Chief Minister Clare Martin today announced that funding for the first stage of the estimated $7 million redevelopment of Darwin High School will be provided in the Territory Budget to be handed down on May 27.

Ms Martin said this fulfilled a promise made by Labor at the last election.

One million dollars has been allocated for 2003/04 to begin the much-needed work.

The proposed redevelopment over the next three years will result in:

- The upgrading of existing facilities such as the multi-purpose hall;
- The construction of new science laboratories;
- The demolition of sections of Block A to enable the area to be turned into standard classrooms;
- The refurbishment of block B to provide extra classroom space;
- The relocation of staff faculty rooms; and
- Supply of temporary demountables during the redevelopment.

"The redevelopment of Darwin High is long overdue," Ms Martin said.

"The school has enrolments of over 1100 students, which is very close to its current total capacity of 1200.

"Some of the facilities are below acceptable standards and we need to ensure that students and teachers are able to operate in the best possible environment.

"I am pleased to announce this today, fulfilling a promise Labor made at the last election."

Ms Martin said the Darwin High redevelopment was part of Government’s ongoing capital works program to upgrade, replace or build schools throughout the Territory to meet the needs of students, staff and communities.

"With education as one of our highest priorities, the Government is committed to ensuring students have the best facilities possible in which to undertake their studies," she said.

The allocation for next financial year will enable the completion of design work on the project and the start of the redevelopment.