



EDUCATION POLICY

(Adopted October 2014)

PRINCIPLES

The Queensland Greens believe that:

1. Education is a public good.
2. Education empowers people to live purposeful, satisfying lives and to participate fully as citizens in an effective democracy.
3. All people are entitled to free, well-funded and high quality, life-long public education and training.
4. High quality education should be accessible to all Queenslanders, regardless of socio-economic or cultural background, religious belief, disability or geographic location, including permanent residents and refugees.
5. Government should be the primary education provider at all levels.
6. Government has a primary responsibility to fund the public education system to provide high quality education to all students.
7. Differences in educational outcomes should not be the result of differences in wealth, income, power, possessions or location.
8. Decision making in education should be open to input from teachers and their unions, academics, parents and students.
9. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities should be able to exercise meaningful control over the design and delivery of educational services for their children and other community members.
10. Funding to the education system should be on the basis of need and equity to ensure that all Queensland children and young people have the opportunity to fulfil their best educational outcomes.
11. A publicly owned and properly funded TAFE system plays an essential role in providing economic prosperity and a socially just society by offering lifelong educational opportunities and skills development to a broad range of people within the community.

AIMS

The Queensland Greens will:

1. Provide equitable access to a quality education for all students.
2. Fund schools based on the needs of students, including additional funding to address disadvantage.
3. Increase funding to public education through funding models for all sectors of the education system that prioritise public education.
4. Ensure that the viability and diversity of existing public schools is not endangered by the development of new non-government schools.
5. Ensure the same accountability and transparency frameworks for public funding are required of non-government schools as are required of government schools, including:
 - a. Non-discrimination in the hiring of staff;
 - b. Non-discrimination in the selection of students, and admissions and expulsions policies similar to government schools, including an obligation to enrol;
 - c. Provision of all information necessary to calculate the income the school has the capacity to generate from fees and other sources; and
 - d. Accounting for their use of public funds.
6. Adequately fund public education infrastructure for capital works and maintenance to create an optimal learning environment whilst meeting the highest environmental sustainability standards.
7. Ensure public education infrastructure and land remains in public ownership and control.
8. Where public education infrastructure and land is sold because of changing demand, direct the proceeds into a fund for the construction of new public schools and buildings.
9. Ensure the Government retains overall responsibility for public school finances and staffing, because inappropriate devolution of decision making can:
 - a. Shift blame for funding constraints more easily to individual school principals rather than with government;
 - b. Undermine a sector-wide transfer system that rewards teachers who are prepared to teach in more challenging environments;
 - c. Increase negative competition between schools and results in the entrenchment of school disadvantage in some geographic locations;
 - d. Open up the way for privatisation of key aspects of our public schools.
10. Set the salaries and conditions of educators at a level that recognises their professionalism, training and the importance of their work, provides secure career structures, and encourages committed and capable people into the teaching profession at all levels of the education system.

11. Reject performance based pay for school teachers and other educators, as it undermines the cooperative environment that is essential to achieving the best educational outcomes, cannot be fairly implemented, discriminates against disadvantaged schools and students, the places downward pressure on overall pay and conditions.
12. Provide ongoing professional development for educators at all levels.
13. Work towards smaller class sizes throughout the public education system to achieve manageable workloads for all educators and the best educational outcomes for all students.
14. Support initiatives which encourage high quality teachers to work in schools servicing disadvantaged populations.
15. Increase specialist teachers and support services for students with special needs, those at educational risk, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities.
16. Include the history, culture and contemporary experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the school curriculum, and in the training and professional development of all teachers.
17. Increase resource allocation for the teaching of community languages in public primary and secondary schools, and well-resourced centres for the study of community languages and trade-specific English language courses.
18. Make decisions about curriculum, testing, reporting and teaching in consultation with appropriate educational experts, teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders.
19. Ensure that national and state testing is used only for analysis of trend data and as a pedagogical aid to teachers, and not as a basis for judging performance of individual teachers or schools.
20. Support programs that aim to engage parents in the schooling of children.
21. Increase funding and support for qualified school welfare and family support professionals in public schools.
22. Allow educational communities to respond to local needs when this does not deprive children of the opportunity to achieve equitable outcomes.
23. Support the delivery of alternative pedagogies in public and independent schools.
24. Encourage participation by students at age-appropriate levels in decision making within educational institutions.
25. Enable parents to educate their children at home or in other settings, provided they demonstrate a commitment and ability to ensure balanced educational and socialisation for their children.
26. Include education for environmental and social responsibility within the curriculum.
27. Provide incentives and support for schools and colleges to reduce consumption and waste, implement energy efficiency measures and use renewable energy sources.

28. Ensure that schools and curriculum materials are free from corporate sponsorship and influence including the use of sponsors' material or logos.
29. Implement education funding across all sectors that does not include or promote competition, privatisation, outsourcing, and other market based mechanisms; noting that such mechanisms undermine standards and integrity and do not further the complex policy objectives of our education system.
30. Ensure vocational education and training (VET) is publicly funded and primarily provided through the public TAFE system.
31. Ensure VET funding priorities balance student needs, employer demand and providing skills in satisfying and sustainable employment.
32. Phase out the public funding of privately funded VET where TAFE can provide the same educational and training outcomes.
33. Reject competitive tendering and entitlement-based funding for TAFE.
34. Address the over-casualisation of TAFE teaching by introducing a benchmark of 80 per cent of teaching by permanent staff throughout public and private VET providers.
35. Ensure educators have a key role in reviewing and developing training packages.
36. Substantially increase the availability of apprenticeships in rural and regional areas and other locations where there is a shortage.
37. Subsidise travel for country students to TAFE colleges.
38. Provide adequate community input through independent advisory bodies to government on training and education issues.
39. Fund diverse adult community education and training programs to foster a culture of lifelong learning.
40. Provide adult literacy and learning programs.
41. Increase state funding for research in universities and for scholarships for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially students from rural and remote communities.