



Speech by

Andrew Cripps

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

Hansard Thursday, 27 November 2008

TILT TRAIN ACCIDENT; HINCHINBROOK ELECTORATE, SCHOOLS

Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (5.45 pm): Before I make a few remarks in my adjournment speech tonight, I put on the record my profound sympathy for the families of those people involved in the accident north of Ingham and south of Cardwell today involving the tilt train. Details of the accident at this moment are not precise. I would not like to comment any further on it. It is with profound sorrow that I express my sympathies. I hope that the families of the people who have lost their lives today will be able to understand that the thoughts and prayers of the people in this parliament are with them.

At this time of the year, schools across Queensland—state, catholic and independent—are very busy with the approaching conclusion of the academic year. In recent weeks, I have attended speech days at St Teresa's College, Abergowrie, and Tully State High School and speech nights at Ingham State High School, Gilroy Santa Maria College and Innisfail State High School.

I am constantly impressed with the achievements of young people in my electorate of Hinchinbrook—academic, cultural and sporting. It bodes well for the future of our great state and I recognise the commitment of parents and teachers to giving their children and students respectively the chance to pursue many opportunities during the years of their formal primary and secondary education.

On Saturday, 15th November 2008 I attended the 60th anniversary celebrations of St John's Catholic Primary School in Silkwood. The day commenced with a rollcall of students who had attended St John's over six decades. Model classrooms had been established demonstrating classroom conditions in 1948 and contrasting them to an adjacent classroom demonstrating 2008 classroom conditions. I was pleased to be involved in a ceremony to seal a time capsule which enclosed teaching materials and student work from 2008 to be opened at a significant anniversary in the future.

I was also very pleased to be invited to open a new kindergarten building at St John's. The building was blessed by the Most Reverend James Foley, the Bishop of Cairns, who remarked that it was fortunate for the parents of the Silkwood district that the facility was not being run by ABC Learning. The new kindergarten is a welcome investment by the Cairns Catholic education office in the future of the early education of young children in the Silkwood district. I congratulate St John's on its 60th anniversary.

In recent weeks my electorate of Hinchinbrook has experienced two very different outcomes as far as reviews of the future viability of individual schools are concerned. Firstly, we have experienced a very positive outcome at Moresby State School, where the minister for education has resolved to give the school a 12-month reprieve to demonstrate its ongoing viability, which I am confident it will do. I was pleased to lend support to Moresby State School. The school is well served by a dedicated principal and P&C. I thank the minister for education in relation to Moresby State School.

The other decision by the minister for education to close Lucinda Point State School was not unexpected and, I concede, probably unavoidable. It is regrettable that after 112 years of delivering quality education to students at Lucinda, that school has closed. However, the written advice to me from Education Queensland indicates that the Lucinda Point State School site will be disposed of. I have communicated my views to the minister that the Lucinda Point State School site needs to be maintained for community use or perhaps even an alternative educational purpose, rather than being sold off.

The education of young Queenslanders is an issue about which I care deeply. I have over 40 schools in my electorate and each one of them has my full support and commitment to work on their behalf.