

12 MAR 2026

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Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie *Neil,*

Thank you for your email dated 10 February 2026 regarding Petition No. 4358-25 in relation to providing flexible early entry to prep for children with disabilities and diverse needs.

As a member of the Crisafulli Government, I am especially focused on advancing this Government's plan for Queensland's future to create a strong, sustainable education system that serves every Queenslander. As part of this, I am committed to effectively engaging children and young people with disabilities to improve educational outcomes and support each student to reach their potential.

The *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* provides that the preparatory year (Prep) is the first year of school. In accordance with section 17 of the *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (EGPR)*, a child can start prep at the beginning of the school year if they turn 5 on or before 30 June that year.

Legislative provisions currently exist for principals of state or non-state schools to approve early enrolment in very specific circumstances and where they are satisfied that the child:

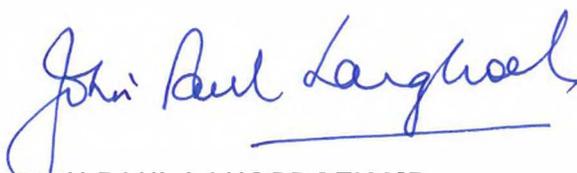
- is ready for education in the Prep year, considering the child's attributes; or
- has started education in another state or country that is equivalent to the Prep year *and* the child is deemed ready to start Prep based on their individual attributes.

The EGPR defines attributes of a child to mean the child's: aptitude and ability; social and emotional competence; physical development; and level of knowledge and understanding. Further information is available at www.education.qld.gov.au/parents-and-carers/school-information/school-operations/early-and-delayed-entry-to-prep.

Prior to being eligible for Prep, families can apply for their child with disability to be registered at a Department of Education-run Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP). ECDPs support the early learning of children with disability and help develop valuable skills to support their transition to school. A child may be eligible to attend an ECDP if they have a diagnosed or suspected disability in the following areas: autism spectrum disorder, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, physical impairment, speech-language impairment and vision impairment. A fact sheet for parents about ECDPs is available at www.education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/ecdp-factsheet-for-parents.pdf.

I would like to thank you, the principal petitioner, and every person who signed the petition for their advocacy for children with disabilities and diverse needs.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education and the Arts