

QLD Minister for Education and Training
The Honourable Geoff Wilson
Tuesday, June 08, 2010

A massive investment in education to give Queensland kids a flying start

The Bligh Government has delivered a \$9.5 billion education and training budget this year – a massive investment which means more kindergartens, sooner, and extra teachers and teacher's aides on the education frontline.

Education and Training Minister Geoff Wilson said the investment amounted to almost a quarter of the entire State Budget.

"We have a strong economic plan for the future which means we can invest more in giving Queensland kids a flying start in their education and skilling up the workforce of tomorrow," Mr Wilson said.

"The Bligh Government is building on the foundations for a stronger economic recovery, which is why investment in our kids has never been more important.

"Even when faced with tough economic conditions, education and training has been at the forefront of government investment.

"Now that the recovery is underway, now isn't the time to stop."

"We're delivering on our promises with more than 316 extra teachers and teacher aides this year.

"We will accelerate planning and delivery of 40 kindergarten services originally scheduled for 2013 and 2014, to open a total of 108 kindergarten services by 2012."

In February this year the Government released the Flying Start Green Paper to prepare the Queensland education system for the future.

"This budget has been designed to help deliver many of the proposals in this discussion paper, including our commitment to provide \$321 million over five years to fund up to 240 extra kindergarten services," Mr Wilson said.

"In 2010-11, we will open 12 kindergarten services on state school sites and partner the non-state sectors to open more services.

Key investment initiatives include:

- \$25.8 million will be allocated to the Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan in 2010-11 to build the reading, writing and numeracy skills of students, particularly in the primary school years.
- \$19.5 million will be provided under the second year of the \$43.5 million three-year Science Spark program to improve science teaching.
- \$14.1 million for an additional 5,000 teacher aide hours per week under the second year of the Government's \$43 million three-year commitment to an additional 15,000 hours a week of teacher aide time in primary schools

Mr Wilson said more than \$1.38 billion would go directly to school infrastructure improvements, TAFE redevelopments, early childhood infrastructure and new schools.

“Our building program will see \$207 million allocated to complete the five-year State Schools of Tomorrow program, delivering new and renewed facilities that support modern teaching methods at some of the older schools in the state.

“Additionally, \$135 million will assist in constructing two new schools at Springfield, relocate two schools, undertake staged work at six schools, buy land, and provide additional classrooms at existing schools in growth areas throughout the state.

“As part of the Queensland Government’s commitment to ‘Doing the Bright Thing’, \$8 million will assist in continuing the solar and energy efficiency program in schools.

“We will be using all relevant information available to us to ensure extra and specialist resources find their way to the children and schools that need it most.

“Parents should feel confident that their children have an education system that is dedicated to ensuring every child receives a flying start to life and no child is left behind.”

Mr Wilson added that training and addressing the re-emerging skills shortage would also be a key government priority.

“As we prepare for an economic recovery and the resources sector continues to grow there is going to be an increased need for skilled labour.

“That is why the Bligh Government will be investing \$1.39 billion to increase training and tertiary education opportunities for Queenslanders state-wide over the next twelve months.

“This will see the development of new course opportunities and specialist learning facilities especially in regions that have pre-identified skills needs.

“More than \$500 million will be invested in vocational education and training, including apprenticeships and traineeships, through the public provider network of TAFE institutes, statutory TAFE institutes, the Australian Agricultural College Corporation and private registered training organisations.

“This budget demonstrates the Queensland Government’s Toward Q2 commitment that by 2020 all children will have access to a quality early childhood education and three out of four Queenslanders will hold trade, training or tertiary qualifications.”

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