REFORM TO CONTINUE IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

The Bracks Government is continuing to invest in programs to improve literacy, numeracy, retention and other educational outcomes for young Victorians.

$24.1 million over two years to continue the *Schools for Innovation and Excellence* program

Included in this year's Budget is funding for this successful program, which is improving literacy, numeracy, school attendance and retention for students in Years 5 to 9.

Internationally recognised for creative and high quality curriculum programs, *Schools for Innovation and Excellence* brings together clusters of primary and secondary schools to collaborate to improve student learning.

The $24.1 million allocated in this budget will:

- Continue the employment of the equivalent of 250 leading teachers to deliver programs to improve the performance of students in Years 5–9, particularly in the areas of mathematics and science;

- Allow experienced teachers to work with their colleagues to improve classroom teaching. These teachers will also build partnerships with experts and monitor student achievement.

$47.2 million to continue the successful *Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning* (VCAL)

The VCAL has been a huge success for Victorian students, improving their pathways to employment destinations and improving school retention rates. There are currently more than 12,000 students enrolled in the VCAL, which began with over 5,000 students in 2003.

The $47.2 million allocated in this budget will:

- Allow schools to continue employing the equivalent of 120 teachers to ensure the delivery of VCAL programs tailored to the needs of individual students; and

- Help VCAL teachers strengthen links between schools and industry to improve opportunities for students and also tailor VCAL programs to meet local and statewide skills shortages.