



Anna Bligh MP
Member for South Brisbane



Media statement

Deputy Premier,
Treasurer and
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Trade and Innovation

BLIGH'S BILLION BUILDING BOOST TO SCHOOLS

A massive \$1 billion, five-year boost to school facilities, along with an extra \$3.3 billion for Health are the cornerstones of the first Bligh Budget.

Announcing the 2006-07 State Budget today, Premier Peter Beattie and Deputy Premier and Treasurer Anna Bligh said the billion-dollar program to modernise Queensland schools was the most significant investment in education infrastructure in the country.

The Budget also outlines capital works spending throughout the state – 60 per cent of it outside the South-east Queensland corner – that tops \$10 billion for the first time ever.

“We are making a \$1 billion investment in renewals and upgrades over the next five years to build Queensland’s schools and ensure they equipped for the future,” Ms Bligh told Parliament this afternoon.

“The new program, *Tomorrow’s Schools – Providing for a Smarter Future*, will involve parents and school communities in an unprecedented way - in a hands-on way in planning for the future of Government schools in local areas.

“The program recognises that many of our schools are in need of extra assistance for small projects that make all the difference.

“To meet this need, *Tomorrow’s Schools* will begin with a School Community Development program of \$50 million in the 2006-07 year, to fund small priority capital works projects for government schools, with projects selected on the advice of parents.

“The program will then see \$850 million invested in modernising and refurbishing Queensland government schools, again in consultation with parents.

“Queensland’s Catholic and Independent schools will also benefit with a one-off allocation of \$100 million this financial year to assist these schools meet the demands of the future.

“This is a new investment in our children’s classrooms and learning environments and the funds are in addition to existing school capital programs.

“The Budget includes including employing more than 470 additional teachers.

“This includes up to 100 teachers who will join our existing early years educators to staff the new Prep year, 150 teachers to complete our commitment to reduce class size

targets in Years 4-10, from 30 to 28 students and up to 224 additional teachers to meet growth in student numbers.

“Our children deserve the best that we can give them and that starts with giving them the best schools we can. Our job is to create opportunity and give our children every chance of success.”

The Treasurer also announced the State Government would pour an extra \$9.7 billion into health over the next five years

The Government is delivering by far the largest health budget in Queensland’s history, injecting a massive \$6.65 billion into our health system in 2006-07.

This record health budget represents a 24 per cent or \$1.3 billion increase on last year (\$5.35 billion in 2005-06).

“We have begun the job of delivering our Health Action Plan, but this funding increase demonstrates our commitment to finish the job,” Ms Bligh said.

In addition, a record health capital program totalling \$594 million will fund the infrastructure needed to support the new and improved services sweeping through public hospitals.

“This will mean more doctors and nurses and the treatment and care of more Queenslanders on time.

“This will mean more elective surgery, more responsive and better resourced emergency departments, expanded public and community health activities and, ultimately, a healthier Queensland.

The Treasurer also announced record funding for Police - including 350 additional police and for the first time ever and Queensland’s capital works budget is forecast to exceed \$10 billion - the largest per capita capital program in the country.

In addition, record spending in disabilities, child safety and housing reflect a government balancing the need for economic drive and social responsibility.

In addition, new tax cuts mean Queenslanders employers now enjoy by far the most generous payroll tax scheme in the country.

“This Budget is about building investment through tax cuts, about building infrastructure for the future with capital works spending that tops \$10 billion, about building opportunities for our future generations with the country’s largest school renewal program,” Ms Bligh said.

“It’s about building the Queensland of tomorrow.”

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