



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

2004–2005–2006–2007–2008

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No. 150

WEDNESDAY, 6 AUGUST 2008

1 The Assembly met at 10.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. A quorum of Members not being present, the Speaker (Mr Berry) ordered the bells to be rung. A quorum having been formed, the Speaker took the Chair and asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

2 SPEAKER'S RULING—MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

The Speaker informed that Assembly that he had requested that Ms Porter amend the terms of the matter of public importance submitted by her today as it did not conform with the provisions set out in *House of Representatives Practice* (Fifth Edition), in that the matter must be definite.

3 PETITIONS

The Clerk announced that the following Members had lodged petitions for presentation:

Mrs Burke, from 217 residents, requesting that the Assembly consider the impact of the lack of forward planning in the Gungahlin area and urgently address these issues.

Mr Stefaniak, from 633 residents, requesting that the Assembly address parking difficulties at the Nicholls shops.

**4 RATES (FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY REPEAL)
AMENDMENT BILL 2008**

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—

Debate resumed.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 1
Mr Mulcahy

NOES, 14
Mr Barr
Mr Berry
Mrs Burke
Mr Corbell
Mrs Dunne
Dr Foskey
Ms Gallagher
Mr Gentleman
Mr Hargreaves
Ms Porter
Mr Seselja
Mr Smyth
Mr Stanhope
Mr Stefaniak

And so it was negatived.

5 CLASS SIZES AND TEACHER RECRUITMENT—GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Mr Seselja (Leader of the Opposition), pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes the positive benefits of small class sizes on educational outcomes especially in primary school;
- (2) condemns the Stanhope Government for cutting 35 high school teacher positions as part of the 2006-07 budget; and
- (3) welcomes recent commitments by the Canberra Liberals to:
 - (a) implement a policy over the term of the next Assembly of having no more than 21 students in ACT government primary school classes;
 - (b) appoint an additional 150 primary school teachers and an additional 20 teaching assistants over four years to meet class size targets;
 - (c) replace over three years the 35 high school teacher positions cut by the Stanhope Government;
 - (d) pay the Higher Education Contribution Scheme debt of some graduate teachers to recruit outstanding teachers; and
 - (e) sponsor mid-career professionals in maths, science and information technology to do teacher training.

Mr Barr (Minister for Education and Training), by leave, moved the following amendments together:

- “(1) paragraph (1)—Omit all words after ‘especially in’, substitute ‘early childhood’;
- (2) paragraph (2)—Omit all words after ‘condemns’, substitute ‘the ACT Liberals for failing to accurately cost their recent commitments’; and
- (3) paragraph (3)—Omit all words after ‘welcomes’, substitute ‘the Stanhope Government’s’:
 - (a) reduction of class sizes in the most critical years of kindergarten to year 3 to 21 students based on a body of international research;
 - (b) increased funding for education of more than 40 per cent since being elected in 2001;
 - (c) investment of over \$350 million in building new public schools where they are most needed and in upgrading every other ACT public school;

- (d) development of the new curriculum framework *Every Chance to Learn* for ACT schools from preschool to year 10 and the investment of \$2 million for curriculum renewal to ensure all students and teachers can access up to date and relevant curriculum;
- (e) development of new policy in the areas of national testing, early childhood education, ICT, safe schools framework, countering bullying, harassment and violence, restorative justice programs and countering racism;
- (f) consultation on and investment in the development of a Schools Standards Authority;
- (g) investment in the Green Schools initiative to enable students to continue to learn about the effects of climate change and how to tackle the problem including \$20 million over 10 years to assist both government and non-government schools become carbon neutral by 2017;
- (h) investment of an extra \$2.378 million in quality teaching under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (i) investment of an extra \$421 000 for teacher leadership under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (j) amalgamation of all ACT pre-schools with public primary schools to deliver on the Government's commitment to early childhood education and give young Canberrans the best start in life;
- (k) increase in pre-school hours to 12 hours per week;
- (l) development of 4 new early childhood schools catering for children from preschool through to year 2 in Lyons, Narrabundah, Isabella Plains and Belconnen;
- (m) investment of \$3.3 million to improve indigenous education outcomes and targeted assistance for year 4 Indigenous students to meet national benchmarks in literacy and numeracy;
- (n) investment of an extra \$977 000 in literacy and numeracy support for students under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (o) investment of an extra \$802 000 to support students at risk of dropping out of school under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (p) investment of an extra \$402 000 to support teachers to help disadvantaged students and the investment of an extra \$1.612 million to support students with a disability under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (q) investment of more than \$1.2 million to revitalise physical education and the \$250 000 investment in the Children's Physical Activity Challenge;
- (r) \$300 000 extra investment in languages education;
- (s) investment of \$27.7 million to ensure state of the art IT in classrooms and broadband connection;
- (t) investment of \$14.6 million in student support services/pastoral care in every high school;
- (u) \$10 million investment in performing arts centres for Calwell and Lyneham High Schools and \$250 000 for additional musical instruments for schools;

- (v) investment in and extension of the Secondary Student Bursary fund to support financially disadvantaged families with students in years 7 to 10;
- (w) development of the ACT College Business Plan 2007-2009 which focuses on further improving teaching and learning and ensuring there are pathways for all students in colleges in their journey through the post compulsory years of education;
- (x) partnership with the Australian National University (ANU) to further develop the ANU Secondary College through an additional \$607 000 for this facility in the 2008-2009 Budget;
- (y) expanded Australian School-Based Apprenticeships enabling students to gain educational and work experience within the ACT Public Service; and
- (z) establishment of the CIT's Vocational College delivering education options and pathways to people of all ages, offering essential skills and job training for around 3000 youth, mature-age and migrant students each year and strengthening career training pathways for students in years 10 to 12 through CIT.'."

Debate continued.

Paper: Dr Foskey, by leave, presented the following paper:

Smaller class sizes—*Do smaller classes make a difference and is it cost effective?* by Trevor Cobbold, Spokesman for Save Our Schools, dated 27 July 2008.

Debate continued.

Debate interrupted in accordance with standing order 74 and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a later hour this day.

6 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

7 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE NOS. 2003, 2082, 2117, 2121—ANSWERS—EXPLANATIONS

Dr Foskey, pursuant to standing order 118A, asked Mr Corbell (Attorney-General) for explanations concerning the answers to questions on notice Nos. 2003, 2082, 2117 and 2121.

Mr Corbell gave explanations.

8 MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—DISCUSSION—GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT—IMPORTANCE IN BUILDING A BETTER CITY AND STRONGER COMMUNITY

The Assembly was informed that Mrs Burke, Dr Foskey, Mr Gentleman, Ms Porter, Mr Pratt, Mr Seselja (Leader of the Opposition), Mr Smyth and Mr Stefaniak had proposed that matters of public importance be submitted to the Assembly for discussion. In accordance with the provisions of standing order 79, the Speaker had determined that the matter proposed by Ms Porter be submitted to the Assembly, namely, "The importance of Government investment in building a better city and a stronger community for all Canberrans".

Discussion ensued.

The time for discussion having expired—

Discussion concluded.

9 CLASS SIZES AND TEACHER RECRUITMENT—GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Seselja (Leader of the Opposition), and on the amendments moved by Mr Barr (Minister for Education and Training) (*see entry 5*)—

Debate resumed.

Question—That the amendments be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8		NOES, 7	
Mr Barr	Mr Gentleman	Mrs Dunne	Mr Seselja
Mr Berry	Mr Hargreaves	Dr Foskey	Mr Smyth
Mr Corbell	Ms Porter	Mr Mulcahy	Mr Stefaniak
Ms Gallagher	Mr Stanhope	Mr Pratt	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes the positive benefits of small class sizes on educational outcomes especially in early childhood;
- (2) condemns the ACT Liberals for failing to accurately cost their recent commitments; and
- (3) welcomes the Stanhope Government’s:
 - (a) reduction of class sizes in the most critical years of kindergarten to year 3 to 21 students based on a body of international research;
 - (b) increased funding for education of more than 40 per cent since being elected in 2001;
 - (c) investment of over \$350 million in building new public schools where they are most needed and in upgrading every other ACT public school;
 - (d) development of the new curriculum framework *Every Chance to Learn* for ACT schools from preschool to year 10 and the investment of \$2 million for curriculum renewal to ensure all students and teachers can access up to date and relevant curriculum;
 - (e) development of new policy in the areas of national testing, early childhood education, ICT, safe schools framework, countering bullying, harassment and violence, restorative justice programs and countering racism;
 - (f) consultation on and investment in the development of a Schools Standards Authority;

- (g) investment in the Green Schools initiative to enable students to continue to learn about the effects of climate change and how to tackle the problem including \$20 million over 10 years to assist both government and non-government schools become carbon neutral by 2017;
- (h) investment of an extra \$2.378 million in quality teaching under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (i) investment of an extra \$421 000 for teacher leadership under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (j) amalgamation of all ACT pre-schools with public primary schools to deliver on the Government's commitment to early childhood education and give young Canberrans the best start in life;
- (k) increase in pre-school hours to 12 hours per week;
- (l) development of 4 new early childhood schools catering for children from preschool through to year 2 in Lyons, Narrabundah, Isabella Plains and Belconnen;
- (m) investment of \$3.3 million to improve indigenous education outcomes and targeted assistance for year 4 Indigenous students to meet national benchmarks in literacy and numeracy;
- (n) investment of an extra \$977 000 in literacy and numeracy support for students under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (o) investment of an extra \$802 000 to support students at risk of dropping out of school under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (p) investment of an extra \$402 000 to support teachers to help disadvantaged students and the investment of an extra \$1.612 million to support students with a disability under the 2008-2009 ACT Budget;
- (q) investment of more than \$1.2 million to revitalise physical education and the \$250 000 investment in the Children's Physical Activity Challenge;
- (r) \$300 000 extra investment in languages education;
- (s) investment of \$27.7 million to ensure state of the art IT in classrooms and broadband connection;
- (t) investment of \$14.6 million in student support services/pastoral care in every high school;
- (u) \$10 million investment in performing arts centres for Calwell and Lyneham High Schools and \$250 000 for additional musical instruments for schools;
- (v) investment in and extension of the Secondary Student Bursary fund to support financially disadvantaged families with students in years 7 to 10;
- (w) development of the ACT College Business Plan 2007-2009 which focuses on further improving teaching and learning and ensuring there are pathways for all students in colleges in their journey through the post compulsory years of education;
- (x) partnership with the Australian National University (ANU) to further develop the ANU Secondary College through an additional \$607 000 for this facility in the 2008-2009 Budget;

- (y) expanded Australian School-Based Apprenticeships enabling students to gain educational and work experience within the ACT Public Service; and
- (z) establishment of the CIT's Vocational College delivering education options and pathways to people of all ages, offering essential skills and job training for around 3000 youth, mature-age and migrant students each year and strengthening career training pathways for students in years 10 to 12 through CIT."—

be agreed to—put.

The bells being rung—

Suspension of sitting—Fire alarm bells: The Deputy Speaker, at 5.20 p.m., suspended the sitting due to a fire alarm and announced that the Chair would be resumed at the ringing of the bells.

Resumption of sitting: The bells having been rung, the Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair at 5.24 p.m.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8		NOES, 7	
Mr Barr	Mr Gentleman	Mrs Dunne	Mr Seselja
Mr Berry	Mr Hargreaves	Dr Foskey	Mr Smyth
Mr Corbell	Ms Porter	Mr Mulcahy	Mr Stefaniak
Ms Gallagher	Mr Stanhope	Mr Pratt	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

10 SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR THE A.C.T.'S AGEING POPULATION

Ms Porter, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly notes the importance of social inclusion for the ACT's ageing population.

Debate ensued.

Dr Foskey addressing the Assembly—

Debate interrupted in accordance with standing order 34 and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

11 ADJOURNMENT

It being 6 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Papers: Dr Foskey, by leave, presented the following papers:

Civil Partnerships Amendment Bill 2008—Explanatory statement.

Waste Minimisation (Container Recovery) Amendment Bill 2008—Explanatory statement.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 6.15 p.m., adjourned until tomorrow at 10.30 a.m.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting, except Ms MacDonald*.

*on leave

Tom Duncan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly