



State Budget 2005

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FROM THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION SERVICES

Tuesday May 3, 2005

HI TECH FIBRE OPTIC BROADBAND BOOST FOR SCHOOLS

Every school in Victoria will be upgraded to high speed fibre-optic broadband under an **\$89 million** initiative that will make the Victorian Government education system a world leader.

The Minister for Education Services, Jacinta Allan, said the SmartONE initiative would give all Victorian Government schools the best broadband network of any Australian state and the best in the world.

“The Bracks Government was elected in 1999, and again in 2002 on a commitment to make education a number one priority,” Ms Allan said.

“We have been investing in the latest technology for schools to give all students, no matter where they live, the opportunities they need to get the best start in life.”

Ms Allan said within four years every Government school would be connected to four megabyte fibre optic bandwidth, the best possible broadband available in terms of capacity and speed.

“No other education system in the country has fibre optic technology connected to every school,” Ms Allan said.

“This \$89 million investment will open up a whole new world of learning, teaching and administrative efficiency to Victorian Government schools.

“Every school will be upgraded to the same standard, removing the inequality between regional and metropolitan schools, and all schools will be able to affordably increase their bandwidth capacity if they so choose.

“Schools will enjoy improved dial up and download speeds, faster internet, and easy access to the rapidly increasing range of online learning resources.

“Students will be able to learn in an environment where technology and digital tools increasingly available to them are supported by the best possible IT infrastructure at the school.

“They will spending less time waiting for information to download, and more time learning. The difference will be greatest for hundreds of schools in regional and rural Victoria, where in some cases the capacity will be up to 60 times greater,” she said.

Ms Allan said the initiative was made possible under the Government’s Telecommunications, Purchasing and Management Strategy (TPAMS) contract. About 700 Telstra exchanges across Victoria will be upgraded to fibre optic, helping not only students, but also local businesses, families and whole communities.

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