



ACT Government

BUDGET 2007-2008

Taking the Territory forward

MEDIA RELEASE

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CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN EVERY ACT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Minister for Education and Training Andrew Barr today said the 2007-08 Budget provided record levels of capital investment in ACT public schools.

Mr Barr announced that in total, from July 2006 to June 2011, over \$350 million would be invested in the infrastructure of ACT public schools. The 2006-07 Budget announced record levels of capital investment for ACT public school infrastructure, including:

- the School Infrastructure Renewal program - \$90 million over 4 years
- Gungahlin East Primary School - \$21 million
- the *Smart Schools: Smart Students* IT initiative - \$20 million over 4 years
- West Belconnen preschool-to-year 10 school - \$45 million
- Gungahlin College feasibility study and forward design - \$1 million, and
- an increase in funding for repairs and maintenance - \$3 million per annum from 2008-09.

“The 2007-08 Budget continues and extends these initiatives, with additional funding of \$60.7 million provided to fund the construction of a new senior secondary college in Gungahlin to open in 2010, and an additional \$50 million provided to construct a new preschool to year 10 school in Tuggeranong, to open in 2011,” Mr Barr said. “This funding is over and above the ACT Government’s ongoing capital upgrades program of more than \$11 million per annum.”

Mr Barr said \$28 million of the Government’s record \$90 million injection announced last year would be spent as part of the 2007-08 Budget.

“This significant commitment is intended to ensure that ACT students have access to consistently high-quality learning environments. Already, significant improvements can be seen at schools such as Chapman and Aranda primary schools, Stromlo, Calwell and Belconnen high schools, as well as Cranleigh Special School and Telopea Park School. Every ACT public school over the next four years will benefit from some of these additional funds to upgrade facilities,” he said.

“Over the next three years we will see specific improvements to public schools including:

- older school upgrades of all schools more than 12 years old not yet upgraded;
- the creation of four P-2 early childhood schools at Isabella Plains, Narrabundah, Lyons and Southern Cross Primary Schools to open in 2009;
- upgrades of all preschools;
- the construction of gymnasiums at Belconnen and Stromlo High Schools – thereby providing a gym at every public high school;

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- the construction of a new performing arts complex at Lyneham High School to support the thriving performing arts program at the school. The performing arts centre will become the premier performing arts complex for schools within the district; and
- support for a range of sustainability initiatives across 10 secondary schools designed to reduce energy usage, greenhouse gas emissions and water usage.

“All new schools and upgrades will have an increasing focus on sustainability, with a component of the School Infrastructure Funding devoted specifically to improving the environmental efficiency of our schools. New schools will incorporate features such as solar passive design, water tanks and solar heating,” said Mr Barr.

The 2007-08 Budget continues the Government’s \$20 million investment in the renewal of public school IT infrastructure. Work has commenced in 2006-07 on the *Smart Schools: Smart Students* initiative, which will enable students to capitalise on state-of-the-art internet access and the very latest technology.

“Over the coming months, all ACT public schools will be connected to significantly increased bandwidth, which will provide reliable, super-fast connection to the internet, and place ACT schools at the leading edge of bandwidth provision, both nationally and internationally,” Mr Barr said.

“The next phase will introduce projects such as video conferencing, podcasting, datacasting, a portal for parents to access their child’s work online and online access of Year 12 grades for senior students. An online library system, and a multimedia and innovation centre will be also provided.

“The Stanhope Government will continue to provide our community with exciting, cutting-edge education and training pathways for all students. With these initiatives we will provide a significantly positive impact on the delivery of education and training opportunities for Canberrans.”

Mr Barr said the Australian Government committed \$4.6 million (indexed) each year through the Australian Government’s Capital Grants program, which formed part of this \$350 million.