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SHEPHERDSON COLLEGE UPGRADE UNDERWAY

Site work has begun on a new $2.5 million senior secondary block for Shepherdson College at Galiwinku on Elcho Island, Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said today.

Mr Stirling said the investment was part of the Territory Government’s efforts to improve remote students’ access to secondary education, with funding allocated for the project in Budget 2004.

“The project is also providing jobs for Territorians, with Brustolin Builders from Palmerston winning the contract to build the facility.

“The ground-level U-shaped facility will contain a computer lab, science lab, a music room, an art room, two classrooms, a teacher resource and study room, a careers’ counselling room, and a homelands learning centre.

“It is hoped to have the facility up and running by Semester II this year.

“Ensuring our young people have access to a quality education is a big part of Government’s efforts to keep the Territory moving ahead.

“As well as building better schools, Government has implemented a range of initiatives to improve education in the Territory including employing 100 extra teachers.

“Our efforts to improve access to secondary education in remote communities is beginning to pay off, with three Indigenous students from Kalkaringi graduating from Year 12 in 2003 and a further four receiving their senior certificate in Maningrida last year.

“It would be great to see similar results coming out of Shepherdson CEC this year.”

More than 600 students are enrolled at Shepherdson, which accommodates students from pre-school through to senior school, as well as administering seven off-campus homeland learning centres.