




Speech By  
**Mark Boothman**

**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

---

Record of Proceedings, 12 February 2014

**EDUCATION (QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY)  
BILL**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (5.50 pm): I rise to support the Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Bill 2013. As all members know, education is a continually changing landscape that is heavily influenced by technology. New fields of endeavour are constantly emerging and employers have expectations around those fields of endeavour. They expect results. They expect individuals to be well and truly trained when they leave school. Gone are the days of a set career path. Today, students have countless opportunities before them. We have to ensure access to education in many different forms so that individuals can develop and hone their skills. With evolution comes opportunity. Certainly, this places an enormous pressure on educational professionals who are continually creating new ways to learn to meet ever-changing demands. The advent of technologies such as mobile networks, the internet et cetera puts additional pressures on educational institutions.

In recent years we have witnessed fundamental changes in the standardisation of testing with the implementation of NAPLAN and national schools reporting. That gives the families in our electorates the ability to sit down and say, 'Okay, this school is performing very well in this area and I feel it will be a very good school for my child because she will get the education that she needs.' That information is on the internet. It is important information for parents, because we all want what is best for our children. That is crucial to us as parents. While I know that all members will say this about their own electorates, in the Albert electorate we are truly blessed with fantastic educational facilities and principals and staff who are proactive.

**Mr Costigan** interjected.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday.

**Mr Crandon:** You are right beside the electorate of Coomera.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** I am right beside the electorate of Coomera.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** No more queuing. It shows how important is our focus on education. One of the key outcomes of the Queensland Plan was the importance of education and skilling the next generation for the rigours of tomorrow. Over a decade ago, the QSA, the Queensland Studies Authority, was formed. Since that time, education has continued to evolve and change. The creation of the Australian Curriculum content and standards of achievement means that we need to change. In recent times, the Australian Curriculum has been rolled out in Queensland schools from prep to year 12 in the subjects of mathematics, English and history. In the not-too-distant future, other subjects will be developed for years 11 and 12.

The Education and Innovation Committee had a long and extensive inquiry into mathematics, chemistry and physics. That inquiry was very in-depth and it ran for a long period. We listened to all

parties involved. Our committee chair, Rosemary Menkens, my fellow committee members and the committee staff did an absolutely fantastic job. This is about the future education of children in this state. We listened to industry professionals and all the parties involved, which was absolutely crucial to understanding what is needed. It was an extremely interesting and thought-provoking inquiry.

As I have previously stated, education needs to keep up with demand. When it comes down to it, the Queensland Studies Authority has served its purpose. However, we cannot sit on our hands. We must rise to meet the challenges for the next generation. We need to put something in place for the next decade and beyond. It is a testament to the Newman government that we are committed to putting in place a statutory body to oversee school curriculum and assessment. This framework should be instigated by independent experts who have a deep understanding of education to ensure that we are prepared for the changing landscape of education. We need to accommodate the potential changes arising from the work of the Australian Council for Education Research. That shows the foresight of the legislation introduced by the minister, John-Paul Langbroek, which will implement changes to the curriculum without the need for significant legislative amendments. That is foresight. It is about understanding that education is continually fluid and that we need to be able to make changes where necessary.

As proposed under the legislation, the governing body of the new Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority will have seven members to give a strategic and streamlined approach. It is most important that those individuals have a clear understanding of school operating environments. Appointing individuals who do not have the necessary knowledge about how our schools work is a waste of time. Again, this shows that the government is listening to the experts in our school environments and is proactively approaching this situation by understanding what it is that we need on the front line. The governing body will include one nominee from each of the three schooling sectors and potential stakeholders will include parents, teachers, principals, training providers, and industry and university representatives.

The authority will be independent in key areas such as individual student achievement, certifications and work programs. To give the House and the residents of Albert a bit of an overview, I point out that the authority's functions will be issuing senior certificates; school based assessment moderation; implementing syllabus in schools and early childhood education centres; developing kindergarten guidelines; ranking students for tertiary placements; and, as I previously highlighted, most importantly, developing the senior syllabus and syllabus for subjects which are not covered by the Australian Curriculum for prep to year 10.

These changes and other announcements in recent times, such as the Great Results Guarantee, have made a real difference to the schools in the Albert electorate. Some \$2.1 million in funding for 2014 is making a real difference. I have a very good working relationship with my principals. I enjoy their company and seeing them on a regular basis. I can certainly say that this funding is music to their ears. This funding will directly help them solve local issues. It gives principals the ability to hire additional specialist teaching staff to actually get on top of the issues faced by students when it comes the RRRs—reading, writing and arithmetic. It is a testament to this minister that he is actually working with his federal colleagues to get a no-strings attached approach to dealing with this issue.

Colin Torr is the principal at Mount Warren Park State School. He is a fantastic principal. I told him about this funding at midnight. The next day he said to me, 'Mark, I asked for a quick emergency meeting with my staff members to discuss how we could best spend this money.' Quite literally, it is the best funding they have ever had for early intervention and to deal with students who are falling behind and need a bit of assistance to get up to the national standard. This money from the Greater Results Guarantee is absolutely fantastic and it is certainly appreciated.

Another proactive approach of this government to education in this state is independent state schools. It is an absolutely fantastic initiative. I have schools literally lining up to be a part of this program. I am happy to say that we had two last year that became independent state schools—Highland Reserve State School and Coomera Springs State School. Fingers crossed we can get more this year.

It gives schools the independence and autonomy to run their school in the best possible manner they can instead of waiting for someone from George Street to give them directions. It is a great initiative. For the principal at Highland Reserve State School, David Roach, and the principal at Coomera Springs State School, Martine Gill, it is a golden light. It gives them the say they need to help their students. This is a proactive approach to education in this state taken by this government.

I thank the minister for his foresight and for his absolute ability to get out there and say, 'This is what we need' and get it done. John Langbroek, if I had a hat I would take my hat off to you. It has

been an absolutely fantastic effort. Education in this state is certainly moving in the right direction. It is accommodating the demands of the real world. It is accommodating the changes facing us in this world.

Lastly, I would again like to thank my fellow committee members. Rosemary Menkens does a fantastic job as the committee chair. It is always great to have her as our committee chair. Sometimes she gives me a bit of leniency when I start talking about the Gold Coast, as I did today. We appreciate her efforts. The committee staff are absolutely fantastic. This bill is going in the right direction. It is servicing the constituents of Albert. I thank the minister for his proactive approach.