



Northern Territory

BUDGET 2004

Moving the Territory ahead... **less tax, more jobs, great lifestyle**

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Syd Stirling

Minister for Employment, Education & Training

18 May 2004

HIGHEST EDUCATION BUDGET - PUTS TERRITORY KIDS FIRST

Improved education standards remain a key priority for the Martin Government, with a record investment in education in Budget 2004.

Employment, Education and Training Minister Syd Stirling said the total Education Budget this year is a record \$540.6 million.

"The Government is committed to putting Territory kids first by equipping them with the knowledge, training and skills they need to get ahead in a rapidly changing world," Mr Stirling said.

"Improving education results is critical to the long-term future of the Territory and Budget 2004 continues Government efforts to address the learning needs of our young people.

MORE RESOURCES, BETTER EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Budget 2004 contains more resources for targeted programs that improve student outcomes and literacy levels. New initiatives include:

- \$1.25 million extra to extend the highly-successful Accelerated Literacy Program to a further 10 schools initially
- \$2 million extra for better information-technology services, including more computers and internet services
- \$250,000 to boost bandwidth for Interactive Distance Learning (IDL), to improve distance education delivery
- \$500,000 extra for ongoing capital and interest assistance to the non-Government school sector to expand and improve school infrastructure.
- \$250,000 more for increased support for students with disabilities

RECORD UPGRADE OF EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Budget 2004 continues an extensive expansion in capital works and infrastructure spending in education including:

- \$1 million for the Stage One redevelopment of Alawa Primary School
- \$1 million for the Stage One redevelopment of Nakara Primary School
- \$1 million for upgrades to Shepherdson College
- \$500,000 for Manyallaluk School
- \$500,000 for Emu Point School
- \$250,000 to complete the Stage Two upgrade of air conditioning at Gillen Primary School
- \$220,000 to construct a disabled access lift at Casuarina Senior College
- \$4 million in minor new works for schools across the Territory



MORE FUNDING FOR SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

Budget 2004 includes \$500,000 more for school equipment in addition to \$1 million announced in February this year. This funding boost aims to tackle the long-term backlog of need in this area.

A NEW SCHOOL GRANTS PROGRAM

- \$300,000 will be spent on the first-ever school grants program designed to fund the purchase of equipment, books and other resources, to reduce the burden on school-based fund raising.
- Grants of up to \$5000 will be available to school communities to purchase items that would previously have gone unfunded

“The Territory Government is committed to lifting education standards for our young people and improving their learning environment – Budget 2004 maintains that commitment,” Mr Stirling said.

