



Speech By
Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2018

MOTION

Independent Public Schools, Order for Production of Documents

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.41 pm): I am pleased to speak in support of the motion moved by the honourable member for Kawana, which acknowledges the significant benefits of independent public schools in Queensland—benefits that those opposite on the government benches have been caught out trying to eradicate. If that were not the case, why the minister's refusal to release the secret review into IPS—a review that she admits she has been hanging on to since 8 August? Why does the minister not release it? What is she trying to hide? Queensland schools, principals, teachers, students and parents deserve to know what the future holds.

A copy of the letter of demand to the Minister for Education from QTU general secretary Graham Moloney dated 29 January 2018 calls for an immediate end to the IPS program, accusing it of creating a two-tiered system of state schooling. That is typical divisive union language that is designed to promote class warfare where it does not exist. We know that the minister met with the QTU five days earlier. The minister was a former Queensland Council of Unions general secretary. She panders to the union's every whim, which is becoming more apparent every day: unions first, students second, third or fourth. Perhaps the minister drafted the letter for the union. On page 4 of the document, secured by the LNP under RTI, it states—

That the IPS program in schools cease in 2018 and that IPS practices with a particular focus on HR, be wound back immediately to ensure that education in Queensland remain systems focused and is able to meet the challenges of the pending teacher shortage.

Where is the mention of student education, high standards, results? Nowhere. That is because the Palaszczuk government and the QTU put themselves first. They would have us believe that they care about quality student education, but they want to punish schools that are doing well. The department's website under the heading 'Independent Public Schools' states—

The Queensland Government is committed to providing state schools with greater autonomy in decision-making and increased capacity to work in new ways to maximise learning outcomes.

The ... IPS initiative delivers on this commitment.

...

Schools also have greater flexibility to tailor the curriculum to directly suit the needs of their students.

That sounds pretty good to me. As a parent, I would like my child to attend a school with that philosophy.

I am immensely proud of the two high schools in my area—Palm Beach Currumbin State High School and Elanora State High School. Under the electoral redistribution, PBC now falls within the Burleigh electorate, but the majority of the students of that school live in the Currumbin electorate. I am involved with both schools and support them wherever I can. Both are IPS. When the policy was introduced by the LNP in 2013, PBC became one of the first schools and Elanora State High School

secured the status about two years ago. I have witnessed the success of the IPS program and what it means to these two fine educational facilities. There is a noticeable sense of pride and belonging in the school community. I applaud more parent involvement and engagement with local businesses and more school autonomy.

It is the union's infiltration and associated, often untrue, propaganda that is of major concern to me and to many of the parents to whom I speak. What has been going on between the QTU's 29 January letter of demand and now? Plenty, it seems. In my 14½ years in this place, I have witnessed some outrageous abuses and behaviours, but the blatant and defiant comments on news screens across Queensland by the QCU state secretary, Ros McLennan, about infiltrating schools and getting to students via the Young Workers Hub program to recruit them into joining a union, becoming protesters and activists shocked me for a number of reasons, but mostly for the brazen, militant manner in which Ros McLennan spoke and behaved. Members of the Young Workers Hub told a recent inquiry that they are still developing the program. They have not met with the minister, or the department, yet the minister is quoted in the *Courier-Mail* on 19 July—well before the estimates committee hearing—as saying, 'I think this is a great initiative of the QCU.' Over the following few hours the minister flip-flopped her way through TV interviews before, in full view, storming off in a huff.

Getting rid of the IPS model is more about unions flexing their muscle to take control and removing any initiative that the LNP government introduced than anything else. Queensland parents should be very afraid of this move. The culture behind the business model of the unions is to go to any length to access and indoctrinate whomever they can, even school students. This minister has shown that she, too, uses this model. During the estimates committee hearing, the minister was talking about addressing year 6 students and offered up the following—

I am sure I would like to think that I had indoctrinated them to vote for the Labor Party.

If that does not show members her true colours, nothing will. We will fight to defend the IPS program—a program that the LNP was very pleased to introduce.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mrs STUCKEY: Once again, the minister is using threatening language—

(Time expired)