



The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP

Premier of NSW

Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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GETTING ON WITH THE JOB, HONOURING COMMITMENTS: LITERACY AND NUMERACY ACTION PLAN

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell and Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli today announced an investment of \$24 million in 2012 to hire 200 full time equivalent teachers to target underperformance in literacy and numeracy across the government and non-government school sectors.

"One year ago we committed to additional literacy and numeracy teachers for the State's schools – today we are delivering," Mr O'Farrell said during a visit to the Exodus Foundation in Ashfield.

"This is the start of the NSW Government delivering on its commitment to provide 900 extra teachers across NSW schools," he said.

"These additional teachers will target those students most in need of assistance in the earliest years of school.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals made a strong commitment to improving the literacy and numeracy of students in NSW and I'm determined to deliver on that," he said.

Mr Piccoli also announced the NSW Government had accepted the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group on Literacy and Numeracy established last year in line with the government's election commitment.

"Under the expert leadership of Dr Ken Boston AO, the Advisory Group has recommended a plan of action to boost the literacy and numeracy of students in NSW and those recommendations will now be implemented," he said.

The key recommendations of the Advisory Group are:

- Early identification of the level of attainment in literacy and numeracy of each individual child and tailoring a specific program of learning to that child's needs;
- Change in teaching practice from a focus on the whole class to a focus on the needs of the individual student; and,
- Using tiered interventions according to need where remediation in literacy or numeracy is needed.

Mr Piccoli said the change to the focus on the needs of individual students will involve three key elements:

- Personalised learning;
- Diagnostic assessment; and,

- Teacher professional development in the classroom under the direction of an instructional leader.

“In Government schools, we will provide funding for the appointment of 50 hands-on Instructional Leaders in the public schools with the greatest need, with the first five appointed by the end of May,” Mr Piccoli said.

“The NSW Government will implement the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group because it is committed to investing in approaches to improving the literacy and numeracy of NSW students that will work.

“What the Ministerial Advisory Group has made clear, is that not all students requiring special attention were being identified and given the appropriate attention – that needs to change.

“It has also revealed that there has been very little evaluation of the success or cost effectiveness of existing programs.

“Instructional leaders will focus on providing classroom-based professional development to teachers in personalised learning and diagnostic assessment.

“They will help to tailor interventions for individual students and take responsibility for coordinating the resources available to the school into a single strategy to improve literacy and numeracy performance.

“Each of the Government, Catholic and Independent sectors will be required to track and report on the achievements of the students in the schools nominated for the intervention.

“To make sure this intervention works, a five year independent evaluation of the whole program will start this year,” Mr Piccoli said.

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