




Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Thursday, 15 November 2012

CLEVELAND ELECTORATE, EDUCATION RESOURCES

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (3.22 pm): The Newman government continues to improve the education opportunities for the students of Cleveland with the recent delivery of e-tablets for children with learning disabilities. The Newman government has provided more than 7,000 e-tablets for Queensland state schools with special education programs as part of the Newman government's \$3.5 million eLearning for Special Needs Students initiative. This election commitment has opened up a wide range of new learning possibilities for students with a disability. The eLearning for Special Needs Students initiative has been rolled out following a successful trial. Other trials interstate and overseas have demonstrated how special needs students have achieved better educational outcomes through the use of e-tablet technology. These e-tablets are right now being rolled out across the state, with many students already receiving them.

While the federal government talks about the NDIS and Gonski without any clear commitment, this government is delivering both in terms of education and disabilities. In my electorate of Cleveland I am happy to state that nine local state schools are currently receiving 98 tablet computers. The schools include Redland District Special School, Bay View State School, Thornlands State School, Cleveland State School, Cleveland District State High School, Ormiston State School, Wellington Point State School, Wellington Point State High School and Birkdale State School. I recently visited the Redland District Special School in Thornlands. This amazing school provides high-quality education for students in the Redlands district who have a disability. It was exciting to see that students are already using this technology enthusiastically and how teachers are putting the devices to good use to cater for the students' diverse learning needs.

The assistive features of e-tablets have enormous benefit for students suffering with a disability, helping them to communicate and to learn in new ways. Children can type words and have the e-tablets verbalise their thoughts. Other students use eye movement to operate the technology, making communication and learning much easier for those who have severely restricted physical mobility. The e-tablets allow students to have greater independence, provide more input into their learning and help to initiate and express their thoughts. Already teachers and parents have enthusiastically supported this technology for the significant benefits it provides. Getting back to the visit to Redland District Special School, I thoroughly enjoyed spending time with students Durim, Matthew, Jessica and Liliya and staff Jenny, Anna, Carol and Helena and thank them for their hospitality. The demonstrations of the practical use of the e-tablets for literacy, numeracy and fine motor skills was illuminating. I thank the minister for this great Newman government initiative.