



SEATH HOLSWICH MP – STATE MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT

5th June 2012

PINE RIVERS SCHOOLS

I rise tonight to express my gratitude to the teachers, school support staff, parents and school communities of the Pine Rivers electorate. Over the past few weeks I have had the opportunity to visit most of the schools within my electorate, and I will be visiting the remainder of the schools by the end of June.

I have met the principals, teachers, P&C presidents, parents, tuckshop volunteers and admin staff, and I have been thoroughly impressed by the commitment displayed across our school communities towards the education of our children.

In the lead-up to Anzac Day I attended three very special Anzac Day services—at Genesis Christian College, Bray Park High and Pine Rivers High. The reverence and respect displayed by students for the Anzac tradition was a credit to the teachers, who have instilled this attitude in our youth.

There are, however, two things that have disappointed me during my visits to our schools. The first is something that particularly annoys me and I believe is a blight on our society. It frustrates me to hear stories of students who display talent in a particular field not getting the opportunity to fully explore and realise their potential because their family cannot afford the costs associated with particular activities. Rising cost-of-living expenses are putting the squeeze on many families, and I dread to think how many stars of future generations are going undiscovered and how many students' talents are going untapped because it is too expensive to involve them in an instrumental music program, send them to a day of excellence or send them on a development camp.

In addition to the commitment of this government to reduce the cost of living for Pine Rivers families, I will work with my local schools to trial innovative localised solutions to this problem so that the children of Pine Rivers have the opportunity to develop into the leaders of tomorrow.

The second thing that disappoints me is the state of disrepair of some of the school facilities throughout the electorate. The results that teachers are able to achieve are more impressive given the facilities some of them have to work in. To see classrooms that leak at the slightest drop of rain and buildings that are slowly sinking into the ground—and to then hear that unless it is something that is actually endangering life there is no money in the budget to fix it—reflects the sad and sorry state of the neglect of our education facilities by the Labor governments of the past couple of decades.

I hope that, once our government can deal with the bottomless pit of debt and the waste that the previous Labor government left strewn across the state, we will be able to tackle some of these serious infrastructure issues that are burdening our schools.

I commend my local schools on the high level of education they provide, sometimes under trying circumstances, and look forward to working with them to see some of these issues resolved.