

David O'BYRNE

Independent for Franklin

Margaret Reynolds
U3A Class Coordinator – *Getting to know your State Parliament*
Via email: margaret.reynolds.tas@gmail.com

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Dear U3A class,

Thank you for visiting the Tasmanian Parliament on Wednesday 22 May and for taking a strong interest in our state's political system. It is fantastic to see people of all ages engage with our democracy and I hope you enjoyed your visit.

I read the policy ideas and initiatives you kindly provided regarding lifting public education outcomes with great interest. From the outset, I can say that I strongly support or support in-principle these recommendations.

Just as you have identified, raising the status of the hardworking teachers in our public education system should be a core priority of this Government. Teachers across Tasmania's public schools go above and beyond to give Tasmanian kids the best education they can, within an education system that is often under resourced and under supported. Our public education system must be able to attract and retain the next generation of bright, dedicated teachers for our schools to be the best they can be. Lifting the salaries of teachers in line with other states and territories is a key part of this.

I recognise the intent behind your suggestion to raise ATAR entry scores for teaching degrees, but I feel this may end up deterring prospective teachers with diverse backgrounds and experiences from taking up the profession. I think we should be encouraging people in different careers to consider switching into teaching, by evaluating the skills and experience of candidates rather than previous academic achievements alone.

I wholeheartedly agree with you that music lessons and physical activity should be a key part of the educational curriculum. Sport and music provide valuable transferrable skills and interests that students can end up carrying with them their whole life. Physical activity is incredibly important to support the health of students in our public schools too.

Providing quality public education across Tasmania plays a key part of reducing intergenerational disadvantage. I firmly believe that no Tasmanian child should miss out on a quality education because their family can't afford an independent or catholic school. Whilst teachers and support staff across the state's public schools do a fantastic job with the limited resources they have, a proper investment in public education is needed to ensure our schools can be the best they can be.

Thank you again for visiting Parliament and for sending through these well-considered policy initiatives. I hope you can visit Parliament again soon.

Kind regards,



David O'Byrne MP
Independent Member for Franklin