

BALLAJURA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Statement by Member for Ballajura

MR J.B. D'ORAZIO (Ballajura) [12.51 pm]: A school and its community having high expectations for student achievement and behaviour can result in some exciting outcomes, as is witnessed in one of the schools in my electorate. Ballajura Community College comprises a student population of 1 950 students. The student population is drawn from 48 different nationalities and encompasses 13 religious backgrounds. Staff and the school's leadership have negotiated with the community agreed desired outcomes for academic excellence and rigour and the type of safe and inclusive learning environment they want for students. On a recent visit to the college, I was able to see first-hand the effect of some of these outcomes, such as every student dressed in school uniform. All students in the classrooms that I visited were seen to be engaging directly in their learning and the level of self-discipline and class participation was extraordinary. The discipline and behaviour of the students was exceptional. It was obvious that the students take great pride in themselves.

When walking through the school grounds, it was amazing to see the cleanliness and presentation of the school premises. There was no graffiti and the facilities were in magnificent condition. The student-negotiated outcomes have resulted in a significant reduction in damage and graffiti, which was previously caused by inappropriate in-school behaviour. The savings in school funds previously used to rectify the damage and remove graffiti has been significant. In agreement with the students, the funds are now used to enhance the students' learning environment. More than \$50 000 was used in this manner in 2003. In addition, school data indicates a significant reduction of inappropriate behaviour in class and in the school grounds.

Ballajura Community College staff believe very strongly that values are "caught, not taught". Through leadership and staff modelling values in the classrooms, and across and within the college community, they are setting desired examples of behaviour, attitudes to learning and a commitment to excellence and learning.

On behalf of the whole community of Ballajura, I thank the principal, Dr Steffan Silcox, the deputy principals and all staff and, especially, the students at Ballajura Committee College for creating such a fantastic learning and teaching environment.