Richard Lim, MLA
Deputy Leader of the Opposition,
Shadow Minister for Employment, Education and Training;
Corporate & Information Services; Communications;
Multicultural Affairs; and Central Australia.

3rd May 2005

Minister for Employment, Education and Training Indicts Himself Over Primary School Education Losses With His Own Budget Papers

Shadow Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Dr Richard Lim has criticised the Minister for his failure to manage education over the term of his government, pointing to the huge loss of 1,288 primary school students from the Northern Territory since 2002-03.

“It is an indictment on the Labor Minister for Employment, Education and Training, who has presided over an annual blow-out on the DEET budget now totalling almost $600m, while primary schools across the Territory have suffered a loss of over 1,000 students and with more predicted losses for 2005-06,” Dr Lim said.

“The primary school budget has grown from $224.5m in 2002-03 to the current budgeted figure of $246.8m while the number of primary school students has gone from 20,888 in 2002-03 to 19,851 for this financial year.

“The Minister, in his Budget Book Number 3 predicts a further loss of 251 primary school students for 2005-06.

“This is truly a reflection of a Minister who does not know how to manage his portfolio, haplessly spending money for a decreasing return for Territorians.

“We have suffered a major population loss, and that is clearly reflected in our schools.

“What is this Labor Government doing about the population loss?

“The Country Liberal Party, as the alternate government, will have policies in place to ensure that we have continuous population growth of around 2.5 per cent per year.

“We will implement policies that will ensure that our school population continues to grow, in anticipation of economic growth stimulation under our policies.

“We have had a wasted 4 years under this Labor Government,” Dr Lim said.

Ends

Contact: Dr Richard Lim 0418 897 688