



Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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EDUCATION (ACCREDITATION OF NON-STATE SCHOOLS) BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.29 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Bill 2017. This legislation has come about from a review into the non-state school sector which was commenced by the former Liberal National Party government. It has now been three years since the results and recommendations of that modernising and streamlining reform were handed down and before legislation has actually made it to the Queensland parliament for resultant implementation. This bill will continue the establishment of the board as a statutory body with administrative support provided by a secretariat staffed with employees from the Department of Education and Training.

It is important to note that the non-state schooling sector in Queensland educates approximately a third of Queensland's school-age students which is nearly 266,000 students through 504 schools. Non-state schools must be accredited to operate via the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board under the auspices of the Queensland accreditation of non-state schools framework. Today, the Minister for Education decides on a non-state school's eligibility for Queensland funding based on criteria prescribed in the accreditation act and also upon the recommendations of the board's Non-State School Eligibility for Government Funding Committee, the funding eligibility committee.

In 2014, the then LNP government, together with the Department of Education and Training, commenced a review of non-state school education regulatory arrangements with a view to modernising and streamlining non-state school accreditation, as I mentioned. As a result of this review and associated feedback from stakeholders, this proposed legislation will replace the existing accreditation act with legislation that will continue the board as an independent statutory body that will be responsible for the regulation of non-state schools. It will streamline the accreditation process. It will streamline the process for government funding eligibility by providing for the board to make funding eligibility decisions, rather than the minister, on the advice from the funding eligibility committee.

The revised accreditation act will strengthen the functions of authorised persons to investigate offences under the act and will require governing bodies to inform the board when members cease and new members commence. These measures will strengthen governance arrangements. It also provides for the review of decisions by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, rather than the minister. This bill is not opposed by LNP members, as outlined by the shadow minister, the Hon. Tracy Davis MP.

I am pleased to highlight at this particular point two distinguished high-performing non-state schools in my electorate of Moggill. The Brisbane Independent School and the Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School are both non-state schools in the electorate I represent. The Brisbane Independent School has 82 students. It is heading into its 50th year as one of Queensland's oldest progressive schools. The Brisbane Independent School community is always looking at how to develop, enhance and nurture their children so students can thrive via the development of their innate love of learning. They certainly have a hardworking principal in Ms Jen Haynes, who both is an innovator and also

provides significant care for her students. I also wish to congratulate Jodie Jetann, Jeanette Mulherin and many other parents for their contribution to the school's success and achievements.

The other non-state school in my electorate of Moggill is the Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School, which is a Catholic primary school located in the heart of Kenmore. The Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School has a very proud history of serving Kenmore and neighbouring communities since 1963. They have excellent facilities there. They have a very conscientious principal in Mr Andrew Oberthur. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Father Mark Franklin and the broader work of members of the Our Lady of the Rosary Parish as well as the Brigidine Sisters over many years in relation to this school. It is a school that has a very professional team of teachers and support staff who are all united in their passion for teaching and supporting 470 students with respect to learning opportunities. I have fond memories of growing up in Kenmore in Aberfeldy Street in the 1970s and having the opportunity to ride my bike in the school grounds, although I did not attend the school. Certainly they have made an outstanding contribution to the education of young people in my local area over many, many years.

Since I have the floor and we are talking about schools, I would also like to pay tribute to the nine state schools in my electorate. As we all know, all schools make an important contribution to the education of our young people. Significantly, last weekend I was able to attend the Moggill State School's Mogganza and the Kenmore South State School fete. I would like to acknowledge their principals respectively—principals Darren Marsh and Raylee Davies—for the great work that they do, along with teachers, parents, students and their relevant P&C committees. Happy birthday to Kenmore South State School because they are celebrating their 50th birthday. In conclusion, I am very fortunate in the electorate of Moggill to have both non-government schools and government state schools that bring excellent records of achievement in academic, musical and sporting arenas—such schools that provide students with a safe, caring and supportive environment where they can learn and foster unlimited potential for future endeavours in life.

Last night it was terrific to welcome the 2017 Kenmore State High School student school leaders—Charlotte Davies, Caleb Webb, Grace Gilroy and Max Mayer—along with their deputy principal, Andrew Blight, to the Queensland parliament for dinner and for those students to see the workings of one of our great democratic institutions. They certainly enjoyed the opportunity to do that. They did mention to me that they would like me to reinforce to the minister, the Hon. Kate Jones, that an investment in their infrastructure—their library and some suboptimal classrooms—would be most welcomed. It was great to have them here last night. I commend this bill to the House.