

**IM/IO CLASSES**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 163:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Is it a case of your Government trying to save funds that has lead to so few ancillary health services, such as speech pathology and occupational therapy and other specialist disability services being provided for students in IM and IO classes? What is the total cost of the limited services purchased by the Department of Education from other providers for students in IM and IO classes?

**Answer:**

The Department of Education and Training (DET) does not employ therapists nor does it purchase therapy services from other providers. Ancillary health services such as speech pathology and occupational therapy are provided by other government agencies such as DADHC and NSW Health.

The NSW Government has recently announced Stronger Together: A new direction for disability services in NSW 2006-2016 to deliver better services across Government for people with a disability and their families. This plan provides an additional \$1 billion of funding over the first five years. DADHC is the lead agency for this plan and is working closely with the DET and other agencies.

**PRIVATE TRAINING ORGANISATIONS**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 164:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What is the average time in NSW for the registration of private training organizations or for scoping of courses in already registered private training organizations.

**Answer:**

VETAB measures its performance against its Customer Service Standards.

VETAB undertakes to complete all applications for initial registration within 12 weeks (unless delays occur as result of non-compliances found at audit). For May and June 2006, 24 initial applications were received with 92% processed within 12 weeks.

VETAB undertakes to complete all applications to vary scope requiring a desk audit within six weeks (unless delays occur as a result of incomplete documentation). For May and June 120 variations to scope applications were received, with 73% processed in a six week period.

VETAB undertakes to complete all applications to vary scope requiring a site audit within 12 weeks (unless delays occur as a result of non-compliances found at audit). For May and June of 25 applications in this category, 80% were processed within 12 weeks.

**REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 165:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What policies and procedures are in place to guarantee the likelihood of uniformity in the audit qualifications of auditors reviewing registered training organizations or training organizations attempting to become registered?

**Answer:**

The standards for State and Territory Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies are publicly available on the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) website. Standard 7 refers to the qualifications of auditors and technical experts.

**CERTIFICATE III COURSES**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 166:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What progress has your Government made to enable Certificate III courses to be taught in NSW schools as per the COAG agreement?

**Answer:**

At the February 2006 COAG meeting, all state and territory governments agreed to remove legislative, regulatory, educational and industrial barriers to school based apprenticeships by 31 December 2006.

The lemma Labor Government has announced an \$18 million plan to create 10 new trade schools in New South Wales which will offer school based apprenticeships, school based traineeships and other vocational training courses to high school students.

**SKILLS SHORTAGE**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 167:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

In light of the skills shortage, what is your Government doing to utilise TAFE as a means to address the skills shortage?

**Answer:**

The New South Wales Lemma Government is giving the highest priority to reducing industry skills shortages – particularly in the areas of traditional trades.

In the 2006/2007 financial year the TAFE NSW budget has been provided with a record level of more than \$1.6 billion in recurrent and capital funding.

Under the New South Wales Labor Government there has been an unprecedented expansion in TAFE. Enrolments have increased with enrolments jumping from 411,046 (1995) to 513,070 (2005).

TAFE NSW plays a key role in tackling skill shortages by providing extra trade classes and training more apprentices.

During 2005, TAFE NSW had a 12.9 per cent increase in apprentice enrolments. TAFE NSW is the pre-eminent provider of skills for NSW industries and delivers training to over 90 per cent of the state's apprentices.

Enrolments increased in priority skills shortages areas with significant growth in areas such as Engineering and Mining, Building and Construction, Automotive, and Electrotechnology.

TAFE fees for apprentices and trainees have also been capped at \$370 per annum no matter what level or course qualification.

The Lemma Labor Government has also announced an \$18 million plan to create 10 new trade schools in New South Wales. These trade schools will be co-located with existing High Schools and TAFE colleges and will offer students school based apprenticeships, traineeships and vocational training programs.

TAFE NSW is a trusted training provider with a strong track record in providing high quality vocational education and training that is relevant to industry and the community.

**TAFE - STUDENT RETENTION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 168:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Given TAFE's low completion rate, less than half of the students who enrol complete their course, what is your Government doing to address TAFE's retention problems?

**Answer:**

One of the key indicators of student achievement in TAFE is the module completion rate.

The 2005 module completion rate for TAFE NSW is 79.4 per cent and has increased by 4 per cent over the period 2001 to 2005.

A number of strategies have been employed to improve the module completion rate in TAFE NSW including expanding career counselling, implementing student-centred flexible delivery, supporting students with special needs, and enhancing teacher skills through professional development.

**COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 169:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Your Government has halved funding for community colleges over the last three years. Why has the community college sector been targeted for significant funding cuts while your Government spends millions on advertising?

**Answer:**

The NSW Government had to enter into new funding agreements with Community Colleges in 2004 after the Commonwealth Government cut funding to NSW by \$345 million.

In 2006 the NSW Government provided over \$12 million in grants to the Adult and Community Education sector.

The NSW Government is prioritising funding for education and training courses related to enhancing employment opportunities. This means that taxpayers no longer subsidise leisure or hobby courses. A Community College can still run these courses – however priority for Government funding is practical courses that will help people find a job. In a time of critical skill shortages the NSW Government is focuses on funding vocational education and training.

The NSW Government recognises the valuable role played by Community Colleges but they are independent organisations. The Department and the Board of Adult and Community Education are assisting these community providers to focus on vocational education and training delivery to people who are facing barriers to employment and training.

**PRIMARY SCIENCE PROGRAM**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 170:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What assessments has your government made on the cost of implementing a Science program in Primary schools that addresses the current shortcomings in Science?

**Answer:**

The results of the first national Year 6 science test (2003) show that NSW Year 6 students are among the best in Australia when it comes to Science Literacy.

On 12 August 2006 a review of the current Science and Technology K-6 syllabus was announced. In conjunction with the Board of Studies syllabus review process the Department will develop proposals for professional and curriculum support for teachers to implement the new syllabus.

Costs for these initiatives will not be available until broad directions for a new syllabus are available.

**PRIMARY SCIENCE PROGRAM**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 171:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What studies has your government undertaken as to how it would be best to improve Science teachings in Primary schools and who undertook those studies and at what cost?

**Answer:**

The recent National Curriculum Consistency of Outcomes (NCCO) project has developed Statements of Learning for science and for information and communications technologies.

The review of the current NSW Science and Technology K-6 syllabus was announced on 12 August.

National bench marking and testing in science – National Assessment of Primary Scientific Literacy (NAPSL) commenced in 2003, with the national assessment program repeated for a sample of students every three years so that performance of students in NSW can be monitored over time.

The NSW Department of Education and Training has already implemented a range of strategies to address any perceived shortcoming in Science including:-

- collaboration with the Australian Academy of Science and its Primary Connections program to provide focused science and literacy support to primary teachers through professional learning and the development of supporting units of work and teaching materials. This program commenced in 2003 and is on-going to 2008

- Provision in 2006 of the connected outcomes groups (COGs), curriculum planning framework and units of work provide direct and explicit assistance for teachers to teach K-6 Science and Technology
- Provision of 20 primary science and technology consultants from 2002 to 2004 working across NSW
- Development and provision of the Supporting SciTech in the primary classroom: a CD-ROM based professional learning package provided to all primary and central schools in 2003 to support the implementation of the Science and Technology K-6 syllabus

Over the last four years 2002-2006 it is estimated that the Department has provided \$6.4 m in funding to these initiatives.

**TEACHER RETRAINING**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 172:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Can you advise whether the Government has undertaken any assessments as to what the cost would be to re-train as Science and Maths teachers those teachers who are currently teaching Science and Maths with no degree in either Science or Maths? If so please advise the committee as to the cost.

**Answer:**

The Department implements a range of strategies to ensure an adequate supply of mathematics and science teachers. Under the Teacher Education Scholarship program, 230 scholarships are awarded each year. Of these, 170 are awarded to students training as teachers in secondary shortfall subject areas, including science and mathematics. A further 60 are awarded to Aboriginal students, who may train as primary teachers or teachers in any secondary subject, including mathematics and science. Scholarship support is of one to five years duration.

The Accelerated Teacher Training Program provides opportunities for people with industry experience to retrain as teachers in secondary shortfall subject areas, including mathematics.

The Department also conducts programs to retrain existing teachers in non shortfall areas as mathematics and physics teachers.

In the 2006/2007 budget, this Government has allocated over \$267 million for teacher quality and supply over the next four years.

**TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 173:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Can you confirm that there are more teachers in the Western area of Sydney than in any other area in NSW teaching Science and/or Maths without qualifications to teach either?

**Answer:**

There are 255 teaching positions in Western Sydney Region which are identified as maths teaching positions and 230 teaching positions in Western Sydney Region which are identified as science teaching positions.

There are no records of teachers teaching science or maths in Western Sydney Region who do not have an approved teaching subject in science or maths recorded on the system.

**JINDABYNE CENTRAL SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 174:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What are the population projects for the Central School at Jindabyne and are there any plans to extend past Year 8?

**Answer:**

Jindabyne Central School will offer Year 9 in 2007.

**LOWANNA PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 175:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Can you explain why due to enrolments dropping at Lowanna Public School, the school has lost its library and primary classroom, as well as a teacher and all remaining students are being forced into one classroom. (Coffs Coast Advocate, 1st September 2006, p9.)

**Answer:**

Teaching staff are allocated to public schools according to a formula based on student enrolments. This process is designed to ensure resources are distributed equitably across the State.

The actual student enrolment for Lowanna Public School for 2006 entitles the school to one classroom teacher. Based on the level of enrolments, the demountable library/communal space at the school, and one demountable classroom, should be released.

The Department will continue to consult with the school community regarding the use of permanent accommodation within the school.

**SCHOOL HALLS - COFFS HARBOUR ELECTORATE**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 176:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

In view of the high incidence of skin cancer on the mid north coast, could you advise how much funding is being allocated to the provision of school halls in the Coffs Harbour electorate.

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and highlights a 145 per cent increase since the opposition was last in government.

Since 1995, the NSW Labor Government has completed over 360 major school upgrades worth more than \$1 million each. This Government has built 33 gyms and 125 halls, with work underway on a further 10 gyms and 14 halls.

Under an initiative to provide a significant number of new school communal halls over four years, public schools with enrolments of more than 500 students are assigned priority consideration.

Public schools in the Coffs Harbour electorate with enrolments of more than 500 students will be considered for the provision of a hall in future capital works programs.

The Department of Education and Training has provided schools with comprehensive information regarding the risks of sun exposure.

**SCHOOL HALLS - COFFS HARBOUR ELECTORATE  
(continued)**

As part of the Department's annual Minor Capital Works Program, Covered Outdoor Learning Areas are provided to schools where a need for such a facility has been identified.

**BEROWRA PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 177:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Referring to the Hornsby and Upper North Shore Advocate, 1st December 2005, p3 why are Berowra Public School students still forced to hold assemblies under a leaking veranda or in a rundown demountable, two and a half years after your Government promised them a new school hall as part of a \$50,000 master plan?

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and highlights a 145 per cent increase since the opposition was last in government.

In addition to this capital investment, the NSW Labor Government has more than doubled the annual school maintenance budget from \$88.6 million in 1994/95 to \$214 million in 2006/07. This represents a significant investment of more than \$4.1 million a week.

Since 1995, the NSW Labor Government has completed over 360 major school upgrades worth more than \$1 million each. This Government has built 33 gyms and 125 halls, with work underway on a further 10 gyms and 14 halls.

Under an initiative to provide a significant number of new school communal halls over four years, schools with enrolments of more than 500 students are assigned priority consideration.

**BEROWRA PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(continued)**

Berowra Public School's current enrolment is 399 students with a predicted decrease in enrolments to 378 by 2010.

**ASQUITH BOYS HIGH SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 178:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Referring to the Hornsby and Upper North Shore Advocate, 11th May 2006, Asquith Boys High School has been fighting for funds to fix the surface of their basketball court since at least 2001. The surface of the court is an OH&S risk. When will your department deliver on the \$130,000 the department itself said was needed to fix the court in 2003?

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and shows a 145 per cent increase since the opposition was last in government.

In addition to this capital investment, the NSW Labor Government has more than doubled the annual school maintenance budget from \$88.6 million in 1994/95 to \$214 million in 2006/07. This represents a significant investment of more than \$4.1 million a week.

Repairs were carried out on one of the basketball courts at Asquith Boys High School court on 5 January 2006.

Further work on basketball courts will be considered for funding against competing regional and statewide priorities.

**SUSPENSION CENTRE - ALBION PARK**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 179:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Referring to the Illawarra Mercury, 19th August 2006, p16 a new suspension centre was due to open at Albion Park. According to the Illawarra and South East Region school education director, Phil Hirst, the centre will only accommodate six students from three local schools. Why is this centre so selective?

**Answer:**

Suspension centres provide a short term intervention, catering for students on long suspensions of up to 20 days.

By 2007, we will have 22 suspension centres operating around the state. Before this program, which was introduced by this Government, there was nowhere for suspended students to go. Early data shows us that 88 per cent of students who attend a suspension centre do not return.

**VANDALISM - SOUTH COAST**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 180:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Referring to the Illawarra Mercury, 29th July 2006, p1 "School open for vandals". The article highlights that while vandalism in the South Coast region had risen – and was the only region where vandalism increased – 85% of schools remained without security fencing. A Department spokesman is quoted in the article as saying, "(When) we assign fences we look at the safety and security data that comes through and we say, 'well, this school really does need a security fence'," If this is the case, how come schools in the South Coast remain open for vandals?

**Answer:**

Since 1996, the NSW Labor Government has installed more than 400 security fences in schools across the state. In 2006/07, a further 67 fences will be constructed.

It is worth noting that prior to 1996, none of the state's public schools had security fencing.

The Department of Education and monitors school security and provides advice on strategies to reduce security risks.

Schools in the Illawarra will be considered for security fencing as part of the Department's ongoing security fencing program.

**COBARGO PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 181:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Currently Cobargo Public School has only 2 classrooms in permanent buildings, the library is also in a demountable, there are no covered walkways and no indoor space for the pupils to gather, and the school has no disabled access. What are your plans, if any, for Cobargo Public School?

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and highlights a 145 per cent increase since the opposition was last in government.

In addition to this capital investment, the NSW Labor Government has more than doubled the annual school maintenance budget from \$88.6 million in 1994/95 to \$214 million in 2006/07. This represents a significant investment of more than \$4.1 million a week.

Demountable buildings are an integral part of the Department of Education and Training's accommodation strategies. In fact demountable buildings are used in schools (including private schools) in every state of Australia.

The Department continues to maintain and refurbish demountables in schools on a regular, programmed basis - well maintained demountables continue to provide teaching spaces which are consistent with contemporary educational requirements.

**COBARGO PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(continued)**

During April this year school maintenance priorities were determined in consultation with the Principal. Projects identified will be undertaken shortly as part of the 2006/07 programmed maintenance.

**HOLBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 182/183:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Referring to a letter from the Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Training, Linda Burney MP, on your letterhead to the Member for Wagga Wagga, Daryl Maguire dated 21st July 2006 relating to Holbrook Public School. The letter is about air conditioning in the school and states it is in a "Hotspot" as the mean maximum January temperature is 31 degrees celsius. This means it qualifies for the Department's Air Cooling Program. However the letter also states, "It should be noted that three classrooms have already been air cooled for a cost of \$20,784. I understand that Holbrook Public School has been identified to receive air cooling for the remaining permanent classrooms."

As, in Ms Burney's own words, the school qualifies for air cooling, why then have only three classrooms been air cooled? Will you guarantee all permanent buildings at the school will be air cooled before summer.

**Answer:**

A project to provide air cooling at Holbrook Public School has been identified by the Department of Education and Training and will be considered in the context of future capital works priorities.

**MOUNT AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 184:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Referring to letters exchanged between the former Minister for Education and Training, Andrew Refshauge and the Member for Wagga Wagga, Daryl Maguire dating back to 2004 in relation to Mount Austin Public School. The school has been asking for a school hall since 2004. The school uses a double classroom for assemblies, however this cannot accommodate infants and primary students at the same time. Any presentation nights need to be held in a hired premise, costing the school money. Is it acceptable that the school cannot hold an indoor assembly with all students just because they do not reach the 500 student enrolment number you require to be considered for a school hall? When will the school receive funding for their much-needed hall?

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and highlights a 145 per cent increase since the opposition was last in government.

Since 1995, the NSW Labor Government has completed over 360 major school upgrades worth more than \$1 million each. This Government has built 33 gyms and 125 halls, with work underway on a further 10 gyms and 14 halls.

Under the initiative to provide a significant number of new communal halls over four years, schools without a communal hall and with enrolments of more than 500 students are assigned priority consideration.

**MOUNT AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOL (continued)**

The enrolment at Mount Austin Public School for 2006 is 303. The projected enrolment for 2009 is 302.

Accordingly, Mount Austin Public School does not meet the Department's current criteria for priority consideration for inclusion of a project to provide a communal hall as part of a future capital works program.

**CRESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 185/186:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

The issue of the state of the toilet facilities at Crestwood Public School was first raised more than four years ago by parents of students at the school.

In a response received from the former Minister dated 13 May, 2004, Wayne Merton, State MP for Baulkham Hills, was assured that funding for a project to upgrade the toilet facilities at Crestwood Public School was to be considered in the context of future capital works priorities. When will this work be undertaken?

**Answer:**

Funding for an upgrade of toilet facilities at Crestwood Public School will continue to be considered in the context of regional priorities.

**CRESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 187:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Wayne Merton, MP for Baukham Hills, lodged a petition in the Legislative Assembly on 11 October 2005 calling for the provision of an assembly hall for the school. In correspondence dated 9 December 2005 the Minister advised that the Department has noted the need for the provision of a hall at the school. When will this work be undertaken? (Wayne Merton)

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This represents a 145 per cent increase since the coalition was last in government. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW.

Since 1995, the NSW Labor Government has completed over 360 major school upgrades worth more than \$1 million each. This Government has built 33 gyms and 125 halls, with work underway on a further 10 gyms and 14 halls.

The Department of Education and Training advises that Crestwood Public School already has a hall.

It is not clear to which petition and school Mr Merton is referring.

**EXCELSIOR PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 188:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Excelsior Public school needs urgent renovation work to be carried out to the school canteen. When will this work be undertaken?

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and highlights a 145 per cent increase since the coalition was last in government.

In addition to this capital investment, the NSW Labor Government has more than doubled the annual school maintenance budget from \$88.6 million in 1994/95 to \$214 million in 2006/07. This represents a significant investment of more than \$4.1 million a week.

Funding for an upgrade of the canteen at Excelsior Public School will be considered against competing statewide priorities.

**EXCELSIOR PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 189:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

When will the toilets at Excelsior Public School be upgraded?

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and highlights a 145 per cent increase since the coalition was last in government.

In addition to this capital investment, the NSW Labor Government has more than doubled the annual school maintenance budget from \$88.6 million in 1994/95 to \$214 million in 2006/07. This represents a significant investment of more than \$4.1 million a week.

Funding for an upgrade of toilet facilities will be considered against competing statewide priorities.

**TAREE WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 190:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Taree West Public School has been seeking a school hall certainly since 1991. There have been campaigns of varying intensity over the years but to no avail. Children have to walk about 1 ½ km to the PCYC for general whole of school functions, across the busy Wingham Road. When is this hall likely to be built?

**Answer:**

In 2006/2007, the NSW Labor Government is investing a record \$486 million to upgrade facilities at public schools. This is the biggest school rebuilding program in the history of NSW and highlights a 145 per cent increase since the coalition was last in government.

Since 1995, the NSW Labor Government has completed over 360 major school upgrades worth more than \$1 million each. This Government has built 33 gyms and 125 halls, with work underway on a further 10 gyms and 14 halls.

Under an initiative to provide a significant number of new school communal halls over four years, schools with enrolments of more than 500 students are assigned priority consideration.

Taree West Public School's current enrolment is 460 with a predicted decrease in enrolments to 425 in 2010.

**NEW HIGH SCHOOL - OLD BAR**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 191:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Old Bar is a growing area in the Greater Taree City Council area. Presently 209 secondary students reside in the area and have to travel to Taree (approximately 16 km) or Wingham (approximately 27 km) to attend school. What is the number of students necessary to have a new high school and what forward planning is the Department doing to ensure when the time comes there is no delay in obtaining land and proceeding with a school.

**Answer:**

The Department of Education and Training has carefully examined the demographic implications of Greater Taree City Council's Draft LEP for Old Bar.

Secondary students from Old Bar are within the catchment area of Taree High School, which is anticipated to be able to accommodate any future growth in enrolment numbers from Old Bar.

The department will monitor demographic factors in the region in an ongoing basis.

**FORSTER PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 192:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Will the Minister provide funds to Great Lakes Council to rectify the significantly dangerous situation at Forster Public School where it faces Hadley Street? The Minister should be aware that there have been hundreds of near misses between school children from the school and motor vehicles because the Government will not provide funds to properly conduct a safe pick up and put down scheme in Hadley Street. Will the Minister make sufficient funds available to fix the problem and ensure the safety of the children from the school?

**Answer:**

The Department of Education and Training considers the proposed drainage works were the result of general run-off from land and roads in the vicinity of the school. The Department has committed to fund half of the cost of kerbing and guttering outside of the school site with Council.

As Council considers the road surface on Hadley Street to be in good condition, Council will not place the street on a priority list for the installation of kerbing and guttering.

**GRIMSHAW REPORT**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 193:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

There was a long-running formal Review of Non-government Schools (the Grimshaw Review) commissioned by the Government in relation to funding policies. It started in October 2000 and the Report was finally released in November 2005. The Government rejected all the Report's recommendations and announced instead the pursuit of a national approach to the public funding of schooling. What actions has the Government taken since to obtain a national funding agreement?

**Answer:**

The Grimshaw Review resulted in two separate reports. The first, which was released in 2002, focused on school registration and accountability. Its findings were endorsed by the Government and legislation enacting the report's recommendations was passed in 2004.

After the first report was completed, Mr Grimshaw started work on his second report, on State funding. He was tasked with finding a new formula for distributing State Government funding to non-government schools.

The overriding conclusion of the second report, which was completed in May 2004, was that State funding cannot be dealt with in isolation because the State Government is the minor funding provider for non-government schools. It argued instead that the resourcing entitlements of all schools need to be addressed through a coordinated, national approach, with the Commonwealth working cooperatively with States and Territories.

**GRIMSHAW REPORT (continued)**

The Government has accepted this conclusion and has publicly supported the report's view that school resourcing is a national issue, requiring a national solution.

Through its chairing of MCEETYA's Schools Resourcing Taskforce, NSW is leading national work towards this solution. The Taskforce's role is to identify the actual costs that schools face in delivering good educational outcomes for their students.

NSW believes that the evidence being uncovered by the Taskforce on the actual costs being faced by schools will assist governments to develop funding approaches that can direct resources to those students most in need.

**NON - GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS - PER CAPITA FUNDING**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Robyn Mary Parker, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 194:**

Ms Parker to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

In recent years the Government has increased the accountability requirements for non-government schools through changes to school registration regulations. In return when will the Government increase its transparency and accountability on the calculation of the per capita “pool of funds” for non-government school children?

**Answer:**

Under the terms of the NSW Education Act 1990, the State Government provides financial assistance to registered non-government schools in the form of per capita funding.

Per capita allowances paid to non-government schools are based on 25 per cent of the equivalent cost to the State of educating a student in a government school and funding is allocated according to a 12 category needs based scheme.

The regimen for payment of per capita funding to non-government schools is calculated twice annually and the rates are approved by the Treasurer.

After approval, the regimen calculations are released to non-government interest groups including the NSW Parents Council, Catholic Education Commission, Independent Education Union, Association of Independent Schools and Council of Catholic School Parents.

**TIME-OUT ROOMS**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 195:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Does the Government have a policy and specific guidelines on the use of “time out” rooms for the purposes of discipline in primary and secondary schools? If, so what do these guidelines specify about:

- a) What age a student must be before being sent to a “time out room”?
- b) How long can a student be kept in a “time out” room? Frequency and length of breaks?
- c) How frequently can a student be sent to a “time out” room?
- d) What activities the student is given while in the “time out” room?
- e) Is parental permission required to send a student to a “time out” room? What communication is required with parents?
- f) Does the school have to undertake any assessment of the student’s emotional well-being before sending that student to a “time out” room?

**Answer:**

Information relating to the use of “time out” rooms is available on the Department of Education and Training’s website.

**QUESTACON**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 196:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Is the Minister aware of the highly pro-nuclear power material being provided to schools by the Questacon organisation?

**Answer:**

Questacon develops and provides a wide range of educational material and outreach programs that can be accessed by schools and the general public.

Teachers and schools assess the appropriateness and curriculum relevance of such material before they use it in their classrooms.

**QUESTACON**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 197:** Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What steps has the Minister taken to ensure that such material is balanced by information that points to the risks, dangers, costs and consequences of the nuclear fuel cycle for Australia?

**Answer:**

The National Science and Technology Centre (Questacon) is a part of and administered within the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

The NSW Department of Education and Training does not endorse specific publications produced by commercial or non-government suppliers. Likewise, it does not endorse non-government publishers or providers of resources.

Schools select resources and programs based on the curriculum and on the needs and interests of their students. Decisions about the selection of resources remain the responsibility of the school principal in consultation with the school community.

Science syllabuses in NSW clearly identify that through the study of science students are “encouraged to critically analyse data and information, evaluate issues and problems, develop questions for inquiry and investigation, and draw evidence-based conclusions. Students are called on to apply and communicate their findings, understanding and viewpoints in a scientifically literate way when making decisions about the environment, the natural and technological world.”

**SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 198:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Can the Minister provide a list of religious and other organisations for which an application to be certified to provide Special Religious Education in public schools has been rejected in the last 8 years?

**Answer:**

The Minister has not rejected any organisation which has applied to be approved as a provider of special religious education in NSW Government schools.

Applications for approval are through the Department of Education and Training and applicants are requested to address a set of criteria developed by Legal Services in accordance with the Education Act 1990 and the recommendations for special religious education, accepted by the Government of the day, in the report Religion in Education in NSW Government School 1980.

When a group meets the criteria its approval is recommended to the Minister who has not to date rejected any application.

**SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 199:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

For each organisation, can the Minister indicate the reasons why the application was rejected?

**Answer:**

No applications have been rejected.

**BASIC SKILLS TESTING**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 200:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Under the DET's current provisions for the Basic Skills Testing (BST), a student with moderate or severe intellectual disability can be considered for exemption [D.G. 8/06 (I.O. - 31-55 I.Q. range/I.S. - sub 30)]. Will the Minister explain why children with moderate (I.O) and severe (I.S.) intellectual disability are not automatically exempted from the annual Basic Skills testing program?

**Answer:**

Parents of any child may seek an exemption from participation in state wide testing assessments following consultation with the school principal. Exemptions are based on a student's capacity to access the curriculum and not the clinical level of intellectual disability.

Any decision by a principal to exempt a student from the BST must be made in consultation with the parent or caregiver.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and Disability Standards for Education (2005) requires the Department not to discriminate against students with disabilities by subjecting them to any detriment. This means treating persons with disabilities on the same basis as those without disabilities by making available to these students reasonable adjustments.

**BASIC SKILLS TESTING**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 201:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

The Director General of the Department of Education and Training has recently informed the PNC & NSW Teachers Federation that, "many students with mild intellectual disabilities perform above the National Benchmarks in Literacy and/or Numeracy."

a. How many students with mild intellectual disability (I.M.) in NSW performed above the National Benchmarks for Literacy and Numeracy in 2005? (I.M. - 55-75 I.Q. range/average I.Q. range 90-110)

b. Does this performance justify the inclusion of students with mild intellectual disabilities in the BST program?

**Answer:**

The Commonwealth's *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA) states that ALL students should be treated on the same basis. Therefore any suggestion that all students with a disability should be excluded from the Basic Skills Test (BST) unless their parents want them to be tested would be a breach of the Act.

All parents have the right to withdraw their child from the BST – they simply need to discuss doing so with their child's school.

Furthermore, the BST is widely recognised as providing valuable information on the progress of students. It is not only a test but a valuable diagnostic tool for teachers, helping them to identify which of their students are in need of extra help.

Results from the BST, along with those from other school based assessments, are used by the

Education Department to help inform decisions about the allocation of resources to schools.

Additional support for special needs students can be provided based on a range of factors, including geographical, socio-economic levels and learning outcomes. This additional support can be accessed whether the student is in regular classes, special classes or at a special school.

The BST is for all students and is helping to achieve improved educational standards.

**ESL PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 202:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What is the current ratio of ESL teachers to students?

**Answer:**

The current ESL teacher-to-student ratio is 1:108 for primary schools and 1:72 for high schools. It should be noted that these ratios are not the same as class sizes.

**ESL PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 203:** Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Why is the number of students receiving English as a second language program support declining when the number of students from a non-English speaking background is increasing?

**Answer:** Students from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) are a diverse student group and not all these students require assistance from a specialist ESL teacher to learn English. NESB students include those who have had all their schooling in Australia as well as recently arrived students who may have arrived with no English speaking skills or may have been learning English in their country of origin.

In the last three years there has been a slight decline in the number of ESL students. The overall number of NESB students receiving support under the ESL program fluctuates slightly from year to year. This variation depends on a number of factors including:

- the number of newly arrived students enrolling in primary and high schools with little or no English language skills
- the number of Australian-born students from language backgrounds other than English entering kindergarten with limited English language skills
- the rate at which individual ESL students learn English.

**TAFE AND RELATED SERVICES**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 204:** Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Given the statement in the budget papers on p.7-7 that we are 'at a time of significant technological change and skilled labour shortages', why is there no significant increase to the TAFE budget (only 4.8%) and a decrease in the average staffing of 100?

**Answer:**

For 2006/2007 financial year that NSW TAFE budget has been provided with a record level of more than \$1.6 billion in capital and recurrent funding.

The New South Wales Government has also announced an \$18 million plan to create 10 dedicated trade schools that are co-located with High Schools and TAFE colleges to provide students with school based apprenticeships and vocational training courses.

The staff changes that the Member refers to are due to shared corporate service initiatives across the Department of Education and Training.

**INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 205:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

The NSW Department of Education conducted a review of Aboriginal Education in 2003 / 2004. The Final Report from this review, Yanigurra Muya: Ganggurrinyma Yaarri Guurulaw Yirringin.gurray Freeing the Spirit: Dreaming an Equal Future, contained a list of 71 recommendations.

- a) Which of the recommendations have actually been implemented in NSW?
- b) How does the Minister plan to evaluate the effectiveness of these measures?
- c) Can the Minister break down the budget currently allocated to each recommendation?

**Answer:**

The Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy 2006-2008 incorporates 70 of the 71 recommendations. One recommendation was not supported.

Specific targets will be included in all senior management performance management agreements. Principals, Regional Directors, TAFE Institute Directors and State Office Directors will be required to report annually on relevant outcomes against their Aboriginal Education and Training Plan.

In addition to our record funding for schools, which benefits all students, including Aboriginal students, we have increased annual funding for Aboriginal education programs six-fold – from \$11 million to \$65 million per year.

We have allocated \$65 million over four years to implement the Schools in Partnership initiative which is helping schools to improve outcomes for Aboriginal students.

**INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 206:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

How many Aboriginal children are currently at primary and secondary schools in NSW?

**Answer:**

Aboriginal student enrolment figures for 2006 are not yet available. 2005 enrolments are freely available on the Australian Bureau of Statistics website.

**INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 207:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

How many Aboriginal children have been suspended in 2005 / 2006? How many children were suspended in 2000/2001? Can you break down these figures into school years.

**Answer:**

The Data collected by the Department on suspension and expulsion relates to the number of suspensions and expulsions, not the number of children who are suspended or expelled.

**INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 208:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

How many Aboriginal children have been expelled in 2005 / 2006? How many children were expelled in 2000/2001? Can you break down these figures into school years.

**Answer:**

The Data collected by the Department on suspension and expulsion relates to the number of suspensions and expulsions, not the number of children who are suspended or expelled.

**“SOLAR IN SCHOOLS” PROGRAMME**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 209:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What is the rate this year at which schools are having solar facilities installed under this program?

**Answer:**

The Solar In Schools Program was launched by the NSW Labor Government in 1999. The program is managed through a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Training, Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (DEUS) and Integral Energy.

124 schools have had solar power systems installed as part of the *Solar In Schools Program* across the three phases of the Program.

**“SOLAR IN SCHOOLS” PROGRAMME**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 210:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What are the limiting factors in implementation? Is it reliant on sponsorship? What are the funding provisions?

**Answer:**

The Solar In Schools Program was launched by the NSW Labor Government in 1999. The program is managed through a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Training, Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (DEUS) and Integral Energy.

124 schools have had solar power systems installed as part of the *Solar In Schools Program* across the three phases of the Program.

**“SOLAR IN SCHOOLS” PROGRAMME**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 211:** Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

How much electricity is actually being generated/saved by NSW schools in this scheme?

**Answer:** Electricity generation data is available from [www.solarschools.net](http://www.solarschools.net)

**“SOLAR IN SCHOOLS” PROGRAMME**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 212:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

How long is the delay between a school applying to this program and the program providing a response?

**Answer:**

The Solar In Schools Program was launched by the NSW Labor Government in 1999. The program is managed through a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Training, Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (DEUS) and Integral Energy.

124 schools have had solar power systems installed as part of the *Solar In Schools Program* across the three phases of the Program.

Schools that register interest in the program are added to a database of schools to be assessed as appropriate sponsors and funding becomes available.

**MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY CLASSES (I.M CLASSES)**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 the Hon Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 213:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

How many I.M. (mild intellectual disability) classes remain on review as at August 2006?

**Answer:**

6 out of ten parents of children with disabilities choose a mainstream class with extra support for their child, with parental demand for discrete special classes fluctuating accordingly.

This Government has a proud history of supporting students with special needs in our public schools. In 2006/07 we are spending \$834 million on special education - \$3.3 billion over four years. That's nearly \$500 million a year more than in 1995. This is almost two and a half times the funding (a 245% increase in funding).

The Government is providing more than 660 additional teachers aides over three years at a cost of \$15.6 million. From 2007, every continuing special education class will have a teacher and a teacher's aide. This is doubling the number of staff in special education classrooms. Students will benefit from closer, individualized attention and a safer workplace for staff.

I am advised that the classes for students with mild intellectual disabilities which have been placed on review in 2006 have less than 9 students. These classes normally cater for a maximum of 18 students. 31 of these classes remain on review.

I am advised that it is standard practice that classes with low enrolments be closely monitored. We need to make sure that resources for students with disabilities are located in the areas that require them.

Parents who want their child in a special class will have that choice. No child will be forced into a mainstream classroom. No special education teacher will lose their job.

There is no reduction in educational provision for students with mild intellectual disabilities. In fact, the additional staff will only improve the education of this group of students.

**MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY CLASSES (I.M CLASSES)**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 the Hon Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 214:** Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What is the future of these classes?

**Answer:**

In November last year I confirmed that classes for students with special needs that had very low enrolments would be placed on review.

I am advised that the classes for students with mild intellectual disabilities which have been placed on review in 2006 have less than 9 students. These classes normally cater for a maximum of 18 students.

I am advised that it is standard practice that classes with low enrolments be closely monitored. We need to make sure that resources for students with disabilities are located in the areas that require them.

I understand that anticipated enrolments for next year will be known in shortly. Local education officers will then be able to determine the best ways to use these classes next year.

Parents who want their child in a special class will have that choice. No child will be forced into a mainstream classroom. No special education teacher will lose their job.

There is no reduction in educational provision for students with mild intellectual disabilities. In fact, the additional staff will only improve the education of this group of students.

**MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY CLASSES (IM CLASSES)**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 215:**

Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Does the Minister intend closing or integrating all or some of these classes before the commencement of the 2007 school year?

**Answer:**

I understand that anticipated enrolments for next year will be known in shortly. Local education officers will then be able to determine the best ways to use these classes next year.

Parents who want their child in a special class will have that choice. No child will be forced into a mainstream classroom; and. No special education teacher will lose their job.

There is no reduction in educational provision for students with mild intellectual disabilities. In fact, the additional staff will only improve the education of this group of students.

**RECURRENT GRANTS TO NON-PROFIT ORGS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION SERVICES**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 Ms Lee Rhiannon, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 216:** Ms Rhiannon to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

There has been a significant increase in the line item of recurrent grants to non-profit orgs in secondary education services. Does the significant increase in this line item include a commitment to pay the Links to Learning programs (Community Grants Program) full indexation of 3.3% to meet increases to the SACS award?

**Answer:** Links to Learning Community Grants Program received indexation of 3.3%.

**NON-SCHOOL BASED STAFF**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 217:**

Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

As at 30 June 2006 how many people does your Department employ who are not based in schools?

**Answer:**

As at 30 June 2006 there was 4,736 full time equivalent staff in state and regional offices providing educational support to schools and corporate services for schools and TAFE.

**HEAD OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 218:**

Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What was the staff establishment of the head office of the Department of Education as at 30 June 2006?

**Answer:**

2,763 full time equivalent staff. These staff are employed across a range of locations in the Sydney CBD, Sydney metropolitan and regional NSW.

**TOTAL STAFF EMPLOYED**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 219:**

Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

How many people do you employ in total as at 30 June 2006?

**Answer:**

94,807 full time equivalent staff.

**TEACHER NUMBERS**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 220:**

Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What is the FTE of school teachers as at 30 June 2006?

**Answer:**

58,528 full time equivalent staff.

**SCHOOL MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 221:** Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

What is the cost of the Department of Commerce supervising the (Asset Management) contracts as at 30 June 2006? What is budgeted for 2006-07?

**Answer:** Whilst the Department of Commerce supervises some contracts for the Department of Education and Training, it does not supervise Asset Management contracts as such.

**LOAN REPAYMENTS - INNER CITY SCHOOLS REDEVELOPMENT**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 222:**

Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

(a) What interest payments were made for the Treasury loan during the 2005-2006 year?

(b) what interest payments are projected for the current and future years?

(c) what the assets have been sold to repay the principal on the \$100 million loan? (please list return for each asset realised)

(d) what assets are targetted for sale in the current and future financial years?

(e) What is the amount that you have budgeted this year for repayment loan principal?

(f) When will the loan be fully repaid?

**Answer:**

At the end of June 2006 the balance on the Treasury loan relating to the Revitalisation of Inner Sydney Schools (RISS) project was \$76.149 million.

During 2006/07 the Department of Education and Training is anticipating that the proceeds from the sale of three surplus properties will retire the RISS loan. The three properties are the former Peter Board High School site, the former Redfern Public School site and the former Vacluse High School site.

**MARKET STREET LEASE - RENT**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 223:**

Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

(a) What rent is the department still paying rent on its Market Street premises?

(b) Who is using the Market Street premises?

(c) How long will this arrangement continue for?

**Answer:**

(a) The current rental at Market Street is \$736,069 per annum.

(b) The current occupants at Market Street are the Department's Asset Management Directorate staff.

(c) The current lease expires on 19 December 2007. The need to retain these premises or the possibility of relocating Asset Management Directorate staff to alternative premises is still being investigated.

**TAMWORTH WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 224:** Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

- (a) Can you advise where the school facilities review is up to in Tamworth?
- (b) When will the review be completed?

**Answer:**

a) Broad community consultation will take place prior to any decision regarding the future provision of public education in Tamworth. A discussion paper, Planning for the Future of Public Education in Tamworth, was released in June 2006, and was published on the Department's Internet site at that time.

The Regional Director, New England has conducted meetings with the 13 school communities in Tamworth.

An independent facilitator will be engaged to continue with more formal community consultation during Term 4 this year.

A comprehensive Tamworth Learning Twenty-Twenty (TL2020) Reference Group has been formed to guide the consultation process and consider the consultation findings.

A meeting was held of this reference Group on Monday 11 September 2006.

In turn, this group will advise a smaller Project Management Team of any key findings and issues arising from the consultation.

**TAMWORTH WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL (continued)**

Representatives on these groups encompass parents, students, teachers and principals; along with those from commerce, local government, TAFE, University, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, the Public Service Association and the Tamworth community.

b) The proposed timeline allows for continued consultation throughout Term 4 2006, consolidation of consultation material by the Reference Group and Project Team, with any recommendations to be made following this process.

**SCHOOL SECURITY FENCING**

On Monday 4 September, 2006 The Hon. Catherine Cusack, MLC placed the following question on the Legislative Council Question and Answer Paper.

**Question No. 225:**

Ms Cusack to ask the Minister for Education and Training –

Which schools received security fencing this in 2005-2006 and which schools will get fencing in the current financial year?

**Answer:**

Details of the Government's commitment can be obtained from the Budget papers for 2005/2006 and the Infrastructure Statement for 2006/2007.