



ACT Government

Providing more opportunities for non-government schools

Embargoed until 1 May 2001

Minister for Education, Bill Stefaniak, said today that non-government schools will benefit in several important facets of their operations following the announcement of the 2001-02 ACT Government Budget.

Provisions in the budget for non-government schools include:

- ❖ Early Childhood support for non-government schools
- ❖ Interest Subsidy Scheme Development
- ❖ Per Capita Grant increase for non-government schools
- ❖ Common assessment process for literacy and numeracy

Non-government schools in the ACT will receive funding to support **Early Childhood** development.

The ACT Government has committed more than \$1.242 million over four years to this initiative with \$82,000 to be spent in 2001-02, rising to \$500,000 in 2004-05.

The initiative provides additional per capita funding to non-government schools for Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 in recognition of the importance of the early years of schooling.

The Early Childhood Support for non-government schools will support better educational outcomes and will assist non-Government schools to target assistance to lower primary students.

The expansion of the **Interest Subsidy Scheme** addresses the increasing demand on the current Interest Subsidy Scheme, which provides payments for interest payments made on loans associated with capital improvements to non-government schools, up to a maximum limit of 10%.

The ACT Government has allocated \$300,000 to the Interest Subsidy Scheme Development for 2001-02, \$307,000 for 2002-03, \$314,000 for 2003-04 and \$321,000 for 2004-05.

This initiative assists non-government schools with their capital works program to provide and maintain suitable facilities.

The ACT Government has also committed more than \$1 million over four years, with \$250,000 in 2001-02, to increase the **Per Capita Grant** for non-government schools.

ACT Budget 2001-02

These funds are paid to schools based on student enrolment numbers and the funding category of the school. The purpose of the grant is to assist schools with the recurrent costs of education delivery.

These increases are in addition to \$4 million extra provided for in the 1998 Budget to the per capita grants for non-government schools.

The ACT Government is also providing funding to allow the non-government sector to participate in the *Common Assessment Process for Literacy and Numeracy* for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students, as presently operates in government schools.

The initiative supports the assessment of Years 3 and 5 in 2001, expanding to Years 7 and 9 in 2002 and subsequent years.

The ACT Government Budget has allocated \$120,000 for 2001-02 to the Assessment Program with ongoing funding of \$250,000 for 2002-03, \$256,000 for 2003-04 and \$263,000 for 2004-05.

The initiative will ensure that parents and teachers receive important information about their children/students performance. It will also assist with the provision of required ACT wide results to the Commonwealth and enable the ACT to report on a single set of testing procedures.

Mr Stefaniak said that all of these initiatives supported the Government's plan to maintain and develop a clever, caring Capital.

"The programs announced for non-government schools today combined with initiatives like free school buses for all students and the new youth framework ensures that all students in the ACT receive a quality education with a strong support network.

"These initiatives aim to maintain a healthy, safe, diverse and contributing community in the ACT.

"The ACT has an excellent record of educational achievements and funding, and the 2001-02 budget ensures that standards will remain at a high level well into the future," he said.

Statement ends

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