

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **BUILDING A BETTER NATIONAL FUTURE THROUGH EDUCATION:**

Parents applaud Rudd Government's school infrastructure initiative

"The best investment any government can make towards our future prosperity is to invest in the education of all our young people," said ACSSO President Steve Carter, responding to the Rudd Government's \$14.7 billion infrastructure program. "That is the leverage point for nation building.

"Every young Australian deserves access to the full array of high quality learning and development opportunities that will enable them to achieve their potential, lead fulfilling lives and contribute as members of a cohesive and productive society.

"High quality teaching is central – but to be fully effective such high quality teaching must be supported by facilities and infrastructure of a matching high quality, currency and availability.

"The parents of Australia's public schools in particular have long argued the need for a total, inclusive national upgrade of education buildings, facilities and infrastructure to a common national standard of excellence that will contribute to the best possible learning opportunities and outcomes for every child.

"An Education Revolution which sets out to achieve the essential transformational improvements in education outcomes right across the country, cannot afford to ignore the limiting effects of obsolete, or inadequate facilities, crumbling infrastructure and dysfunctional buildings left over from another era. It must recognise that the piecemeal patchwork approaches of recent years, the constant catch-up where no school really ever catches up, is inadequate for a leading educational system in the modern world.

"ACSSO applauds and congratulates the Rudd Government on its clear realisation of this central need right across the country, and its commitment to move swiftly, nationally and inclusively to bring every school up to the standards necessary to deliver high quality education in a way that will make a real difference for every student, every family, every community – and our collective national future.

"It will be important that funding will be based on real need, and the extent to which each school may fall short of the desired and required standards for a 21st century education," Steve noted.

"It is equally important that the parents, students and whole school community be brought into the processes and have a shared and contributory partnership role in shaping, informing and directing the opportunities and processes of change. The recent UK "Joined Up Design for Schools" program has clearly demonstrated that such community engagement in the process contributes to better outcomes."

This initiative recognises very appropriately the vitally important contribution of the Primary School years in shaping effective learning and personal development of each and every young Australian – and we welcome in particular the major focus on the needs of that sector of education.

We also applaud the specific focus on the need to provide Science Labs and Language Learning Centres of the highest quality in secondary schools. Science and technology are central to Australia's productivity and prosperous future.

Language skills and associated inter-cultural understanding will similarly be an increasingly vital component of the capacity of all Australians to operate effectively in an increasingly globalised modern world environment.

ACSSO totally supports the fundamentally important strategic purpose of the "Building the Education Revolution" initiatives and is fully committed to working positively and productively with the Australian Government to contribute to the achievement of the essential objectives of this landmark program, on behalf of students, families and school communities in every part of the country.

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Media Comment:

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