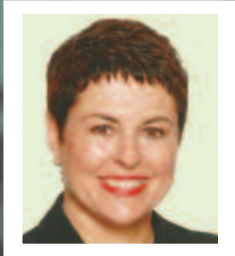


2005–06 Victorian Budget

Building Opportunity and Innovation



Education remains the Bracks Government's number one priority. We are committed to building a better future and giving children the start they need.

This Budget provides an additional \$867.5 million in funding, bringing total investment in education and training to \$5.23 billion since 1999.

We have committed \$315 million to a building and infrastructure improvement program in schools and TAFE.

Victorian students will again benefit from a Budget that is focused on delivering world-class education and training, with quality teaching, state-of-the-art facilities and high standards.

The Bracks Government is announcing a range of initiatives to maintain high literacy and numeracy standards and low class sizes, with emphasis on the primary school years where the foundations for learning are set.

This Government is committed to fairness for all Victorians and firmly believes all government school students are entitled to an excellent education and genuine opportunity to succeed.



This Budget continues the Bracks Government's commitment to building better schools with modern facilities and state-of-the-art information and communication technologies and infrastructure across Victoria.

An extra \$280.5 million has been committed to continue our massive schools construction program, including modernisation and new schools.

An exciting feature of this year's Budget is SmartONE, an \$89 million innovation that will revolutionise the Victorian government education system with the best broadband network of any state in Australia and one of the best in the world.

All government schools in Victoria will be upgraded to fibre-optic high-speed broadband under this four-year program.

For the first time in Australia, city and country schools will share the same high quality bandwidth. Some of the smallest and most remote schools will have their bandwidth capacity increased up to 60 times.

In this Budget, \$36.9 million will be provided over four years to help students overcome disadvantage and learn to their full potential.

The Bracks Government values the important role of Catholic and independent schools in Victoria. This Budget delivers fairer funding and a simpler funding model for students in non-government schools.

The Government's commitment to education has resulted in modern education and training facilities, new schools and smaller class sizes in Victoria.

This Budget continues our investment in training and skills development – \$43.3 million includes funding for more pre-apprenticeship places and the modernisation of facilities and teaching equipment in TAFE institutes.

The education budget continues the excellent work taking place in schools and TAFE to meet the community's expectations of a quality education and training system that ensures Victoria is the best place to raise a family.

Lynne Kosky
Minister for Education and Training

This initiative will open up a whole new world of learning, teaching and administrative improvement to Victorian government schools.

It builds on a school system where all our schools have just been made wireless and where 95 per cent of our teachers and principals now have notebook computers.

These initiatives will be greatly enhanced by the increased capacity of fibre-optic broadband.

We are very excited by this latest innovation as it will strengthen the opportunities already available for students and teachers to learn and teach in more innovative and collaborative ways with other students, educators and institutions.

This Budget continues our Government's program of providing students and teachers with state-of-the-art facilities in which innovative learning programs can thrive.

Jacinta Allan
Minister for Education Services

Budget Highlights



» New Schools and Improved Facilities

\$280.5 million building program to benefit Victorian schools, which includes:

- \$145.5 million for modernisation building projects at more than 50 schools
- \$94.1 million to construct or complete 16 new and replacement schools
- \$30.6 million to build specialist facilities through the leading schools fund and a rural learning centre
- \$10.3 million for assets to support better education and training which includes:
 - \$5.8 million to modernise buildings on the existing Moreland City College site to accommodate the Victorian Curriculum And Assessment Authority (VCAA) exam centre
 - \$4.5 million for the ongoing planning of future facilities.

» Class Sizes, Teachers and Student Retention

- \$93.4 million over four years to ensure Prep–2 class sizes remain low. This funding will enable schools to continue the Bracks Government's commitment to a statewide average class size of 21 for students in Prep–2 classes.
- \$43.5 million over four years in enrolment-based funding to respond to growth in the number of students in government schools. Funding is allocated over four years to take into account an increasing number of students in Years 10–12.
- \$42.9 million over four years to continue to support improved numeracy outcomes for students.
- \$36.9 million over four years to help needy students. Funding will be targeted to needy students to help them overcome disadvantage and provide them with increased educational opportunities.
- \$14.2 million over two years to continue the schools for innovation and excellence program. This program enables primary and secondary school clusters to work closely together to deliver innovation and excellence in the middle years of schooling and to work on high quality programs to improve literacy and numeracy skills and increase school attendance of students in Years 5–9.
- \$3 million in 2005–06 for teachers in Victorian schools to undertake professional development in the new essential learning standards.

» Non-government School Funding

The Bracks Government recognises the important contribution of Catholic and independent schools in Victoria. This budget provides a record funding boost to non-government schools including:

- **\$115 million over four years to help needy students in non-government schools meet targets around literacy, numeracy and retention.**
- **\$36.1 million over four years will be allocated to meet the growing enrolment costs of education and to enable the sector to better meet education targets.**

» Information Technology

\$96.3 million for broadband computer link – SmartONE and new computers for students:

- **under a new \$89.3 million four-year initiative, Victorian students and teachers will benefit by being connected to the high-speed, fibre-optic broadband system, SmartONE.**
 - all government schools will be upgraded to 4 megabits per second (mbps) of fibre optic bandwidth capacity within four years
 - all city and country government schools will share the same speed access
 - some of Victoria's smallest schools will have their bandwidth capacity increased by 60 times
- **\$7 million in funding has been allocated to assist schools to buy computers and other high-tech learning equipment.**

» Support for Skill Development in Victoria

\$43.3 million to enhance skills development in Victoria, which includes:

- **\$27.8 million for the continuing modernisation of TAFE facilities and equipment throughout Victoria.** The modernisation of facilities and equipment includes:
 - \$12 million to update TAFE teaching equipment
 - \$9 million to up-grade the Gordon Institute of TAFE at Geelong
 - \$3.75 million for the redevelopment of the Kangan Batman Institute of TAFE campus at Avondale heights
 - \$3 million for a project that includes a permanent facility for the Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES) at Noble Park.
- **\$12.5 million over four years to be invested in pre-apprenticeship training.** This funding will enable an additional 1600 pre-apprenticeship training places.
- **\$3 million over two years to enable lab.3000, a centre of excellence in digital design, to work with educators and industry to expand Victoria's digital design capacity.**



Budget Highlights

» Tackling Absenteeism

\$1.9 million over two years to spread the message: It's Not OK To Be Away From School

- The successful *It's Not OK To Be Away* campaign running in government schools in the Gippsland region will be rolled out to all government schools across the state.
- The program promotes the importance of regular school attendance and will include:
 - a tool kit for every school to help plan and deliver local school and community strategies to reduce absenteeism
 - grants to schools (or groups of schools) for school-based activities to reduce absenteeism
 - a website, posters and other information to parents, students and communities to highlight the importance of regular attendance at school; and
 - a statewide and local media campaign to promote an absenteeism awareness week, including schools sending letters to all parents.



Further copies of this kit are available from www.det.vic.gov.au

Alternatively, a limited number of hard copies are available by calling the Department of Education & Training's Information and Referral Service on 9637 2222.

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