



Rachel Nolan MP

Member for Ipswich

**Electorate Office**

125 Brisbane Road

Telephone

07 3202 3452

Email

ipswich@parliament.qld.gov.au

Postal Address

PO Box 98, Booval Q 4304

Facsimile

07 3202 4778

Web

www.rachelnolanmp.com

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FLYING START EDUCATION FORUMS INVITE IPSWICH FEEDBACK

Ipswich residents are invited to have their say on the future of the State's education system at community consultation forums next week/this week.

Member for Ipswich Rachel Nolan said a forum would be held on Thursday 17 June at the Ipswich Grammar School's auditorium in Darling Street, Ipswich at 11am and 6.30pm.

"To date more than 2000 Queenslanders have had their say at more than 80 forums that began in Townsville on 18 February and have been held in centres ranging from Weipa to Warwick," she said.

"Participants have been eager to voice their opinions on the education Green Paper A Flying Start for Queensland Children.

"The plan to move Year 7 to secondary school by 2014 remains a hotly debated topic, with discussions focused around providing adequate resources for such a proposal.

"Forum participants have clearly valued the opportunity to have their say and it is encouraging to receive so many suggestions from community members on ways to help families prepare their children for school.

"There was also strong interest from community members in our plans to introduce volunteers – Queensland Ready Readers – to assist children with reading in our primary schools.

"The forums have proven a very valuable way of gathering meaningful feedback and significant contributions have been made by school students as well as parents, teachers and the general community."

Ms Nolan said the Green Paper outlined the challenges facing education in Queensland and put forward proposals to improve young children's readiness for school, and to ensure high performance standards for all Queensland schools.

"I encourage as many people as possible to attend the forums which will be held throughout the state before the end of June," she said.

The proposals in A Flying Start for Queensland Children followed on from the introduction of Prep and the 'earning or learning' reforms that came out of the Education and Training Reforms for the Future discussion paper in 2003.

"They will complement our investment in early childhood services, including the rollout of up to 240 new kindergartens by 2014 and funding of kindergarten programs in long day care centres," Ms Nolan said.

"I look forward to working with the community to ensure all Queensland children and young people get the flying start to learning they deserve."

RSVPs to the community forums can be made via a free call 1800 452 056 or email aflyingstart@deta.qld.gov.au

A list of forum locations is available on the Queensland Government website at www.qld.gov.au/educationforums.

Responses to the paper can also be made online at the Queensland Government website or by email, fax or post until the end of June this year.

Media contact: Ipswich Electorate Office 3202 3452