



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

\$16.5 MILLION BOOST FOR CAPITAL WORKS IN SCHOOLS

The 2004-2005 Budget continues the Stanhope Government's high level of investment in school facilities.

"The Budget provides \$16.5 million dollars in new funding for capital works in our government schools," said Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services, Ms Katy Gallagher.

"The school communities of Melrose High, Belconnen High and Telopea Park School are major beneficiaries of this year's budget, while all students will benefit from the rebuilding of Birrigai Outdoor School."

"The \$16.5 million injection reflects the government's commitment to providing facilities which reflect the needs of students, and which make our schools safe and enjoyable places for students, staff and the community."

- Telopea Park School will receive \$1.5 million to upgrade their school library
- Melrose High School will get a new \$2.5 million gymnasium
- Belconnen High School gymnasium will receive a \$500,000 upgrade

"The Birrigai Outdoor School, which was tragically destroyed by the firestorm of January 2003, will benefit from a \$2.1 million grant to rebuild the school. Birrigai is an invaluable asset to Canberra's school students, teaching them the principals of ecological sustainability by focusing on science, Indigenous education, wetlands ecology and sustainable agriculture practices."

"Safety is another focus of this year's Budget with an additional \$1.9 million for safety facilities including access for people with disabilities, glazing, roof safety and soft fall material for our playgrounds."

"In preparing for the future, \$500,000 will be spent on a forward design for a preschool and primary school for Gungahlin East. The community of Gungahlin East deserve a state of the art school and the design process is the first step, as we prepare for another great school for the ACT," Ms Gallagher said.

An additional \$2.5 million has been allocated for older school refurbishments, a further \$1 million to upgrade ageing science labs, and \$3.2 million for minor new works. \$800,000 will be invested in transportable classrooms.

"Maintaining functional and attractive school buildings is an important part of creating conditions for effective teaching and learning. Our investment in school capital works reflects the value we place on education and the work of teachers and students" Ms Gallagher said.

Statement Ends.

