




Speech By
Amy MacMahon

MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE

Record of Proceedings, 10 September 2024

EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISIONS) (HELPING FAMILIES WITH SCHOOL COSTS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (6.55 pm), in reply: I thank the minister and those members who have made contributions tonight. I share the member for Capalaba's delight: this bill has made it through to its second reading, but I must say that it is disappointing to get to this point and see that Labor, the LNP and the Katters are going to vote together to lock in continuing underfunding state schools in Queensland. I note that the minister talked about putting pressure on the federal government to increase its contribution to 25 per cent but note that, even if the federal government does that, Queensland state schools will go underfunded until 2032. If you have a child who is starting prep next year, not until they are in year 7 will they be in a fully funded school. The minister said that the government is steadfast in its commitment to full funding, yet we have this long runway where Queensland state schools will be underfunded.

A number of members noted that they are concerned that the bill will circumvent the negotiations Queensland is doing with the federal government, but I would note that that is only going to be the case if your intention is to sign an agreement where Queensland state schools are underfunded. There is nothing in this bill that would prevent negotiations that ensure state schools are fully funded, but it seems that is not the intention of the government.

A number of members were delighting in the fact that P&Cs have to do fundraising and sell doughnuts. Can members imagine that they would share delight in forcing P&Cs and parents to fundraise for the basics for their kids' education? A number of members were concerned that the bill will result in unlimited funding for things like extracurricular activities, but they have overlooked the fact that the bill puts the responsibility to determine those levels of funding with the minister and the chief executive based on feedback from schools. A number of members highlighted with derision funding things like high-end art supplies, rowing, ballet and language programs. What we see here is members who are committed to a two-track education system where the private school kids get one thing and the state school kids get another.

I note that the member for Moggill talked about putting pressure on the federal Greens. I would note that the federal Greens have introduced a private member's bill to replace the 20 per cent cap on Commonwealth funding with a 25 per cent cap. The federal Greens have literally done more than federal Labor to increase federal school funding to 25 per cent. If the Queensland government is trying to put pressure on the federal government to increase its funding to 25 per cent, its biggest ally is the Greens. After today, we are going to ensure that every resident in the electorate of Miller knows that Labor does not support full school funding and that every resident in the seats of Moggill, Bulimba and Capalaba knows that their members do not support full school funding.