



24 September 2008

Rees Government injects \$16M into disadvantaged schools

The Rees Government today announced \$16 million a year for the next four years to boost the Priority Action Schools Program which helps disadvantaged school communities.

Minister for Education and Training Verity Firth announced the continuation of the program with 74 schools set to benefit.

“The Labor Government strongly believes socio-economic disadvantage should not determine the quality of education a child receives,” Ms Firth said.

“Teachers and principals in low socio-economic school communities work extremely hard to support their students, and their schools deserve our support as well.

“We know that the socio-economic status of families has a major influence on how a child performs at school.

“That’s why our Priority Action Schools Program provides additional resources to the schools educating students from the most disadvantaged communities in the State.

“We have seen in the past that these resources can make a positive difference to student achievement.

“Recent national testing showed that NSW has the lowest proportion of students not meeting minimum standards in literacy and numeracy in the country.

“The results are a good sign that initiatives like our Priority Action Schools Program are working.”

Schools in the Priority Action Schools Program can receive up to \$360,000 each year, depending on the number of students.

“One school on the NSW North Coast will use its funding to tailor individual learning plans for students with learning difficulties,” Ms Firth said.

“Another school in Western Sydney will provide additional training for teachers and parents of children having difficulties with literacy and numeracy.”

The criteria for inclusion in the Program was developed in consultation with an Advisory Group including the NSW Teachers Federation, Federation of Parents and Citizens’ Associations, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Ethnic Communities Council, Primary Principals’ Association and Secondary Principals’ Council.

A survey was sent to all parents to gauge the socio-economic circumstances of schools that wished to participate. More than 90 per cent of parents at each school participated in the survey, which was translated into more than 30 languages to help families from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Ms Firth said the list of schools included in this four-year funding round saw a mix of some schools benefiting for the first time, and other schools coming off the Program.

“This reflects changes in the demographics of school communities over the four-year period since the start of the last round,” Ms Firth said.

“The improvements that have been made to the retiring schools through their participation in the Program will continue to be felt.

“Schools which are coming off the Program will also continue to receive half of their previous additional Priority Action Schools funding for the next twelve months so that they can continue to give their students extra support.

“And the great majority of schools remain in the larger Priority Schools Funding Program, which allocates \$49.5 million to 588 schools.”

Today’s announcement has been welcomed by the President of the NSW Primary Principals’ Association, Mr Geoff Scott.

“The NSWPPA fully supports the decision to continue to provide additional resources through the Priority Action Schools Program to over 70 of our most disadvantaged schools across NSW,” Mr Scott said.

“The survey instrument used to determine which schools are disadvantaged is a strong instrument and the process of determining funding is fair and transparent.

“The 74 schools, each with over 160 student enrolments, will benefit enormously from the additional support and staffing that the program allows.”

President of the Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW, Ms Dianne Giblin, agreed that the additional funding would be welcomed by schools.

“We are pleased to see a Government commitment to this program for the next four years,” Ms Giblin said.

The Priority Action Schools Program is one of a series of NSW Government initiatives to provide extra support to schools.

The Rees Government has committed \$65.5 million a year between 2009 and 2012 to provide extra resources to 588 NSW public schools through the wider Priority Schools Programs and Country Areas Program.

Media contact: *David Boyd 0404 944 550*

Schools included in the Priority Action Schools Program for 2009-12

Airds HS
Arthur Phillip HS
Ashcroft PS
Ashford CS
Auburn GHS
Bankstown Snr College
Bellambi PS
Bidwill PS
Birrong BHS
Blackett PS
Bonnyrigg HS
Bonnyrigg PS
Bourke HS
Bowen PS
Brewarrina CS
Briar Road PS
Broken Hill North PS
Broken Hill PS
Cabramatta HS
Cabramatta West PS
Campbellfield PS
Chifley College Bidwill
Chifley College Dunheved
Chifley College Mount Druitt
Chifley College Shalvey
Chullora PS
Coonamble HS
Coonamble PS
Curran PS
Doonside PS
Edensor Park PS
Emerton PS
Frank Partridge VC PS
Gillwinga PS
Goonellabah PS
Goulburn PS
Granville BHS
Guise PS
Gunnedah PS
Heckenberg PS
Illawarra Snr College
Irrawang PS
James Meehan HS
John Warby PS
Kempsey HS
Kempsey South PS
Kempsey West PS
Lakemba PS
Lethbridge Park PS
Madang Avenue PS
Manning Gardens PS
Miller PS
Moree East PS
Moree Sec Coll Carol Ave
Nowra East PS
Plattsburg PS
Portland CS
Punchbowl BHS
Queanbeyan South PS
Sadleir PS
Shoalhaven HS
Sir Joseph Banks HS
Tolland PS
Trangie CS
Tregear PS
Tweed Heads South PS
Villawood East PS
Wellington HS
Whalan PS
Willmot PS
Windale PS
Windsor South PS
Woodberry PS
Wyoming PS