



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISIONS) AMENDMENT BILL 2025

 **Mr HUTTON** (Keppel—LNP) (5.01 pm): ‘Drowning’, ‘exhausted’, ‘failed’—those are the words of teachers, and that reflects exactly what the failed former education minister left at the end of their term of government. I was one of those teachers who had to experience that we would provide feedback again and again and yet were put in circumstances where teachers did not feel safe at work, where teachers were not allowed to do what drives them each and every day—that is, to teach. Every student has a right to learn and no class should miss out on learning because of the individual rights of one. The custodians in our school—the amazing teacher aides, the librarians, the people who walk around our school doing cleaning—wanted to have pride in their school and pride in their place, yet each and every day we would see the same behaviours repeated, the same things broken again and again, with no consequences. Then we knew that the system had failed.

I am proud to be working with the education minister and the Crisafulli LNP government to change things for our teachers and our students because they deserve nothing less. I am proud to be part of a government that is going to deliver reform. While we have talked and consulted, we will deliver and not leave things hanging.

Today I rise to speak on the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2025. It instigates positive reforms to support our young Queenslanders and the amazing hardworking educators who invest their lives into providing a brighter future for Queenslanders. The Crisafulli government, like every Queensland educator, wants our children to succeed. This bill is about reducing red tape which distracts our educators from their first purpose and passion. It also supports our classrooms by prioritising learning and is taking action to provide safety in schools. Importantly, these steps are for the safety of our staff and our students alike. I know there is more work to do, and I am glad to be part of a team that will deliver because the learning communities of Queensland deserve nothing less.

Let’s look at the practical steps this bill takes, starting with the streamlining of student access to online services for digital learning. We live in an age where students, each and every day in their classrooms and in their schools, are expected to engage through apps and through websites to access learning, yet the antiquated system the department was using meant that the burden it was placing on our schools, administrators and families was duplicative and added time that was not necessary. By providing this opportunity, we are actually reducing the red tape attached to gaining and maintaining permissions, simplifying the systems for schools and families, providing the security of demonstrating our knowledge and understanding and having the research undertaken to ensure we are taking steps in the right direction for our families and reflecting the maturity of our systems.

We are also extending the age eligibility of students in home education. We are providing for our principals to delegate the notification of suspension decisions to another of the school’s senior staff members. In our schools each and every day, there are hardworking teachers and administrators who work with students and their families to develop learning plans and learning journeys, yet on their hardest day, when things do not go right, we are relying on the principal to be that point of contact. This provides for principals to delegate to decision-makers in their school and say, ‘Hey, the relationship you

have with this family means that not only are you going to work with them through what has to happen today—the consequences for the actions of that child—but you can talk to them about the journey that will get them to where they want to be, about the supports that we can put in place to help that child get to the end of their education and into the workforce and succeeding,’ which I am sure is what every Queenslanders wants. That connection is so important. Some in our community have had bad experiences of education in the past. In terms of the knowledge of the parent you have met at parent/teacher interviews, the person you have spoken to when acknowledging the success of a student should be the person who works with you in those hard times—in hard and good. This also means that we give our school administrators the opportunity to get back to basics and support their teachers in their classrooms. That is important.

The bill also allows for separate parents and citizens’ associations for schools with multiple campuses and enables financial donations between P&Cs under special circumstances. We are providing clarity that, while we understand that charity begins at home, in times when Queenslanders wish to show their solidarity, when school communities wish to demonstrate their financial generosity in support of others, P&Cs can facilitate that.

This bill also further clarifies the provision of information by non-state schools to the Department of Education in relation to school attendance and enrolment. It further clarifies the eligibility criteria of children to access eKindy, making it easier for those in the community to have a certainty around where they can go. It implements the recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse—the royal commission—in relation to information sharing between Queensland schools when students transfer, providing better information, ensuring that, where possible, the holistic knowledge that supports the entry of a student into a new school environment gives them the best chance for success and gives the school the things they need so they can put supports in place. It amends various statutes to make commonsense minor and technical amendments.

I had the honour as chair of the Education, Arts and Communities Committee, along with committee members from this House, to inquire into this bill. I want to acknowledge the efforts of the entire committee and the committee secretariat and the very submitters who gave their time. Our committee benefited from the lived experiences of our members, inclusive of a former principal, a former teacher, a former teacher assistant, as well as the shared experiences of many committee members as parents and carers—everyone who wants to see education succeed and wants to see help for our educators, our students and our schools.

The inquiry heard from 34 submitters, conducted a public briefing with officers from the Department of Education and held a public hearing. The wealth of knowledge, the shared wisdom and the willingness of submitters and attendees to invest time and effort was greatly appreciated by all of the members of our committee and provided valuable insight to our inquiry.

The inquiry report was passed unanimously. The changes put forward in this bill are practical steps that will ease the burden on our school community and will make it a little bit better for educators. As I said in my opening remarks, there is so much more to do and I am committed to doing it, as are the education minister and the entire Crisafulli government. These are small steps, but they are steps in the right direction. They are steps that will give back time to our learning community—time that can be invested in our students and in our schools, which is something that everyone in this House can get behind and support. I commend this bill to the House and I commend the Crisafulli government for bringing these positive reforms into the parliament so we may further support our youngest Queenslanders and the dedicated educators who invest their lives into supporting them.