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Government Media Statement

DAVID BARTLETT

Premier, Minister for Education and Skills

\$1.164 billion investment in education and training

Successful partnership negotiations and agreements with the Australian Government have resulted in an investment of \$1.164 billion for Tasmania's education and training sector in this year's State Budget.

Premier and Minister for Education and Skills, David Bartlett, said this will mean that schools would get the "front-line" budget priority.

"We have already foreshadowed that we are directing our energy and expertise on supporting students and continuous school improvement.

"We will not shift our focus from this goal."

Mr Bartlett said that State Government was putting families first in committing more than \$76 million to fund up to 30 Child and Family centres state-wide.

"The first allocation of \$27.4 million in 2009-10 will support the establishment of eight centres at Beaconsfield, East Devonport, Queenstown, George Town, Ravenswood, Clarendon Vale, Chigwell and Risdon Cove," Mr Bartlett said.

"They will provide a range of integrated services that support families with the health, care and education needs of children from birth to school age, preparing them for a healthy life and success at school.

"The centres will build upon what already exists in those communities rather than duplicate services.

“They will be developed to suit the particular needs of each community in which they are located – it is not a ‘one size fits all’ approach and may use existing infrastructure such as schools or neighbourhood houses or be in new buildings,” he said.

Mr Bartlett said that in 2009-10, the Department of Education’s total Capital Investment budget will increase from its 2008-09 level of \$41.805 million to \$240.735 million.

“The State component increases from an original 2008-09 level of \$27.125 million to \$71.485 million, including \$27.44 million for Child and Family Centres.

“The Commonwealth’s funding increases from \$14.68 million to \$169.25 million, including \$151.3 million for Building the Education Revolution, \$2.5 million for Local Schools Working Together, \$2.53 million for the Child and Family Centre at Bridgewater and \$1.8 million for the Beaconsfield Early Learning and Care Centre,” he said.

“Partnerships with the Australian Government will benefit our early years, school and training sectors.

“For 2009-10 \$207.4 million will be provided to Tasmanian schools under the Australian Government’s *Building the Education Revolution*, \$151.3 million to government schools and \$56.1 million to non-government schools. A further \$133 million is scheduled to be received in 2010-11 to support the two sectors.

“The roll-out of the Digital Education Revolution will continue to provide new information and communication technology for secondary schools with students in Years 9 to 12 through an extra commitment of \$9.6 million in 2009-10.

“Funding of \$1.5 million for the Achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education will allow us to progressively provide all Tasmanian children with access to at least 15 hours of kindergarten by 2013.

“Smarter Schools national partnership agreements worth more than \$9 million will fund projects to improve teacher quality, promote effective teaching of literacy and numeracy and encourage improvements in low socio-economic status school communities.

“State Government funding in this year’s budget continues to provide resources to schools and communities where there is most need and builds on the success of existing strategies in the Government’s priority areas of the early years, literacy and numeracy and student retention.

Mr Bartlett said that there is also provision in this year’s budget for public liability insurance coverage for certain community groups using Department of Education (DoE) sporting and recreational facilities.

“The coverage will be provided on a two year trial basis at an estimated cost of approximately \$300,000 and will remove a previous barrier restricting community use of departmental facilities and will increase participation in sport and recreation activities leading to improved health, social and life skills outcomes,” he said.

Other Budget highlights include:

- **Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap** – \$8 million State Government funding plus an additional \$2 million from the Australian Government to continue targeted support to increase the number of children finishing primary school with functional literacy and numeracy skills.
- **Industry Network solutions** – Up to \$800,000 in 2009-10 to partner with industry in developing skills solutions that will provide a greater ability to respond to opportunities from an economic upturn.
- **Secondary School Renewal Program** – \$6 million including \$2 million in 2009-10 to modernise and improve the standard of facilities at secondary and district high schools.
- **Sustainability Learning Centre** – \$2.5 million in Australian Government funding for the construction of a sustainability and climate change education centre for Tasmanian schools and the community.
- **School Resourcing Review** – \$136,000 for a review of school resourcing to ensure financial and staffing allocations reflect student needs.
- **Kingston High School** – \$9.5 million for the third year of a four year, \$33 million capital investment project to construct a new Kingston High School.
- **Bridgewater and Southern Midlands Education Renewal project** – \$9.3 million for the second year of a four year, \$30

million investment to establish contemporary education facilities in the region as part of the Bridgewater and Southern Midlands renewal project.

- **Launching Into Learning** – An additional \$224,000 to bring the 2009-10 investment to \$4.3 million for the continuation of the program to support young children before they formally start school.
- **Learning Services Literacy Strategy** – \$3 million for learning services to support schools in literacy improvement.
- **Early Years Literacy** – \$220,000 to enhance learning opportunities for young people by providing books for parents to read to their children.
- **Reading Together** – \$100,000 for the continuation of the program to work with families to explore ways of developing the literacy skills of children.
- **Reducing Class Sizes from Years 2 to 7 – \$6.1 million.** An increase of \$1.7 million to the 2008-09 total allocation of \$4.4 million. Includes an additional \$1.1 million to continue the program to reduce class sizes to 25 students in all government primary schools and an additional \$581,000 targeted at reducing the pupil teacher ratio in Year 7 to below the national average.
- **Teacher Learning Centre – \$318,000.** A Teacher Learning Centre has been established at Rokeby High School as part of a partnership between the Department of Education and the University of Tasmania. The partnership aims to support pre-service teachers and improve professional development opportunities for all teachers through study supported by the university.
- **Tasmania Tomorrow** – \$4.3 million for the second year of a three year \$7.8 million allocation to improve and upgrade facilities transferred to the Tasmanian Polytechnic, the Tasmanian Academy and the Tasmanian Skills Institute.