

SYD STIRLING**MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

3 May 2005

BUILDING BETTER SCHOOLS

Budget 2005 delivers a record \$582 million for Employment, Education and Training – an increase of 22% since 2001.

Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said Budget 2005 supported the Martin Government's ongoing initiatives in education to build better schools and provide more educational resources for students.

IMPROVING SECONDARY EDUCATION

Government is spending an extra \$42 million over four years to improve secondary education.

Funds will be focussed on:

- Providing qualified counsellors to each secondary school above staffing allocation
- Broadening course options, particularly in Vocational Education and Training
- Providing opportunities to teachers to access improved professional development, and share good teaching and learning practice
- Improving Indigenous education through increased face-to-face teaching and improved access to specialist teaching resources
- Establishing a leading edge Distance Education system including a new interactive distance learning unit at the Katherine School of the Air; and
- Building stronger school communities

BUILDING BETTER SCHOOLS

Budget 2005 continues a number of Government's ongoing education initiatives. More than \$37 million has been invested in these initiatives since 2001-2002 including:

- \$25.82 million for the ongoing employment of an extra 100 teachers above allocation
- \$2.09 million for the ongoing employment of eight School Attendance Officers
- \$3.4 million for Student Teacher Bursaries

The Government's focus on literacy continues in Budget 2005, with \$2 million ongoing for the Accelerated Literacy program. Over the next four years, the program is being rolled out to up to 100 schools and 10,000 students.

Around \$5 million is being invested over four years to provide lap top computers free to every classroom teacher, with \$1.57 million allocated in 2005-06.

A further \$2.56 million ongoing is being provided to employ Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers to assist with increasing indigenous enrolments and attendance, as well as literacy and numeracy teaching.

PROVIDING BETTER SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Budget 2005 continues the Martin Government's focus on improving education infrastructure with a close to \$50 million program including:

- \$23.95 million for new capital works
- \$6 million for minor new works
- \$19.5 million for repairs and maintenance

Highlights include:

- \$5.5 million for a secondary education facility and science block at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic College in Wadeye, as well as additional teachers, additional teacher housing and a VET program
- \$145,000 to extend school areas at Nightcliff High School
- an all-weather access and drop-off zone at Karama Primary School
- upgrades to remote schools, including \$2 million to replace Mamaruni School destroyed by Cyclone Ingrid, \$750,000 for Donyddji Homeland Centre; \$1 million for Maparru Homeland Centre; and \$750,000 for Gunbalanya Community Education Centre
- \$1.2 million to upgrade air conditioning at Ross Park Primary School over two years
- Capital assistance and / or interest subsidies to provide additional classrooms for Essington School, O'Loughlin College and St Johns College, and for land for Alice Springs Steiner School

MORE FUNDING FOR SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE

The Martin Government is continuing with its efforts to provide more resources for schools and teachers and to improve the learning environment.

Budget 2005 includes:

- \$500,000 extra for schools to purchase equipment – this brings to \$2 million the extra funding provided for school equipment since February 2004; and
- \$500,000 extra for furniture in teacher housing – this brings to \$2.25 million the extra funding for this program since February 2004.

“The Martin Government is backing Territory schools, teachers and students with more funding for teaching and education resources, school upgrades, and more classroom equipment,” Mr Stirling said.

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