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*Minister for Education
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2003-04 Budget

– Excellence for All

The Bracks Government will invest more than \$285 million over the next four years to fund an extra 700 teachers and staff in our schools, enhance language studies and boost training options.

The budget also provides a substantial investment of \$137 million in building new schools and modernising facilities to provide better learning opportunities for young Victorians.

The funding is part of a four-year education and training package announced as part of the 2003-2004 State Budget.

Since 1999, the Bracks Government has met major challenges in rebuilding and reinvesting in our education and training system.

The increased funding in the 2003-2004 Budget builds on the additional \$2.75 billion we have invested in Victoria's education and training system since 1999.

We are delivering on our commitments and building on our record of achievement.

This budget furthers our commitment to building better schools, providing an excellent education for all students and enabling Victorians to gain new knowledge and skills throughout their lives.

The 2003-2004 Budget continues the Bracks Government's record of strategic, targeted investment to produce better education outcomes for all Victorians.

The current Budget is geared towards ensuring access to the best education for all students and providing excellent curriculum and programs in all government schools.

A key part of this is providing schools with the resources to encourage innovative teaching – such as the investment in 450 additional teachers over four years and new specialist facilities.

This budget builds on the Bracks Government's achievements in post compulsory education – with further investment in providing a wider range of study and training options, and supporting students' transition from school through further education and training to the workforce.

It also targets the education and training needs of adults, such as parents returning to the workforce and workers who have been made redundant.

Our investment in our education and training system is an investment in a better future for all Victorians.



LYNNE KOSKY
Minister for Education and Training



JACINTA ALLAN
Minister for Education Services

IMPROVING EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN VICTORIA

The 2003-2004 Budget is a major step in delivering the Bracks Government's goals and targets for education and training.

The extra \$2.75 billion the Bracks Government has invested in education and training since 1999 has reaped significant dividends.

Victoria's government schools now boast better buildings and facilities and dramatically smaller class sizes in primary schools.

An extra 4000 teachers and staff are now employed in our schools, and we have introduced groundbreaking programs to meet individual needs and improve outcomes for all students.

School retention rates have continued to rise, and the performance of Years 3 and 5 students since 1999 is above national literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

Following the 2003-2004 Budget, our next step is to ensure that Victoria provides access to the best education for all students, and that the education system fosters a culture of innovation which ensures all government schools aim for excellence.

The 2003-2004 Budget funds new initiatives to further improve student outcomes.

In primary schools, **256 new student welfare officer** positions will be funded over the next four years to provide a secure and supportive environment for student learning.

In secondary schools, funding for **an extra 450 teachers** will be provided and new facilities built to help develop a public education system which offers all students breadth and depth of curriculum choice and the chance to excel.

In the post compulsory years, it focuses on providing programs which will help Victorians make education and training choices for their future aspirations. And in a move to encourage higher completion rates for apprentices and trainees, the Government has announced an employers' completion bonus (\$51.4 million over four years).

The 2003-2004 Budget builds on the reforms and achievements of the past three-and-a-half years, and continues the Bracks Government's drive to ensure that all Victorians have access to an excellent education.

Budget highlights >> NEW SCHOOLS AND BETTER FACILITIES

\$137 million for building programs at 58 Victorian schools and to upgrade TAFE equipment, which includes:

- \$52 million to upgrade facilities at 38 schools.
- \$38.1 million for new primary and secondary school facilities in eight locations.
- \$5.1 million for the replacement of three schools.
- \$12 million to reinstate four schools destroyed or damaged by fire.
- \$10 million to develop specialist facilities in secondary schools.
- \$12 million to replace and upgrade obsolete equipment at TAFE Institutes. The funding will be used to modernise specialised training equipment in priority industry training areas.
- \$2 million for planning and development work for new asset initiatives and future capital works programs.
- \$5.5 million for the Maryborough and Gippsland Education Precinct developments.
- \$500,000 for joint developments with local government and other education sectors to build new school facilities to be used by the community. This program aims to boost community access to school facilities, including libraries, computer laboratories and sporting facilities.

TARGETS



>> By 2005, Victoria will be at or above national benchmark levels for reading, writing and numeracy as they apply to primary students.

>> By 2010, 90 per cent of young people in Victoria will successfully complete Year 12 or its equivalent.

>> By 2005, young people aged 15-19 in rural and regional Victoria engaged in education and training will increase by 6 per cent.



EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

- **\$82 million over four years to employ an additional 450 secondary school teachers to support specialisation and excellence in secondary schools.**

The new teachers and facilities will support the establishment of innovative specialist programs in secondary schools.

- **\$49.5 million over four years to fund 256 primary school welfare officer positions, which will be allocated according to school population and need.**

The welfare officers will help create more secure and supportive learning environments and provide individual support for students who need it.

This extra support will help students deal with issues that can impact on their performance and attendance at school, and help them focus on their schoolwork.

- **\$6 million over four years for excellence in language education.**

The increased investment will provide better quality programs and increased choice and access to language studies for metropolitan and regional students.

It will fund the establishment of three Centres of Excellence in Languages in secondary schools and five Victorian School of Languages centres in regional Victoria; the development of online teaching materials for middle years students; and increased per capita grants for after-hours ethnic schools.

- **\$2.3 million over four years to develop and deliver professional development programs for school principals.**

The programs will focus on educational leadership, school improvement and accountability.

- **\$62 million over four years to support needy non-government schools.**

Needy non-government schools, including multicultural community schools, will receive extra funds to meet the rising operational and administrative costs caused by wage rises and other price increases.

- **\$8 million over four years for Internet access in non-government schools connected to the VicONE network.**

Non-government schools, including multicultural schools, connected to VicONE will receive funding for their Internet access costs. This will boost their ability to implement multimedia teaching and learning programs and share information with other schools.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- **\$4.8 million over four years for the *On Track* program.**

On Track will ensure that Year 10–12 government and non government students are followed up after leaving school.

Those young people who are not in further education and training or full-time employment will be offered further support.

Data from *On Track* will be used to provide a comprehensive picture of what happens to young people when they leave school. This will help the Government and local communities to better plan programs and services for students in the post compulsory years.

- **A \$3.5 million boost over four years for VET in Schools.**

The additional funding is for VET in government schools and will be split evenly to meet increased demand from students and recognise the higher costs involved in running the program in some schools.

- **\$11 million over four years to fund a Parents Returning to Work program.**

This program will target parents who are seeking to return to work after a minimum of two years out of the workforce because of child-rearing responsibilities.

Grants of \$1000 per person would include funds for approved training at a TAFE Institute or other registered training organisation; approved training at an adult

education centre or neighbourhood house; part payment of first year Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) fees at a university course; or the cost of childcare while taking part in training.

- **\$5 million over four years for *Skill Up*.**

Skill Up is a rapid-response retraining program for workers who have been made redundant as a result of a major industry downturn or workplace closure.

Registered training organisations will receive funding to provide vocational and industry-recognised training which will improve redundant workers' employment prospects.

- **\$51.4 million over four years to increase completion rates among young apprentices and trainees.**

The completion bonus is a significant incentive for employers to support their trainees and apprentices while also ensuring that young people undergoing traineeships and apprenticeships are getting the best possible outcome.

