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## **BUDGET DELIVERS FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

The Bracks Government will deliver **\$113 million** over four years to help students attending Victoria's non-government schools under a major 2007-08 State Budget education boost.

The Education Minister, John Lenders, said funding for needy non-government schools included capital works grants and funding to boost literacy, numeracy and retention rates.

"The 2007-08 State Budget delivers on the commitment we made to Victorians to invest in the services that matter to their families and ensure education remained our top priority," he said.

"The Bracks Government understands the importance of non-government schools in Victoria's education system, with about 35 per cent of students attending independent or Catholic schools.

"Many non-government schools have facilities which are outdated and inadequate for a 21<sup>st</sup> century education and it is difficult for many to replace them without government support.

"We said we would do more to support non-government schools, and we are delivering **\$30 million** in grants to needy non-government schools unable to upgrade their facilities.

"These schools will be eligible to apply for grants of up to \$350,000 for planning, construction, extension, renovation, relocation or upgrading of education facilities.

"Eligibility for the grants will be based on the needs of the student population, and we expect at least 300 non-government schools - about 40 per cent - will be eligible to apply."

Mr Lenders said the Bracks Government would continue its support for non-government schools by providing **\$83 million** over four years to support needy students.

"Victoria had the highest Year 12 or equivalent completion rate of any State in 2005, and our primary school literacy and numeracy rates are at, or above, the national benchmark," Mr Lenders said.

"We understand all students in need require support to meet the Government's numeracy literacy and retention targets and get the best possibly start for their futures."