

PEOPLE'S QUESTION TIME

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND (FEBRUARY)

Excerpt from Transcript

<http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/government/peoples-question-time/2010/assets/first-session-pqt.doc>.

Friday 26 February 2010

Panel:

1. **Anna Bligh** - Premier and Minister for the Arts (PREMIER)
2. Geoff Wilson - Minister for Education and Training (G.WILSON)
3. Margaret Black - State President, Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Associations (M.BLACK)
4. Mike Byrne - Executive Director, Queensland Catholic Education Commission (M.BYRNE)
5. Professor Claire Wyatt-Smith - Dean of the Faculty of Education, Griffith University (C.WYATT-SMITH)

Moderator – Erin O'Brien

MODERATOR: Terrific, well hopefully Tina can do that. We've also had another question on special needs from a primary school learning support teacher from Glenda at Toowong who raises concerns about **dyslexia** and notes that in the United Kingdom, **dyslexia** is seen as a disability and has the funding that comes along with that. And I couldn't help with the opportunity, the literacy expert with us here, she asks: "The effects of **dyslexia** continue throughout life. When and how does the **Bligh** Government propose to address the issue of support for dyslexic children in our schools?" And before we ask that question about support I might ask if Claire has an opinion on how we can help with dyslexic children.

C.WYATT-SMITH: I think the important thing for teacher education programs is to look very carefully at the place of the teaching of reading and to ensure that all our graduates are qualified in the teaching of reading right throughout schooling, and in particular teaching of reading for students with special needs. In terms of **dyslexia**, one of the ways I think that we go forward is careful diagnosis of the needs and the planning of the interventions for the individual student, and then the careful monitoring of those interventions for effect. The partnership therefore between the teacher, the learning support teacher and the parents, critical in a whole school provision. And for the school to look at what other specialist support needs the child has. So it's really a partnership model that's critical.

MODERATOR: Minister, is this an issue that your department is concerned with?

G.WILSON: It is indeed and the department is actually reviewing in a particular area a potentially far more effective way in examining the needs of the children with perhaps certain learning difficulties so that the preoccupation is on what the learning support that is needed is on what is the learning support that's needed rather than whether or not they have a particularly named identified disability of some sort. So they're having a careful look at that now because the bottom line is we want to make sure the child gets the opportunity to have the education experience in an inclusive situation within a classroom that maximises their chances with education, rather than identifying whether they have a condition that satisfies a particular name or don't have a condition that satisfies a required name.

MODERATOR: Sure.

PREMIER: I think it is important to say though that we do provide learning support, additional resources into schools now. We do not determine... We don't define **dyslexia** as a disability, the questioner is right about that, and I think we'd be a little cautious and I think most jurisdictions around the world have been a bit cautious about doing that because it's a pretty heavy label and it's one you want to use a bit carefully. And people usually only want it because they think it will deliver resources. So what we're sort of talking about here is how do we deliver the resources better, but there is, there are resources in our schools and they are learning support teachers who do work over and above the classroom teacher with children who have these sorts of issues with reading.

PREMIER: And thank you to QUT.

[APPLAUSE]

[END OF PEOPLE'S QUESTION TIME]

Transcript of People's Question Time – Friday 26 February 2010

Full transcript can be found on:

<http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/government/peoples-question-time/2010/assets/first-session-pqt.doc>.