

Kim Beazley's Plan for our Schools

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Overview

21st CENTURY SCHOOLS

Labor believes that our future national prosperity lies in the minds of our children. We must invest not just in some of them and occasionally, but in all of them and continually for our nation to be all that it can.

The great tragedy of the Howard Government's education policies is that our country can't make it as a Knowledge Nation unless we educate every child to the highest standard.

We must not let any group, or any disadvantaged area, be left behind – this country is too small, and its workforce too important, to reward only the few.

Our aim is to give every child access to a quality education and the same chance to achieve their full potential.

Our aim is also to improve standards – in students' results, retention rates, teaching, curriculum and behaviour.

To achieve this we must turn all of our schools into 21st Century Schools.

We must increase the funding of schools and target more resources to schools that need them.

We must improve early learning opportunities so that every child gets a better start.

We must use the Internet to provide information and assistance to students and their parents and ensure that our children have the skills and qualifications that will get them into further study, training or a good job.

We must repair and modernise our school buildings to make our schools places that the community can be proud of and that students will respect.

And we must invest to continually improve the skills of our teachers and attract high achievers into the teaching profession.

KIM BEAZLEY'S PLAN FOR OUR SCHOOLS

LABOR'S PLAN FOR 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS

Labor will invest more than an extra \$1 billion over the next five years to create **21st Century Schools** with a strong focus on improving results in disadvantaged areas, creating more early learning places for pre-schoolers, access to the most up-to-date learning technologies, modernized and relevant curricula and a massive expansion of school-to-work programs to tackle the problem of youth unemployment.

Labor has already announced a \$227.8 million plan to attract high achievers into teaching, retrain existing teachers and improve public school facilities.

The new announcements in this policy invest an extra \$692 million over the next five years.

Labor will be making further significant school policy announcements later in the campaign that will take our investment to more than \$1 billion.

Labor's plan will:

1. Give disadvantaged schools an average of \$1 million each by establishing **Education Priority Zones** to work with communities where education results need to be improved and too few young people are finishing year 12 and going on to university, TAFE or an apprenticeship. By the fifth year of this program 54 **Education Priority Zones** comprising approximately 640 schools will be helping approximately 205,000 students. The total investment will be \$430 million over five years.
2. Invest \$100 million over five years to provide additional early childhood education opportunities in primary schools in communities that lack adequate pre-school or other early learning centres. Offering quality early childhood education at local public schools will ensure that these children will have a much smoother transition to school and gain a solid foundation in essential literacy, numeracy and social skills.
3. Modernise Australian education by investing \$50 million over five years to create **The Learning Gateway**. This Internet portal will offer access to online homework assistance from trained teachers, education information, resources and tools to parents, teachers and students across Australia.
4. Provide an additional \$25 million to fund research into **modernising curricula** and give Australian students the opportunity to get new qualifications that will help them get a job and give them the skills they need for university, TAFE or an apprenticeship.
5. Get more school leavers into jobs by massively **expanding the Jobs Pathways Program**. This will create approximately 200,000 additional places over five years at a total cost of \$70 million.
6. **Abolish the Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment** that has taken \$60 million from government schools.
7. **Increase funding for special education students at non-government schools** from the current \$527 per child per year to around \$750.

These newly announced policies build on Labor's existing commitments to invest:

- \$110.5 million extra for public school capital works;
- \$108 million to retrain 4,000 teachers a year; and

- \$9.3 million for 1,000 new HECS-free scholarships per year to attract high achievers into teaching.

21st Century Schools: Labor's Five-Year Costings Table

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	Total
Education Priority Zones	20.0	60.0	70.0	120.0	160.0	430.0
Better Early Childhood Education	5.0	5.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	100.0
The Learning Gateway	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	50.0
New Curricula	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	25.0
Jobs Pathways Program expansion	5.0	10.0	15.0	20.0	20.0	70.0
Special Education Funding for Non-Government Schools	0	2.5	5.0	5.0	5.0	17.5
Capital for Public Schools	4.5	16.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	110.5
Teacher Scholarships	0.4	1.0	1.7	2.4	3.8	9.3
Teacher Development	12.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	108.0
Abolishing the Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Public Education Alliance	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL (\$m)	61.9	133.5	190.7	246.4	287.8	920.3
<i>Savings from Cat. 1 Schools</i>	<i>-15.0</i>	<i>-37.5</i>	<i>-52.5</i>	<i>-35.0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-135.0</i>

EDUCATION PRIORITY ZONES

While the Howard Government attacks public education and provides massive funding increases for the 58 elite Category 1 schools, Labor will provide extra funding to the schools and communities that need it the most.

Our goal is to increase educational standards and results in these schools and increase the number of children who complete Year 12 and go on to university, TAFE or and apprenticeship.

We must prevent the creation of a two-tier education system if Australia is to become a Knowledge Nation.

It can be done. The many examples of schools in disadvantaged communities where student outcomes are high demonstrate that these disadvantages can be overcome.

That's why Labor will invest \$430 million over five years to establish a national network of **Education Priority Zones**.

Education Priority Zones will be established in clusters of schools where results need to be improved and where retention rates are low and too few children are going on to university, TAFE, an apprenticeship or secure employment.

The former Disadvantaged Schools Program, which was abolished by the Howard Government, provided additional funding to individual schools.

An essential part of our plan for **Education Priority Zones** is to provide additional funds to encourage local schools, and their communities, to work collaboratively to solve common problems.

By the fifth year of this program there will be approximately 54 **Education Priority Zones**, comprising 640 schools and helping up to 205,000 children.

The share of funds for an average-sized school in an **Education Priority Zone** will be an additional \$1 million over four years.

In each **Education Priority Zone** the Commonwealth will work with the community to develop a local plan to improve school results. These plans must include a commitment to focus on core educational outcomes, such as literacy, numeracy and year-12 completion rates.

To achieve this, specific initiatives will be funded to address local needs identified by the community and agreed with the Commonwealth.

These initiatives could include:

- employing more teachers to reduce class sizes and give more students one-on-one attention;
- employing specialist remedial literacy and numeracy teachers;
- extra training in key subjects and classroom skills for teachers;
- improving student behaviour;
- options to increase vocational education and training (VET) in schools;
- offering formal IT qualifications at school and lap top computer programs for senior students;
- providing students with mentors who will help with study and advice;
- encouraging local businesses and local government to work with schools to give them a better understanding of the importance of education to the world of work and offer appropriate workplace learning opportunities;
- strengthening the links between local schools, universities and TAFE colleges to help get more children into university, TAFE or an apprenticeship; and
- expanding access to special education initiatives.

Education Priority Zones will also seek to improve parents' involvement in schools and raise expectations for their children.

Schools will be funded for four years and student performance will be closely monitored through testing, including basic skills testing, to ensure that the region gains the greatest benefit from the program.

Education Priority Zones will have a significant role to play in improving the education outcomes of many Indigenous Australians through the establishment of an appropriate number of Zones in Indigenous communities.

BETTER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Every parent knows how quickly infants learn and how crucial it is for their child's development that they are encouraged to draw, count and recognise letters even before they start school.

In Canada, research by Professor Fraser Mustard has suggested that improving early childhood development for four year olds, not only gives children a better start at primary school, but also increases their chances of excelling through high school and beyond.

The lessons in Australia and many others countries are that the earlier you spend an extra dollar in education the bigger the difference it makes.

By developing learning abilities early, we can give children skills that will dramatically improve their education outcomes throughout their life and boost their prospects of entering university, TAFE or an apprenticeship and living healthier lives.

Unfortunately, too many children do not have access to early childhood education. As a result, some children receive little or no formal preparation for school. These children are missing out on an important opportunity for a good start.

Labor will provide \$100 million over five years to provide additional early childhood education opportunities in State primary schools. By the fifth year, this will employ around 429 additional early learning teachers.

These additional resources will be provided to the states to enable primary schools to run additional early learning programs in communities not adequately served by pre-schools and other early learning services.

At Niagara Park Primary School on the NSW Central Coast, four year olds are given the opportunity to attend "Play School" one morning each fortnight throughout the year.

Children have the opportunity to improve their pre-writing, reading and number skills, work with their future classmates and teachers and become familiar with their new school.

The program is run by a qualified early childhood teacher with volunteer support from parents and helps identify areas of need such as language delays, socially immature children or those with physical problems such as poor hearing. Children with learning difficulties are offered extra help.

To join the program parents must agree to attend two meetings during the year to receive information on the school and how parents can best help their children learn at home.

Primary schools, like Niagara Park are already providing excellent programs, our goal is to dramatically expand the number of schools that do.

THE LEARNING GATEWAY

The Internet offers new opportunities to involve parents in their children's schooling and to assist students outside school hours.

Labor will invest \$50 million over five years to open *The Learning Gateway* – an Internet portal that will:

- provide education information, resources and tools to students, parents and teachers;
- give parents and students access to qualified teachers online to provide advice and assistance, initially for senior students;

- improve education outcomes by giving students access to high quality learning materials online; and
- ensure Australia is at the cutting edge in developing multi-media education content.

The Learning Gateway will give parents the information they need to play a greater role in their children's education, including information on their children's curriculum; their expected progress; sample tests; advice on how to assist their child; and access to teachers outside school hours.

It will give teachers access to teaching resources including the best practice of their peers and high-quality Australian content.

It will give students tools to improve their study and links to the best available learning resources.

Students, initially senior students, using **The Learning Gateway** will have access to teachers online outside school hours for homework and study assistance.

Labor will also use **The Learning Gateway** to further develop the Australian education content industry by commissioning high quality Australian content.

When fully developed, The Learning Gateway will also deliver high quality online content relevant to vocational education and training, tertiary education and adult and community education.

NEW CURRICULA

It is appropriate that the national Government should take a leadership role on research into new curriculum in areas such as middle years, New Basics and IT literacy.

Research shows that many children's educational progress slows between the ages of nine and twelve and that some students appear to respond better to long term projects as opposed to eight classes in eight different subjects each day.

Under Labor, the Commonwealth will invest an additional \$25 million over five years for curriculum development and making new qualifications available to secondary school students.

The Commonwealth will work with the States to ensure the curricula in our schools are giving our children the skills they need for satisfying and productive lives in our rapidly changing world.

For instance, new curricula could include the opportunity for children to leave school with industry-recognised IT qualifications that will help them get a good job and give them the skills they need for university, TAFE or an apprenticeship.

EXPANDING THE JOBS PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Labor will invest \$70 million over five years to help approximately 200,000 more young Australians get a job when they leave school.

For young people without formal qualifications, leaving school and finding a job is harder than ever before. There are currently 6 unemployed people for every job. All too often, young Australians are failing to make the transition, and run the risk of having their working lives blighted before they even begin.

Investing at this crucial juncture can avoid much greater problems down the track.

Labor's increased investment in the Jobs Pathways Program will enable every child to complete school with a significant boost into the workforce.

There are many paths for young people to follow – university, training (including TAFE, apprenticeships and traineeships) and a job. Labor will ensure that every student gets the right amount of advice and assistance. It's the best way to tackle the high unemployment rate among school leavers.

Labor began the Job Pathways Program and by radically expanding it more students will have access to this program that targets students 'at risk' of becoming unemployed and/or leaving school early.

These students are provided with counseling as well as access to a training or work experience program in local industry. Best practice models for undertaking the JPP program will be encouraged under the contracts that are allocated, and Labor will ensure that services are not duplicated with those operating at the State level.

Only around 20 percent of 15 to 19 year old high school students currently have access to this program that was piloted under Labor.

Labor's \$70 million in funding will help an approximately 200,000 additional students over five years to ensure that our school leavers get a job or stay in education and don't slip through the net.

Labor's policy will lead to the employment of an additional 200 Jobs Pathways career advisers in our schools in the fifth year of the program.

Labor will also give certainty of funding to the Jobs Pathways Program by extending the length of contracts from the current seven months to two years. This will allow career advisers to pay salaries and invest for the long-term, rather than worry about whether or not they will receive funding in a few months time.

ABOLISHING THE ENROLMENT BENCHMARK ADJUSTMENT

The Howard Government's unfair Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment (EBA) policy has taken more than \$60 million from public schools over the last three years even though those schools have enrolled more than 26,000 extra students.

Labor will abolish the EBA and return this funding to the States to spend on schools.

In January this year the Howard Government claimed to have abolished the EBA.

In fact, they still took the money from the States but promised to give it back if the States did what John Howard demanded.

The Howard Government wanted States to cut existing programs, like Reading Recovery, and start new ones the Howard Government could claim credit for.

Labor will not allow this. The funding to which the States are entitled will be returned to them, and new initiatives to strengthen our public schools – as set out in Labor's policies above – will be properly funded.

SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Labor will provide a 40 percent increase in the per capita funding for special education students at non-government schools.

An increase in funding of \$5 million a year will allow the Commonwealth to increase the current payment of \$527 per child per year to around \$750.

This will enable non-government schools to improve the education they can give to children with disabilities and special learning needs.

NEW TEACHERS

Labor's plan to create **21st Century Schools** will lead to the employment of 2,229 extra teachers and career advisers in 2005, leading to smaller class sizes and more one-on-one attention for students.

	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
New Education Priority Zone Teachers*	200	600	700	1,200	1,600
New Early Childhood Teachers	71	71	429	429	429
New Jobs Pathway School Counsellors	50	100	150	200	200
Total New Teachers	321	771	1,279	1,829	2,229

* This is calculated on the assumption that 70 percent of the EPZ budgets of each school will be spent employing additional teachers and related staff. This is based on an average figure across Australian States of 70 percent of state school budgets devoted to salaries at an average unit cost of \$70,000, including salaries and on-costs.

Kim Beazley's Plan for Teachers and School Facilities

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

In too many of our schools teachers are being forced to teach subjects – particularly maths, science and IT - in which they are not fully qualified. This is not fair on the teacher and not good enough for the students.

To address this problem, Labor will invest \$108 million over five years to offer **Teacher Development Partnerships** to 4,000 teachers each year in government and non-government schools to help them upgrade their skills and knowledge and reward them for doing so.

Teachers who accept a partnership and undertake a semester of part-time training in their own time will receive up to \$4,000 towards their course costs and a completion payment of \$2,000.

Priority will be given to:

- teachers who are forced to teach outside their area of specialty, particularly in maths and science; and
- teachers, particularly primary teachers, who need to improve their IT skills.

TEACHER EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

We know that the quality of teaching is the single most important factor in students' results.

That is why we must place a higher priority on recruiting and retaining the best teachers.

And that is why Labor will offer 1,000 HECS-free scholarships each year to attract high achievers into a teaching career.

Teaching students who win a scholarship will have the annual HECS repayments forgiven for each year they teach in a government or non-government school after graduation.

In this way, Labor's **Teacher Excellence Scholarships** will act as an incentive not only to attract the best students into teaching but also to encourage them to remain in teaching.

INVESTING IN PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

Federal Labor will provide \$110.5 million over five years to improve the classrooms, libraries and laboratories of our public schools.

Matching by the States will increase the total to \$221 million over five years. John Howard is planning to give massive increases to the 58 elite Category 1 schools which already have facilities most schools could only dream about.

Labor will re-direct this funding and use it to narrow the gap between public schools and Category 1 schools, not widen it.

SAVINGS FROM ELITE CATEGORY 1 PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Labor does not believe that the 58 elite Category 1 schools need the massive funding increases delivered to them by the Howard Government.

Labor will fund these 58 elite Category 1 schools at their fully indexed 2000 funding levels in 2002, 2003 and 2004.

Instead, Labor will spend the \$135 million, which would have paid for these increases, on areas of genuine educational need:

- increased capital funding for public schools;
- 1,000 scholarships each year to attract high achievers into teaching; and
- 4,000 training courses each year for exiting teachers to improve their skill and knowledge.

NATIONAL PUBLIC EDUCATION ALLIANCE

The **National Public Education Alliance** (NPEA) contains a long-term commitment from all Labor Federal, State and Territory leaders to:

- increase funding for public schools in real terms over the next decade;
- end the blame-shifting between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories that holds back real progress; and
- co-operate on Federal Labor's new initiatives to strengthen and modernise our public schools for the 21st Century.

Labor will work with the States and Territories to deliver real educational improvements in our schools through our plans for:

- **Education Priority Zones;**
- Better early childhood education;
- **New Curricula;**

- ***The Learning Gateway***;
- Expanding the Jobs Pathways Program;
- Increased capital funding for public schools; and
- Improving the quality of teaching through ***Teacher Excellence Scholarships*** and ***Teacher Development Partnerships***.

Non-Government Schools

Under Labor all non-government schools, except the 58 elite Category 1 schools, will receive their full funding entitlements, as contained in the *States Grants (Primary and Secondary Education Assistance) Act 2000*.

Labor fully supports the funding of non-government schools on the basis of need.

Labor has pledged to review the SES funding system for the 2005-2008 quadrennium, to make it fairer and we will consult with all non-government school groups as part of that review.

As well as guaranteeing existing funding, Labor's new policies will mean significant benefits for both government and non-government schools.

Non-government schools will receive a 40 percent increase in the per capita funding for special education students and, like public schools, non-government schools will have access to the following programs on the basis of need:

- ***Education Priority Zones*** (\$430 million over five years);
- ***Teacher Development Partnerships*** – professional development opportunities for 4,000 existing teachers nationally each year (\$108 million over five years);
- ***Teacher Excellence Scholarships*** – designed to attract high achievers into teaching career (\$9.3m over five years); and
- ***The Learning Gateway*** (\$50m over five years); and
- ***New Curricula*** (\$25m over five years).

Costing

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	Total
Education Priority Zones	20.0	60.0	70.0	120.0	270.0
Better Early Childhood Education	5.0	5.0	30.0	30.0	70.0
The Learning Gateway	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	40.0
New Curricula	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	20.0
Jobs Pathways Program expansion	5.0	10.0	15.0	20.0	50.0
Special Education Funding for Non-Government Schools	0	2.5	5.0	5.0	12.5
Abolishing the Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment	0	0	0	0	0
Capital for Public Schools ¹	4.5	16.0	30.0	30.0	80.5
Teacher Scholarships ¹	0.4	1.0	1.7	2.4	5.5
Teacher Development ¹	12.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	84.0
Savings from Category 1 Private Schools ¹	-15.0	-37.5	-52.5	-35.0	-135.0
National Public Education Alliance ¹	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL (million) ²	46.9	96.0	138.2	211.4	497.5

This table is prepared on a four-year basis to comply with the requirements of the Charter of Budget Honesty. However, the full costings for Labor's five-year program are found in the table on page 3.

1. These programs were announced on 10 October 2001 in *Kim Beazley's Plan for Teachers and Schools*.
2. The costing table above figures reflects the full value of *Kim Beazley's Plan for our Schools*. The net impact on the Budget (\$m) is:

2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	Total
\$45.0	\$92.5	\$135.0	\$190.0	\$462.5