



Speech By
Jon Krause

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

EDUCATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (5.12 pm): It is a pleasure to speak on the Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 this afternoon. This bill has three primary purposes: to recognise prep as the first year of schooling, to support the move of year 7 into secondary school from 2015 and to allow for the cancellation of enrolment of international students at state schools for nonpayment of fees. I will address each of these in turn.

Firstly, prep is now seen as an integral part of school and the curriculum in Queensland. Under present legislative arrangements, a basic allocation of 24 semesters is provided for state schooling—that is, 12 years. This amendment increases that to 26 semesters, recognising that 13 years of schooling may be undertaken. The amendment is prospective only, so it does not affect any past arrangements and does not change the fact that enrolment in prep is not compulsory.

Secondly, it supports the move of year 7 into high school by amending the definitions of primary and secondary education from 2015. It also introduces a streamlined process for non-state schools to alter their accreditation status to offer year 7 in secondary education from 2015.

Thirdly, the power will be given to the director-general to cancel the enrolment of an international student if the student or their parents do not pay the required fees for the education being received. Let's be clear: where there is financial hardship, such fees can be waived, an exemption can be given or payment plans can be entered into. Refugee families do not pay fees, nor do children of asylum seekers held in community detention. This is not about denying an international student an education but about ensuring that those who can pay for this service, which is provided by the Queensland taxpayer to Australian citizens and permanent residents, do in fact pay for the service. This is a sensible proposal to prudently manage the precious resources of the state.

My electorate has around 30 schools, five of which are non-state schools. I have visited many of them, some on numerous occasions. I thank the minister for visiting Tamborine Mountain in the aftermath of the Australia Day storms which wreaked havoc there. The communities and staff of Tamborine Mountain State School, the state high school and St Bernard State School appreciated the minister's visit. I know that staff at the high school in particular are looking forward to the transition of year 7 into high school. No doubt it will have its challenges, but the feedback I receive about the great things that are happening in all of our schools gives me confidence that the transition can be well managed and great outcomes will continue to be achieved.

Some of the recent visits to schools have provided wonderful examples of the dedication and hard work of our high schools in particular, although nothing should be taken away from our primary schools. At this point, I should make mention of a tragic event that occurred this week in Beaudesert in relation to the St Mary's Catholic Primary School community. Early Monday morning a fire ripped through one of several of the blocks at St Mary's in Beaudesert. It was well alight when firefighters arrived there around 1 am. It destroyed the school's year 5, 6 and 7 classrooms, the staffroom, toilet block and storage sheds. It has also caused damage to the front section of an iconic two-storey building which dates back to the late 1930s. There are still people around Beaudesert who were involved in the construction of this building and some of the other buildings that were destroyed. A lot

of memories of the Beaudesert community, of the generations of Catholic families and other families who have fond memories of the buildings that have been destroyed and of the St Mary's community have been lost.

The building that was destroyed was opened and blessed on 3 September 1939, the same day that the Second World War started. That gives an indication of the amount of history—70 years of educational history—that went up in smoke on Monday morning. It was a tragic event for the community. There were 30 firefighters on site. Water was applied to the historic St Mary's church to protect the stained glass windows, which are very beautiful and needed to be protected. Fortunately, the fire occurred at night and there were no people on site, no students on site and no lives were lost, although a great deal of educational history and assets were lost.

One of the local state schools, Gleneagle State School, has opened its doors for St Mary's students this week to enable parents who need to go to work to have their children looked after during the day. The St Mary's community will be arranging for a temporary building later on in the week so they can reopen before they get new buildings further down the track. It is a terrible event, but the community has pulled together. There have been cook-ups for the staff and families who are so busy. I am sure the community, which is very tight-knit, will recover from this tragedy, large as it is.

Many great schools will benefit from this reform. Boonah State High School is one of those schools which will be taking year 7 in 2015. Recently they held a leaders forum in which year 12 leaders got together with other community leaders and talked about the issues facing their community. There has been a great dialogue between the student leaders and the other community leaders around Fassifern. They have also been participating in QuoCKa, which is a reading program involving secondary students and primary students to increase literacy skills. There were great participants in the National Reading Day as well. Under the leadership of Principal Bronwyn Johnstone, I am sure that when year 7 commences in 2015 there will continue to be great outcomes for the whole community.

Beaudesert State High School is another such school. They recently celebrated 50 years in Beaudesert providing secondary education. I was also honoured recently, together with the Minister for Education, to see several students from Beaudesert State High School performing in the Creative Generation Excellence Awards in Instrumental Music at QPAC on the same night as the second State of Origin a couple of months ago. It was great to see so much talent from Beaudesert State High School, and there was a student from Boonah State High School there as well. Five out of 77 performers from across the state were from the Beaudesert State High School. It was great to see the minister there and great to see the array of talent from those schools. Planning is well underway for a trades training centre at the school. When year 7 arrives at Beaudesert State High School, they are going to be welcomed into a community that is punching well above its weight

Tamborine Mountain College is a secondary school on Tamborine Mountain which has been the recipient of \$515,000 in capital funding under the government's Building Our Future Schools program, which overall delivered \$24.5 million of extra capital funding for both the state and non-state sectors this year. It is part of a four-year \$115 million election commitment, and this will assist Tamborine Mountain College to construct the additional facilities necessary for the movement of year 7 into high school. The college is a great asset on the mountain, and it was great to visit during their awards night at the end of last year and to see all of the hard work that is going on in the community.

Tamborine Mountain State High School has also been allocated around \$3 million to facilitate the movement of year 7 into high school. It is a great school which is led very well by the principal Tracey Brose, and I know that the school community is happy now that the goat track is open again. That is the road connecting Canungra and Tambourine Mountain. A lot of students, families and teachers go up and down that road each day to get to work and to school.

There are many, many other fantastic things that I could say about all of the independent, Catholic and state schools in my electorate. There have been a lot of sports days of late: Fassifern small schools, All Saints, St Marys, Jimboomba State School, Hillview and Kooralbyn International School. That is another fantastic school. It is prep to 12 already, so they have had the primary, middle and high school for some time now. Rathdowney State School was there as well. They won the prize for the best march-past. They had a marching band on their school sports day, which was fantastic.

The \$200 million in funding last year and the \$100 million in funding this year to clear maintenance backlogs has been a terrific boon for all of the schools in my electorate and for local businesses as well. It is a shame that the former government let those maintenance backlogs get so big. I am pleased that we have addressed those, and we also are addressing the substantive changes to the education system coming up in 2015. It is a great—

(Time expired)