

Record Education Budget – Putting Territory Kids First

Better education standards are a key priority of the Martin Government. To keep the Territory moving ahead, we need to ensure young Territorians get the best possible education.

Budget 2004 contains record funding for education, which will see more support and resources provided to students and teachers, and the continued improvement of infrastructure in our schools.

Budget 04 delivers a \$10.3 million boost for education, with \$540.6 million for 2004-05, up from \$530.3 million last year.

More resources – better educational outcomes

Improving educational results is critical to the future of the Territory – the Budget contains more resources for targeted programs that improve student outcomes and literacy levels.

These funding boosts include:

- \$1.25 million extra to extend the Accelerated Literacy Program to a further 10 schools initially – a program achieving record improvements in literacy levels.
- \$2 million extra for better information technology services at schools including more computers and internet services.
- \$250 000 to boost internet bandwidth to improve distance education program delivery.
- A \$500 000 increase for non-government schools Capital and Interest Subsidy Scheme.
- \$250 000 extra to increase support for students with disabilities.

Record upgrade of education infrastructure

Budget 2004 builds upon the multi-million dollar upgrade to education infrastructure begun in the 2003 budget. New initiatives this year include:

- \$4 million in minor new works for schools across the Territory.
- \$1 million for the stage one redevelopment of Alawa Primary School.
- \$1 million for the stage one redevelopment of Nakara Primary School.
- \$2 million for upgrades of remote schools.
- \$250 000 to complete the stage two upgrade of airconditioning at Gillen Primary School.
- \$220 000 for a lift for disabled access at Casuarina Senior College.



More funding for school equipment

- \$500 000 extra for schools equipment, on top of \$1 million announced in February 2004.

This funding boost is targeted to tackle the long term backlog of need in this area.

A better deal and more resources for teachers

Budget 2004 delivers more resources to teachers as well as improved working and living conditions – making the Territory a more attractive place to live and teach.

- \$4.9 million over four years to provide laptops for the 2 200 classroom-based teachers working in Government schools.
- \$750 000 extra for furniture for teacher housing, on top of \$1 million announced in February 04.
- \$2.9 million to recruit an additional 40 teachers, delivering on the Martin Government's election commitment to employ an extra 100 teachers in its first term.
- 11 of these new teachers will be allocated to specialist behaviour management programs to boost resources helping teachers manage day to day in the classroom.
- \$1.2 million in 2003-04 and \$2.6 million ongoing from 2005-06 for the continued employment of Aboriginal Islander Education Workers in urban schools, after a cut in Commonwealth funding.
- Additional \$270 000 to a total of \$760 000 to provide Student Teacher Bursaries to 80 teaching students from the Territory attending Charles Darwin University and other accredited NT training institutions.
- \$285 000 towards establishment of a Teacher Registration Board.
- Establishment of a Teacher Support Unit in the Barkly region to improve the standard of support and service to remote teachers.
- Continuing enhancement of teacher recruitment strategies and professional development opportunities.

A new school grants program for urgent needs

- \$300 000 will be spent on the first ever school grants program designed to fund purchases of equipment, books and other resources – lifting the burden off school-based fundraising.
- Grants of up to \$5 000 will be available to school communities to purchase items that would previously have gone unfunded.