



Minister for Education  
with responsibility for:  
Schooling  
Vocational Training  
Children's Youth and Family Services  
Sport and Recreation

**Bill Stefaniak MLA**

Australian Capital Territory

**Budget 2000-01**  
Department of Education  
& Community Services

## **SCHOOLS ONLINE: MAJOR ACT BUDGET INITIATIVE**

Education Minister Bill Stefaniak has confirmed the ACT 2000-01 Budget includes a large funding injection to maintain the ACT Government's commitment to information technology facilities and networks in Canberra schools.

The Government will commit \$500,000 to increase students' and teachers' access to computer-age learning facilities.

"The Government will develop a Wide Area Network improvement plan, by working closely with TRANSACT to take full advantage of their groundbreaking technology," Mr Stefaniak said.

Mr Stefaniak said the TRANSACT project is set to revolutionise communications in the Canberra region, and schools were likely to gain enormous benefit from the improvements it would bring to information technology.

"There are rapid improvements in information and advanced technology, and there are exciting prospects for the delivery of hi-tech education services and programs. The Government is committed to improving student and teacher access to the currently existing Wide Area Network in schools.

"Planned improvements will allow more users to access the Network simultaneously, substantially decrease the time taken to transmit information, improve communication between schools and other institutions, and maximise schools' capacity to use streaming technology.

"This really is an exciting new development for teaching and learning in Canberra, and confirms the ACT Government remains committed to providing superior, state of the art technology in our schools."

Mr Stefaniak said there was a growing introduction of information technology into Canberra schools, and remains an area of high priority for the ACT Government. Currently:

- The number of computers in schools more than doubled in two years, from 3,300 in 1997 to 8,215 in 1999*
- All 2,800 full time teachers have access to a pentium computer – at no cost to schools*
- Over 6,900 hours of training were provided to almost 2,000 teachers in 1999*
- Year 10 IT Competency tests are being trialed in ACT schools in 2000*
- 100% of Canberra schools are 'online', accessing the internet through the wide area network or dial-in access*

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Embargoed until:

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