




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Education

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.46 pm): Queensland's state education system is in crisis under this third-term state Labor government. Queensland students, parents, teachers and principals remain deeply concerned about this Labor government's reporting and management of asbestos incidents in our schools. Last month an asbestos incident was reported at Rochedale State School, with subsequent testing revealing that, of the 89 samples that were taken, 14 positive results were returned across multiple classrooms. It is abundantly clear that, despite the temporary rectification works being undertaken, parents remain deeply concerned about the adequacy of those works and the sealant, and the timelines for the full rectification of the asbestos affected classrooms. This latest incident is off the back of other significant asbestos management and rectification issues, including at Sunnybank State High School and other schools on the Gold Coast.

The Liberal National Party has been raising Labor's problematic asbestos management in schools for years, including during the 2021 budget estimates hearing where it was revealed that Labor failed to maintain the monthly reporting of asbestos testing via the asbestos incident sample testing register and releasing that online. I table a copy of an ABC online article dealing with that failing at the time.

Tabled paper: Article from ABC News online, dated 11 October 2021, titled 'Delay in asbestos reports for Queensland state schools blasted by opposition' [569](#).

Also on our education system, the Liberal National Party has recently revealed that more than 12,300 teachers and teacher aides have resigned from their roles over the four years since 2020. For Queensland teachers, that represents a 55 per cent increase in resignations since 2020, whilst for teacher aides there has been an almost 80 per cent increase in resignations in the four-year period from 2020 to 2023. That is nothing short of a damning indictment of Labor's failed teacher workforce strategy. Queensland's teacher workforce crisis is one wholly owned and created by the state Labor government. Indeed, as one headline declared last week, this is a 'Labor teacher crisis'.

It is important to remember that, at the last Queensland state election in October of 2020, Labor went to the people of Queensland and promised to deliver 6,190 new teachers and 1,139 new teacher aides over the current electoral term. Labor's promise was unequivocal and gave every school community, every teacher and every teacher aide the right to believe that this promise was for the delivery of teachers on top of attrition and not simply to replace those teachers and teacher aides who would be resigning or retiring. What is more, according to the latest available public sector workforce profile, as of March 2023 Labor have only been able to deliver eight per cent of their election commitment.

Our dedicated teachers and teacher aides are leaving in their thousands because they are overworked, under-resourced and not respected by the state Labor government. Our teachers and staff deserve to feel safe and respected in their workplace and yet when asked whether they believe that the wellbeing of staff is a priority at their school, there has been a shocking 15 per cent decrease since

2014 according to the latest School Opinion Survey results. If the Labor state government actually took the time to listen to teachers, just as the Liberal National Party does, they would discover that a key driver for teacher resignations is Labor's broken student behavioural management framework and increasing assaults and workplace violence in our schools, and we will come back to the fact that this Labor government has not been listening to frontline teachers and principals. Every teacher, parent and student is right to be alarmed, and on average there are more than 47 student suspensions and exclusions each and every school day as a result of weapons and drug incidents in our schools.

Literacy and numeracy outcomes of Queensland students are suffering under this state Labor government. We know this because, by the Labor government's own school education performance metrics, which are reported in the Department of Education's annual report, not a single target for reading, writing or numeracy across years 3, 5, 7 and 9 has been achieved in the last two years and outcomes in Indigenous communities are even worse. It is also clear that the Labor government failed to consult properly on key educational reforms prior to Labor introducing its recent legislation, and we have seen some embarrassing backflips by the state Labor government in the last couple of days.

Finally, on educational infrastructure, the Labor state government, supported by the Greens political party, refuses to build an additional high school to service families and students in the electorate of Moggill. I know there are many members in this House who need additional investment in their school infrastructure. This is a government of chaos and crisis. Apart from the education crisis there is the youth crime crisis, the hospital and ambulance crisis, the housing affordability crisis and the cost-of-living pressures that everyone is facing across Queensland.

Queensland desperately needs a state government that is focused on the right priorities when it comes to the needs of Queenslanders and particularly Queensland schools. In October 2024 it is the time for Queensland parents, teachers, teacher aides and principals to finally show Labor the door in '24.