**QUEENSLAND SUCCESS LEADS SENSIBLE STEPS BACK TO SCHOOL**

Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk has announced the steps allowing Queensland children to return to school.

The Premier said a sensible, gradual return is only possible because of Queensland’s success in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

“Compare what has happened in this state to what has happened in other parts of the world and Queensland can be very proud,” the Premier said.

“It’s only because of these good results we are able to once again lead the progress on the road to recovery.”

The steps to full resumption of school are:

* May 11: Kindy, Prep, Year 1 and Years 11 and 12 return to school
* May 15: Assess state-wide response to easing of restrictions
* May 25: Proposed re-opening to remaining students in remaining grades

“These are the children who are at the most important junctures of schooling – the beginning and the end of their educational journey,” the Premier said.

The stages to full school resumption are consistent with Queensland’s measured approach to confronting COVID-19 and balancing family needs with protecting lives during the global pandemic.

Chief Health Officer Dr Jeanette Young said Queensland’s early response to confronting the pandemic was paying dividends now.

“You only have to look at what we were dealing with prior to the school holidays with what we have now to appreciate why Queensland is in the strong position it is,” Dr Young said.

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| MARCH  Active cases xxxxx  Rate of infection xxxxx  Tests done xxxxx | MAY  Active cases xxxx  Rate of infection xxxx  Tests done xxxxx |

Education Minister Grace Grace said the government’s plan has been endorsed by the independent and Catholic school sector as well as principals and teachers alike.

“Most of all, we have listened to Queensland parents who have done such an incredible job for their children supporting them through home learning,” the Minister said.

“I think we all appreciate our teachers and school staff like never before.

“And their health and safety remains paramount.

“When students begin to return to school, our schools remain safe and hygienic environments for the teachers and staff who will be in the workplace.”

Social distancing measures to protect adults at schools will include:

* staff and students who are unwell must not attend school
* all adults must maintain social distancing of 1.5 metres
* adults must not gather in groups in and around school grounds, car parks, school gates and outside classrooms
* Parents should use stop, drop and go options rather than walking children into school grounds
* strict personal hygiene protocols, including the cleaning of high touch surfaces such as desks and door handles, will remain in place.

The Premier said no-one is forgetting we are still in the midst of a global pandemic.

“Thankfully Queensland has done better than most and that’s something we can all be proud of.”