Funds for 2003/04 include:

- $87.7 million for services to students
- $39.2 million for Aboriginal
- $73 million for rural education
- $63.4 million for socio-economically

In 2003/04, dedicated funds of $73 million will provide:

- Distance Education Centre Support for over 2,800 students through 8 secondary and 11 primary centres;
- Living Away From Home Allowance-Funding of over $0.8 million has been provided for students in both government and non-government schools. The allowance in 2003 is $1,052 per student;
- Access and Boarding Scholarships for Students funding of $0.4 million will be provided to support around 220 students;
- Isolated School Grants funding of over $1.1 million will be provided in 2003/04 to support over 17,000 students in 186 schools;
- Students in country schools continue to benefit from computers, Internet access and teacher training.

In 2003/04, $39.2 million will be provided to support Aboriginal services for over 34,000 students. This includes around 320 Aboriginal Education Assistants employed in public schools across the State. This initiative recognises Aboriginal people working effectively with teachers in classrooms and liaising with Aboriginal parents. The Government is giving high priority to programs designed to strengthen Aboriginal literacy and numeracy within the context of the NSW Aboriginal Education Policy and State Literacy and Numeracy Plan, starting from the earliest years of schooling.

**Non-English Speaking Backgrounds**

In 2003/04, $87.7 million will be provided for services to students from non-English speaking backgrounds. With enrolments expected at around 197,000 in 2004, over 25 percent of all students enrolled in NSW government schools are from language backgrounds other than English.

**Student Welfare**

A total of $53.8 million will be provided for targeted welfare and anti-violence programs. These funds will support activities such as:

- an enhanced drug education strategy, focusing on drugs identified as causing the most harm to young people;
- home school liaison and specialist support to students with behaviour problems;
- targeted child protection activities;
- programs to combat violence;
- peer mediation and peer support;
- a series of initiatives to address disruptive student behaviour. In 2003/04, over $12 million will be provided towards the continuation of this program which provides a wider range of placement and support options for students with difficult behaviour;
- $8 million over four years, including $0.5 million in 2003/04 for the establishment of 20 new suspension centres by 2007;
- $8.4 million in 2003/04 to continue the trial of a “priority action schools” program, to provide intensive support to specifically targeted primary, central and high schools; and
- $2.6 million in 2003/04 to continue the pilot of reduced class sizes in designated schools, in Kindergarten to Year 3, to be independently monitored and evaluated.

**Non-Government Schools**

In 2003/04 non-government schools will receive $585.5 million. This funding includes provision for student per capita grants, interest subsidy scheme payments and secondary textbook funding.
In 2003/04, the State Government will continue to build on its commitment to help young people to improve their lives and secure their futures through record investments in quality education and training. This State Budget provides a record $8.7 billion in new and increased funding for education and training. Total recurrent and capital funding for schools is $6,986.8 million, up by almost 8 percent on last year’s Budget. Government school student enrolments are estimated at over 756,000 for 2003/04.

The key priorities for school education in 2003/04 will be to:

- implement a staged class size reduction program to progressively reduce class sizes in Government schools for students enrolled in Kindergarten to Year 2;
- continue to provide a wider range of placement and support options for students with disruptive behaviour. In addition to existing initiatives, 20 new suspension centres will be established by 2007 to implement behaviour modification plans for students returning to school after long suspensions;
- expand current technology programs, including the roll-out of Network Bandwidth in schools and TAFE colleges, and the provision of email accounts and Internet access for Government schools. This includes TAFE students and teachers;
- provide extra funding to enhance the quality of teaching in Government schools, ensure an adequate supply of teachers in key learning areas across the State and increased teacher professional development;
- continue the Government initiative introduced in 2002/03, which will provide over $10 million in 2003/04 to Government schools which have specific needs in meeting service delivery requirements at the local level;
- continue the trial of a “priority action schools” program, to provide intensive support to specifically targeted primary, central and high schools;
- continue the pilot of reduced class sizes in designated schools, in Kindergarten to Year 3, which will be independently monitored and evaluated;
- prove the amenity of schools through the Schools Improvement package of capital works;
- continue the focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills; and provide a quality employment and training through schools, TAFE NSW and adult and community education colleges.

The State Government is making a major commitment to improving education facilities through increased funding for capital works and school maintenance. In 2003/04, a total of $368 million will be provided for capital works funding for schools. This includes $333 million for new and continuing projects, over $34 million for new projects while a separate funding arrangement with the private sector and $1 million for the upgrading of the National Art School. A sum of $186.1 million is being provided for school maintenance, including some $15.4 million provided to schools through global funding arrangements.

The Government is continuing to implement initiatives which focus on improving literacy and numeracy standards and teachers and students can use the latest technology for teaching and learning so that young people are well prepared to enter the workforce.

To increase the quality of teaching in Government schools, $139 million will be provided over the next four financial years for teacher professional development. When fully implemented, this initiative will amount to $144 million over four school years, including $44 million Government initiative commencing in 2003/04. The Government’s support is reflected in record levels of per capita funding. It is also reflected in more resources being available for schools and school staff than ever before.

Average recurrent funding per public school student in 2003/04 is $7,965, the highest per capita figure in the history of public education in this State. This is up from $7,055 in 1994/95, an increase over 13 percent.

**SCHOOL FACILITIES**

The Government is continuing to provide a substantial injection of funds to improve the amenity of schools through the Schools Improvement Package of capital works.

The $1.2 billion Package over the next four years will provide a significant upgrade of schools to accommodate and the expansion of Internet services for staff and students.

In 2003/04, $333 million will be spent on school maintenance projects as part of this Package.

The 2003/04 budget will provide for the commencement of 17 major new building projects including the continued upgrade of facilities at Callaghan College and Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College and the provision of the Secondary Macquarie at Lakemba. Work will also commence on the second stages of the new or redeveloped schools at Banana Point, Borara, Blakehurst and Harbord. Work will continue on over 70 projects commenced in previous years, including new or replacement schools at Bongaree, St George (Rockdale) and Jerrabomberra as well as staged works at Auburn West, Blue Haven, Denistone East, James Ruse (Carlingford), Lightning Ridge, Mullumbimby and Westfields (Fairfield West).

Sixteen of the 70 continuing projects are being undertaken as part of the Revitalisation of Inner Sydney Schools Program. These include the redevelopment of facilities for

Alexandra Park Community School, Cleveland Street Intensive English High School, Rose Bay Secondary College, and the Sydney Secondary College Language and Literacy Assessment Certificate in Year 10 and the New Higher School Certificate at the end of Year 12; and

- the Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program, which is compulsory for all Year 7 students in Government schools.

**TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTERS**

The Government is continuing its focus on ensuring that teachers and students in New South Wales Government schools have access to and are proficient in using, the most up to date technology.

The Department’s budget includes $846.2 million in recurrent funding over the next four years for technology initiatives. These strategies include:

- continuing technology in schools initiatives. Over $572.3 million will be provided over the next four years to fund new computers, Internet services and technology support in schools;
- additional recurrent funding of $172.3 million over the next four years for Network Bandwidth. This initiative will progressively upgrade bandwidth in schools and TAFE colleges, using available technology including government owned infrastructure and a range of telecommunication carriers;
- E-learning accounts for staff and students in schools and TAFE. This project will provide E-mail accounts to teachers and students, filtered access to the Internet, discussion forums and Web hosting facilities to all schools and colleges. Remote access will be available from locations such as home or libraries. The Government is providing $84.1 million over the next four years;
- Technology in Learning and Teacher Training. This program is continuing to provide teacher training in schools in the use of the latest computer technology with the Government providing $17.6 million over the next four years; and
- A further $119 million in capital funding will be provided over the next three years to support technology initiatives.

**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

Increasing opportunities for young people to study vocational subjects and develop workplace skills in school is one of the Government’s highest priorities.

As part of the Ready for Work Plan:

- $22.1 million will be provided over four years for individual School to Work plans for students in Years 9 to 12 to help them direct their study and career paths, including $5.5 million in 2003/04;
- an expanded work education program to improve knowledge of young people on how to get a job, where the jobs are and the personal qualities and other skills needed to succeed;
- accredited industry-based courses as part of the New Higher School Certificate. These courses will count towards university entrance;
- $11.9 million will be provided over four years for scholarships to encourage school students to continue their studies full-time at TAFE NSW, including $3 million in 2003/2004;
- $7.5 million will be provided over four years to expand programs for young people at risk, including $1.9 million in 2003/2004; and
- stronger links between schools, TAFE NSW and employers.

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL ALLOWANCE**

Parents and guardians of over 1.1 million children in NSW government and non-government schools will continue to benefit from the Back-to-School Allowance. The Allowance provides $50 per student to assist with the meeting of costs of uniforms, shoes, books and other costs of attending school.

$6,618.7 million in total recurrent funding.

$368 million for school capital works projects, as part of a four year $1.2 billion Schools Improvement Package, including $333 million for new and continuing projects, $34 million for new projects under a separate funding arrangement with the private sector and $1 million for the upgrading of the National Art school.

$24.7 million in recurrent and capital funding in 2003/04, to progressively reduce class sizes in Government schools for students enrolled in Kindergarten to Year 2 ($329 million over the next four years).

$0.5 million in 2003/04 for the establishment of 20 new suspension centres by 2007 ($8 million over the next four years).

$257.8 million in recurrent and capital funding for technology and computers in schools ($965.2 million over the next four years).

$139 million will be provided over the next four financial years for teacher professional development. When fully implemented, this initiative will amount to $144 million over four school years, including the additional $44 million Government initiative.

$186.1 million for school maintenance, which includes some $15.4 million provided to schools under global funding arrangements.

$126 million to target literacy and numeracy ($492 million over the next four years).

$280.4 million for grants to schools under global funding.

$589.5 million for special education.

$73 million for dedicated rural education programs.

$63.4 million for socio-economically disadvantaged students.

$39.2 million for Aboriginal education.

$87.7 million for students from non English speaking backgrounds.

$56 million for the Back-to-School Allowance.

$585.5 million to support students in non-government schools.

$8.4 million to continue the trial of a “priority action schools” program, to provide intensive support to specifically targeted primary, central and high schools.

$2.6 million to continue the pilot of reduced class sizes in designated schools, in Kindergarten to Year 3, to be independently monitored and evaluated.