Dear Parent or Carer

A quiet revolution is happening in Queensland state schools to help all students improve their school performance every year. New programs are providing support to our school communities, school leaders and classroom teachers like never before.

We know that the success of a child's education relies upon strong partnerships between schools and parents and carers. It's important that you know about the programs that are under way in our state schools to improve school performance.

Our approach draws on international research about the best ways to improve children's school results. For example, Queensland is the only state in Australia that has developed a program that examines all areas of teaching and learning at every school. School communities are using that important information to improve results.

We've also set a required number of hours that children spend on English, maths and science in our primary schools. These subjects are the building blocks of a child's education. If you feel your child needs extra help in these subject areas, I encourage you to speak with your child's teacher or principal.

These are just some of the initiatives designed to give our children the skills they need. Our goal is to be among Australia's best performing states in English, maths and science. We know it's going to take time to achieve this, but we have a plan and are building on firm foundations.

You can play an important role in helping us to achieve our goal by working with your child to help them with their education. Parent fact sheets and children's activities to help with reading, writing and maths, can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Training website at www.det.qld.gov.au

I encourage you to talk with your classroom teacher or school principal to find out more about ways to help your child get a flying start in education and life.

Please find attached information on the range of programs occurring in schools throughout Queensland.

GEOFF WILSON MP
Minister for Education and Training
There are already many valuable programs and initiatives happening in our state schools that are providing students with the skills they need to succeed after school.

The Queensland Government is committed to continuing to improve children’s results in every state school.

Comprehensive programs are being implemented in schools throughout Queensland to help us achieve our goal of being among Australia’s best performing states in English, maths and science. Below are just some of the programs.

**Teaching and Learning Audits** – Queensland is the only state in Australia with an audit program that examines all areas of teaching, learning, assessment and reporting in all schools. The audit program is based on international best practice and is conducted by experienced, high performing school principals. The audit gives each school a picture of where they are at, against clear criteria, across eight key aspects of teaching and learning. Each school receives a comprehensive report which the principal then uses to develop an action plan, in consultation with their school community, as a part of an overall school improvement strategy.

**Personalised coaching for principals** – An Assistant Director-General, who is also an experienced school principal, is travelling the state to work with 120 selected principals at large primary schools to boost academic performance in reading, writing and mathematics. The coaching initiative is underpinned by principals working with principals sharing good practices.

**New way of appointing principals** – A new principal recruitment process to better fit the talents of a principal with the specific needs of a school is being implemented.

**Turnaround Teams** – Ten teams of experienced, effective teachers are now working with school leaders in 131 schools in disadvantaged areas to improve student results. Their work is supplemented by the Low SES National Partnership that invests an additional $800 a student into special projects in low socio-economic schools that are making a significant difference and boosting student results.

**Summer schools** – Year 5, 6 and 7 students identified as needing extra help in literacy and numeracy are receiving intensive support again these September and Christmas school holidays. Summer Schools started in 2009 and up to 75 per cent of participating students showed improvement in an area of literacy or numeracy.

**Literacy and numeracy** – More than 90 literacy and numeracy coaches are working in more than 175 schools to help classroom teachers provide an extra boost to students in need. Minimum time allocations for English, mathematics and science have been mandated in Years 1 to 7.

**Science Spark** – A total of 100 primary science experts are working with Years 4–7 teachers and students across the state. Fifteen Regional Science Managers are also providing professional development to all Years 4–7 teachers.

**School Centres of Excellence** – Student teachers will receive high quality professional field experiences and existing teachers will receive professional development at five new School Centres of Excellence to be established in partnership with Queensland universities.

**Queensland Education Leadership Institute** – A new institute has been established to provide innovative and quality leadership programs and services to equip current and aspiring school leaders from the state, Catholic and independent sectors with the skills and training they need to help drive major education reforms.

**Learning Beyond the School Gate** – A major Reading Awareness campaign is under way to encourage parents to read to their children and an army of volunteers is being recruited to support young readers in their literacy. This program, Queensland Ready Readers, is being extended to provide free reader training for parents and carers of Prep to Year 3 students to provide extra support in literacy development at home.

**Parent fact sheets** – A range of parent fact sheets and children’s activities to help with reading, writing and maths can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Training website.

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Tomorrow’s Queensland: strong, green, smart, healthy and fair