$10 MILLION TO BE INVESTED IN PALMERSTON SCHOOLS

The Territory Government will invest $10 million to improve enrolment capacity in Palmerston schools, using the funds previously set aside for construction of a senior secondary college at the Charles Darwin University Palmerston Campus.

Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said Government had made the decision to spend the funds on the most pressing priorities in the Palmerston area.

“After careful consideration and analysis, Government believes that a new senior secondary college in Palmerston is not required at this stage.

“However, a number of Palmerston primary schools as well as Palmerston High School are facing growing enrolments and this issue needs to be addressed as a matter of priority.

“The $10 million will be better spent focusing on these existing facilities.

“Woodroffe Primary School is currently at 98% enrolment capacity and Durack Primary at 93%.

“In the short term, each school will receive purpose-built transportable classrooms worth $500,000 each, to be in place early in the 2006 school year.

“The rest of the funds will be set aside to boost secondary education infrastructure in Palmerston, probably at Palmerston High School.

“Exactly how this funding will be spent will depend on discussions with the community during the Middle Years consultation process.

“While Palmerston High School has high enrolments, it is still well within capacity and we want to ensure we make the right decisions that properly address future growth in the area before investing the funding.

“Palmerston is a growth area, with its population fluctuating rapidly across suburbs. Government is closely monitoring those changes and addressing needs accordingly.

“This $10 million investment will resolve the immediate needs of Palmerston school communities.”

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