Dear Colleagues

There is no doubt in my mind that education is the key to achieving growth in terms of individuals but also growth for Tasmania’s communities.

This year, I am pleased to share with you that the Government has committed $1.3 billion to education and training in this year’s State Budget.

Education and training is one of the most crucial investments a Government can make starting with the early years, strengthening K-12 education, creating positive learning environments, lifting our retention and attainment rates and supporting skills training.

One of the highlights in this year’s Budget includes an allocation of $83 million over the next four years to implement the State Government’s response to the reforms advocated in the Gonski Report.

The Tasmanian Education Funding Reform package will go towards improving educational outcomes and provide needs based funding to Tasmanian schools.

It is important that young Tasmanians from all backgrounds receive an education that is equitable, of high quality and maximises their potential in life.

The Budget also includes $65 million for education infrastructure over the next four years including $22 million in 2013-14 for an additional 11 new projects. I truly believe that if we are to prepare students for the 21st century we need to provide the best possible teaching and learning environments.

We are also supporting Year 11 and 12 regional education with an injection of $900,000 over the next four years to ensure learners can continue to access quality education throughout the State as part of a 6 point action plan that I released earlier this week.

The Government will also continue to support the early years and ensure that there is continuous improvement in literacy and numeracy in our schools through a range of programs.

Over $3.1 million has been made available to fund an eStrategy that will support a range of learning models for all Tasmanians including those 15-19 year olds in regional Tasmania.

We are also ensuring that Tasmanians are equipped with the skills needed to enter the workforce by committing nearly $9.9 million in 2013-14 under the Skills for Work initiative.

I really appreciate your commitment to education and training over the past year. Thank you for your efforts, and all the best for the future.

Warm Regards

Nick McKim MP
Minister for Education and Skills