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MEMBER: Ms LAUGA

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 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.19 pm): I rise to speak to the estimates committee report for the Education, Employment and Training Committee. Prior to getting into the detail of the estimates committee report, I would like to table a copy of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association prospectus. I met with members of the association in the cafe before speaking today. They are a great bunch of people who are dedicated to ensuring that all rural and remote students have equity of access to a continuing and appropriate education. I commend the association for their work in advocating for rural and remote students across Queensland.

Tabled paper: Brochure from Isolated Children's Parents' Association Queensland titled 'Access to equitable education: Strengthening rural & remote communities through education'.

I note the comments of the member for Theodore previously with respect to air conditioning. For the member for Theodore's benefit, I want to put on the record that we are on track to air-condition every classroom, every library and every staff room in Queensland state schools by June next year. Of 650 schools to be air-conditioned when we made that commitment, nearly 500 already have operational air conditioning in less than 12 months. It has been an extraordinary effort by the Department of Education to roll air conditioning out across those schools. We are on track to deliver that commitment.

After the great efforts during COVID last year and as we move into the 2021 school year, I am so excited for what lies ahead for schools and the Department of Education over the next four years. Our students, teachers and school communities were very excited and happy to go back to school and hopefully—touch wood—this school year is a full school year as per normal given that last year was such a disrupted year. The schools, the Department of Education, the students and the teachers adapted so well in such a challenging time through the global pandemic.

At the last election we made a series of commitments all designed to ensure that we continue to give our students a world-class education that sets them up for a great future. That includes a \$1 billion boost to education infrastructure investment over the next four years. I note that the Minister for Education said this morning that there is probably not a member in this House who has not had investment in infrastructure at their local schools. I think that is testament to the work that the Palaszczuk Labor government is doing to deliver quality infrastructure so that all of our students and teaches right across Queensland have state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces.

I am particularly proud of our \$45 million Local Schools Local Jobs plan, which will upgrade training facilities in 26 secondary schools across the state and prepare students with the skills they need to move into secure, well-paid jobs in their local region. Skilling young Queenslanders is essential to ensure that our youngest and brightest minds are prepared for the jobs of tomorrow and Queensland's economic recovery. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government's Local Schools Local Jobs plan includes investments like \$2 million for Gladstone State High School to upgrade training facilities to prepare students for jobs in the hydrogen industry; \$2.25 million for Woodcrest Secondary College to upgrade trade training facilities to prepare students for jobs in aviation engineering; and \$2.5 million for Rockhampton State High School to build an aquaculture training and research facility to prepare students for jobs in this fast growing food industry.

It is about creating training opportunities for students at our local schools that match the local economy and the skills demand for that local economy. This investment of \$45 million under this plan will build and upgrade training facilities in schools such as metal work and welding equipment to support future jobs in the mining sector; horse stables to support future jobs in the agriculture sector such as farm managers, animal trainers and equine veterinarians and nurses; commercial standard kitchens to support future jobs in the hospitality sector; and new science laboratories to support future jobs in advance manufacturing such as product designers and automotive engineers. Local Schools Local Jobs will deliver modern facilities across Queensland that teachers, parents and students can be proud of.

Over the next four years we will deliver close to 6,200 new teachers and more than 1,100 new teacher aides to meet student enrolment growth and maintain our nation-leading teacher to student

ratios and class sizes. On top of the existing student numbers each year, we are seeing 8,000 additional students in Queensland schools every year. That means that we need to employ more teachers, we need to build more schools and we need to build more classrooms at our schools as well. Add this to our Turn to Teaching internship program to support 300 aspiring teachers to move into Queensland state schools, new homework centres in 120 schools and sanitary products into schools, we have a clear plan and vision for the next four years and beyond for education in Queensland. I commend the committee report to the House.