



# ACT Government

## BUDGET 2006-2007

### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **\$90 MILLION SCHOOLS CAPITAL UPGRADE FUNDING - THE LARGEST INJECTION SINCE SELF-GOVERNMENT**

The Stanhope Government has provided the largest capital funding injection for schools since self-government with \$90 million provided over the next four years for school infrastructure upgrades.

Minister for Education and Training, Andrew Barr, said the funding comes as part of the Government's *Towards 2020: Renewing our Schools* initiative, which will see changes in the way education is delivered across the Territory.

"The ACT's public education system is among the best in the world but is operating under pressure as a result of changing demographics and community expectations," Mr Barr said.

"Across the country there has been a move away from public schools to the private sector and the ACT is not immune to this. Currently, there are almost 18,000 empty desks in the ACT's system.

"Our system needs reform if it is to continue to provide excellent educational outcomes and *Towards 2020: Renewing our Schools* delivers that reform.

"The \$90 million in capital upgrades funding will assist schools to undertake much needed upgrades of their infrastructure to ensure quality learning environments for students. Funding will be used for upgrades to specialist areas such as science and computer labs and kitchens as well as grounds improvements, improvements to student amenities and internal and external refurbishing."

Mr Barr said the Government has also allocated an extra \$3 million per annum from 2008-09 to maintain school infrastructure.

"Many of the ACT's public schools are 30 and 40 years old and age is certainly taking its toll on the façades as well as internal infrastructure," Mr Barr said.

"This funding will allow schools, many of which will be receiving an influx of new students from nearby schools as a result of the *Towards 2020: Renewing our Schools* project, to prepare for an increase in students and provide and maintain quality facilities."

"This funding comes on top of last year's Budget allocation of an additional \$8.3 million over four years for infrastructure upgrades and will be in addition to other capital works being undertaken, which include \$11.3 million in refurbishments to schools and pre-schools including health and safety improvements, \$2.3 million to complete a new gymnasium for Melrose High School and construction of two new schools," he said

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