



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Welford, Hon. RJ

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (10.20 am): I rise to address the motion of condolence recognising the extraordinary service rendered to Queensland by the late the Hon. Rod Welford. Rod Welford served as a member of this parliament from 1989 until 2009 and is survived by his daughter, Lisa, and partner, Gayle. I extend my sincere sympathies to them both as well as his family at this time.

Rod Welford was born and raised in Brisbane and first took the seat of Stafford in 1989 at the age of 31. He would go on to hold that seat until 1992 when he would then win the seat of Everton. Rod would go on to become the minister for a number of portfolio areas, but as a teacher and a former school principal his position as the Queensland minister for education from 2005 to 2009 was of most significance to me and to my colleagues in education.

Rod was well educated himself, an important attribute for this position. He was respected immensely by the education profession during his time as minister. This was evidenced by the wide support afforded Rod for the bold and explicit education agenda he led. Rod had high expectations of himself and of others. Our profession was under no illusion as to what was expected of us, for Rod truly believed that a quality education and high-performing teachers could change the trajectory of a child's life.

During that time Minister Rod Welford made significant and exciting legislative reforms which included State Schools of Tomorrow, which involved extensive public consultation aiming to create modern, 21st century learning environments, flexible classrooms with advanced technology. He established the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework, part of the Smart State strategy, which supported teachers and schools in building a culture of high expectations, engaged learning and focused teaching. He oversaw the introduction of prep in all Queensland schools and the first code of school behaviour. Minister Welford established the Queensland College of Teachers and a renewed focus on teacher professionalism. He established the three Queensland academies and Aviation High.

As minister, Rod ensured every teacher was issued with a department laptop to support their teaching and communication with colleagues. He mandated 30 minutes of physical activity each day for primary school students and as minister, he ensured that all teachers embedded literacy and numeracy strategies in their teaching to improve student outcomes and so much more.

As a young principal, I had enormous respect for Minister Welford. His clear vision for education in Queensland, his values, his courage to enact change in a big department, his commitment to improving teaching and consequently student learning resulted in substantial overall school and system achievement. Rod was so proud of our public education system, our teachers and our students. Minister Welford achieved so much in such a short time as Minister for Education. He was a transformative leader.

In his post-political career, Rod became an adjunct professor at Griffith University, where he is much loved. I am sure the students at Griffith University have benefited, and will continue to benefit, from Rod's teachings for many years to come. Rod was a trailblazer in education, committed to making a difference. He was bold, he was intelligent and he was visionary. Rod can rest well knowing he made a significant difference to this world, improving the lives of so many, especially children. The students during his tenure as minister—and many more after—have benefited from the educational reforms that he led. Vale, Rod Welford.