



1st PLANK OF GREENS' BALANCED PLAN TO FIX POST YEAR 10 MESS

Immediate Action Can be Taken Without Disrupting School Year

Nick McKim MP
Greens Leader

Saturday, 13 February 2010

For Comment: Tasmanian Greens Parliamentary Office, 6233 8300

www.tas.greens.org.au

The Tasmanian Greens today released the first plank of their policy to fix up the mess in the troubled Post Year 10 sector, saying that these initial steps will improve things on campuses immediately.

Greens Leader and Education spokesperson Nick McKim MP said that because major restructuring is not possible in the middle of the school year, these are the immediate steps that the Greens would take to fix up the mess David Bartlett has made of Tasmania Tomorrow.

"The first plank of the Greens' Post Year 10 policy, outlines the initial steps that can be taken immediately to fix critical areas of concern and frustration felt by teachers, students and parents," Mr McKim said.

"It would be untenable to undertake major new restructuring in the middle of a school year, however immediate steps can and must be taken to start cleaning up the mess that David Bartlett has made of our Post Year 10 sector."

The initial steps that the Greens would take include:

- Appoint Principals into the Polytechnic and get leadership back onto campuses rather than the current centralised model of leadership.
- Give authority to team leaders and teachers in specific subject areas to develop their own budgets and/or authority to make minor expenditure purchases on credit cards.
- Improve communication and flexibility between the Academy and Polytechnic to improve access for polytechnic students into Academy classes by better co-ordination of time-tables and better transport options.

Mr McKim also said that the Greens would release the second plank of their Post Year 10 policy in the very near future which will focus upon their long term vision for the Post Year 10 sector in Tasmania.



GREENS COMMIT TO SEVEN NEW DEDICATED LEARNING CENTRES FOR HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS

And Also Provide Urgent Infrastructure Funding for School Asbestos Hot-Spots

Nick McKim MP
Greens Leader

Saturday, 13 February 2010

For Comment: Tasmanian Greens Parliamentary Office, 6233 8300

www.tas.greens.org.au

The Tasmanian Greens today released their two-part \$46 million *Investing in Priority Infrastructure* policy commitment, which will deliver seven new Dedicated Learning Centres for high needs disengaged and disruptive students, as well as providing further funding for targeted asbestos removal from priority public school sites and urgent infrastructure upgrades.

Greens Leader and Education spokesperson Nick McKim MP said that this balanced plan delivers a win for high needs and disruptive students and their parents, a win for other students and their parents, and a win for teachers.

Highlights of the Greens' *Investing in Priority Education Funding* policy commitment include:

- A \$46 million package to deliver the following two key priority infrastructure programs:
 1. A \$36 million program to develop seven new Dedicated Learning Centres for disruptive and/or disengaged students to allow one-on-one with their teachers, with the funding distributed between:
 - (a) \$35 million over the forward estimates to build and/or retrofit the Centres; and
 - (b) \$1 million for the first year to fund the following: site and development consultation, planning processes to be undertaken, and the development of criteria by which individualised assessments are undertaken to identify students who will benefit from the new Dedicated Learning Centres.
 2. A \$10 million program to: (a) conduct an audit of asbestos in public schools, identify priority removal sites and provide targeted funding for removal; and (b) identify and fund priority school infrastructure upgrades.

"The current policy has not delivered for some high needs disruptive and disengaged students, and it hasn't worked for other students or teachers," Mr McKim said.

"This is a win-win-win outcome."

"The Dedicated Learning Centres program would receive \$36 million dollars under this policy commitment, which is about lifting the burden on teachers and providing better outcomes for all students in Tasmania's education sector."

“These seven new Centres will provide individualised learning environments where disengaged and disruptive students can develop career paths and life skills with personal attention from trained professionals.”

“This will give hope to students who are disengaged or feel alienated due to behavioural problems, as well as their parents, and will also allow teachers in other schools to focus 100 per cent on their students without disruption.”

Mr McKim outlined that the seven new Dedicated Learning Centres, which would either be built on greenfield sites or be current facilities assessed to be appropriate for retrofitting and adaptation for this purpose, would be situated in the following regions:

- Huon and the Channel
- Hobart
- Hobart’s Northern Suburbs
- Hobart’s Eastern Shore
- Launceston
- Devonport
- Burnie

Mr McKim, said that the policy provides for a specific West Coast and Bass Strait Islands needs assessment study to identify those communities’ demand for improved access to similar learning and support services.

“The second half of our Priority Education Infrastructure policy delivers \$10 million for the identification of key areas to be targeted for asbestos removal from public school sites, as well as provides for urgent infrastructure upgrades that schools have not been able to afford from their standard resource allocations.”

“We have listened to teachers, and we have listened to parents. This is a balanced policy that will deliver for everyone in public education,” Mr McKim said.

Attached: *Investing in Priority Education Infrastructure* policy commitment, released by Nick McKim MP, February 2010.

Investing in Priority Education Infrastructure

Launched by Nick McKim MP

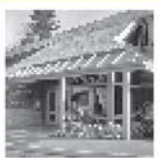
February 2010

READY TO DELIVER

\$46 million Priority Education Infrastructure package:

- ***\$35 million to build and/or retrofit seven new Dedicated Learning Centres around the state***
- ***\$1 million Consultation, Planning and Student Identification Assessment Criteria***
- ***\$10 million for targeted prioritised asbestos removal from priority public school sites; and to fund other urgent school infrastructure upgrades***
- ***Require a comprehensive audit of public schools to identify priority asbestos removal sites***

POLICY INITIATIVE OF THE TASMANIAN GREENS MPs



Investing in Priority Education Infrastructure

“Investing in school infrastructure that facilitates flexible learning options for those in need, as well as funding healthy built school environments, is an investment in the health, wellbeing and good educational outcomes for all of our young people.”

Nick McKim MP - Greens Leader

THE ISSUE:

Lack of Education Facilities for Those in Need

The mental health and emotional well-being of our young people is inextricably linked to learning participation and outcomes

Research shows that disruptive and disengaged students who cannot ‘fit in’ with mainstream schooling benefit from having alternative learning settings

There is insufficient alternative education infrastructure to provide these students and their teachers with suitable options that provide for one on one sessions

Maintenance & Asbestos Removal Not Prioritised

Some Tasmanian schools still have asbestos products on-site. The age of this material means it is degrading and releasing dangerous particles

The amount and type of asbestos products varies from school to school. Some schools are unable to fund from their standard resource allocation the safe removal of asbestos

Similarly other school infrastructure has degenerated to being dangerous, unsafe, or just unusable due to government failure to provide dedicated and targeted funding additional to standard maintenance budgets

THE TASMANIAN GREENS WILL:

Fund a \$46 million package to deliver two key priority infrastructure programs:

- ☑ **a \$36 million program to build and/or retrofit seven new Dedicated Learning Centres for disruptive and/or disengaged students to allow one-on-one with their teachers**
 - **develop criteria by which individualised assessments are undertaken to identify students who will benefit from the new dedicated learning centres**
- ☑ **a \$10 million program to: (1) conduct an audit of asbestos in public schools, identify priority removal sites and provide targeted funding for removal; and (2) identify and fund priority school infrastructure upgrades**

The Tasmanian Greens - Delivering Priority Education Infrastructure

Properly funding public education is a key priority of the Greens. And ensuring that adequate and targeted funding is provided to maintain and upgrade school infrastructure is an important component of delivering quality education services, just as new infrastructure to meet growing demand is also an investment in good education outcomes.

- ▲ Researchers, teachers, and parents all say that a serious gap in education infrastructure is the lack of dedicated alternative facilities for students with severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviours, and who do not cope with regular school settings. It is widely recognised that alternative physical settings are required to minimise the disruption on the education of other students, reduce the stress on teachers, and most importantly, provide an appropriate learning environment where these students’ needs can be identified and acted upon.
- ▲ We must also invest in safe and healthy school infrastructure. A key place to start is to identify the priority areas for asbestos removal from public schools.

PART 1: Dedicated Learning Centres

The Greens have long advocated that funding and support for high needs students needs to be increased, in line with our policy of supporting early identification and engagement with learners with difficulties.

Some students who are highly disengaged with regular school settings require alternative settings and individualized learning facilities, as these students can be particularly disruptive in class, leading to poor outcomes for themselves, as well as poor outcomes for the rest of the students in that class.

This initiative provides seven new dedicated centres for students with learning difficulties, for teachers and support staff who work with special needs students, and students who are disengaged from school and/or have significant behavioural problems.

- ▲ These seven new Dedicated Learning Centres will be available for both primary and secondary students.
- ▲ This program is not intended to remove high needs students from their classroom completely. Instead these Centres will provide a flexible option to improve learning outcomes for disruptive and disengaged students, minimize the disruption upon the rest of the class, and help teachers prioritise their focus as required.

This seven Dedicated Learning Centres commitment is a win-win-win initiative. It is a win for disruptive and disengaged students, a win for other students, and a win for their teachers.

\$1 million for the Consultation, Planning, and Student Identification Process

- ▲ The first year is when the stakeholder and community consultation process will occur, and feasibility studies undertaken. This process will also involve the identification of either potential greenfield sites, or the appropriate existing facilities that can be retrofitted for the purpose. Retrofitting will meet the Green 6-Star energy efficiency standard where practicable, as well as incorporate other efficiencies such as water saving devices.
- ▲ During this period, any site purchase and planning processes will get underway.
- ▲ This first year will also see the development, in consultation with unions, teachers and parents, of criteria by which an individualized assessment process is undertaken to identify the students who will benefit from these dedicated learning centres.
- ▲ This assessment process will incorporate both primary and secondary students, but will have a particular focus on identifying students while they are young, which will enhance current early intervention programs.

PART 1: Dedicated Learning Centres cont.

The Dedicated Learning Centres

\$35 million over the forward estimates will be provided for the development and construction of seven Dedicated Learning Centres around the state, one each in the following regions:

1. Huon and the Channel
2. Hobart
3. Hobart's Northern Suburbs
4. Hobart's Eastern Shore
5. Launceston
6. Devonport
7. Burnie.

These seven new Centres will either be built on greenfield sites, or will be already available venues which have been identified as appropriate for adaptation and retrofitting.

There will also be a specific West Coast and Bass Strait Islands' needs assessment study to identify those communities' demand for improved access to these learning and support services. In particular that study will examine transport restrictions and options, technological options, and any upgrade of infrastructure requirements.

The Dedicated Learning Centres Will:

- ▲ Support both primary and secondary students
- ▲ Provide alternative settings for highly disengaged or disruptive students, to be utilized as that individual student's needs determine. Depending on individualized learning plans for students some may also spend regular time in school settings.
- ▲ Provide individualized learning opportunities, and facilitate regular one on one sessions with teachers
- ▲ Provide vocational programs to develop career paths
- ▲ Encourage community learning and small group tuition
- ▲ Assist in providing appropriate access into schools to help students with their socialization
- ▲ Provide dedicated training and support for teachers and support staff who work with special needs students, and students who are disengaged from school and/or have significant behavioural problems.

PART 2: Priority Infrastructure Upgrades and Asbestos Removal Program

An additional and extra **\$10 million** over four years will be provided to establish the Priority Infrastructure Upgrades and Asbestos Removal program.

Asbestos Removal

- ▲ This program will allow Tasmania to join Queensland and Western Australia, both of which have centrally funded school asbestos removal programs.
- ▲ There is no safe level of asbestos, and due to the age of asbestos items within our school facilities they are degrading and releasing particles into the school environment.
- ▲ The first step will be a comprehensive audit of all public Tasmanian schools to identify asbestos priority removal.
- ▲ This funding is extra and additional to schools' current funding packages, and will be dedicated to the program's specified purpose. Funding that is allocated to schools on a needs basis for asbestos removal and remediation will be required to be spent for that purpose.

Priority Infrastructure Upgrades

- ▲ Some schools have serious problems with old, damaged or dangerous infrastructure, which they have not been able to address out of their standard school resource package.
- ▲ This program will provide extra and additional funding for specific and targeted infrastructure upgrades, to be allocated on a needs basis.

Investment in the Priority Education Infrastructure Package

This **\$46 million** Priority Education Infrastructure package (which incorporates the above two programs) will be expended over the forward estimates.

Funds allocated from the *Priority Infrastructure Upgrades and Asbestos Removal Program* is extra and additional to the current funding allocation provided to schools as part of their resource package, and will be required to spend it on the specific identified project(s).

	2009-10 Budget	2010-11 Forward Estimate	2011-12 Forward Estimate	2012-13 Forward Estimate
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Part 1:				
Consultation, Feasibility and Planning Process, plus development of student identification criteria	1 000
Learning Centre Development, Construction and Retrofitting Program	15 000	10 000	10 000
Part 2:				
Priority Infrastructure Upgrades and Asbestos Removal Program	3 000	3 000	2 000	2 000

Your Greens Representatives in Tasmania's State Parliament



State Parliamentary Offices of the Tasmanian Greens
Level 1, 162 Macquarie Street, Hobart, 7000

Postal Address: Parliament House, Hobart, 7000

Phone: (03) 6233 8300

Fax: (03) 6223 1406

E-mail: greens@parliament.tas.gov.au