SCHOOLS BENEFIT FROM NEW BROADBAND NETWORK

The Minister for Education and Training, Verity Firth, said today that NSW public schools would now have access to high-speed, reliable internet services after the successful rollout of the nation’s largest broadband network.

“This massive $280 million investment is providing high-speed broadband to over 2,400 public school and TAFE sites across NSW,” Ms Firth said.

“It means every student in NSW including those in rural and regional schools can now be connected to the world and link up with experts from universities and other classrooms in NSW and overseas.

“We have equipped the state’s 1.2 million public school and TAFE students with internet access that allows them to use their email, video conferencing and interactive whiteboards in the classroom.

“This investment, coupled with our $158 million Connected Classrooms initiative and the Commonwealth Government’s $442 million Digital Education Revolution in NSW has resulted in unprecedented investment in technology in public schools,” Ms Firth said.

Telstra CEO David Thodey said it would provide students and teachers with access to technology that was never previously possible.

“Our children are growing-up in a world where high-speed broadband will be an essential tool for learning about the world and connecting with others. These 1.2 million students are now connected to Telstra’s high-speed broadband network, giving them speeds that are equal to many of Australia’s largest companies,” Mr Thodey said.

Ms Firth congratulated Telstra for the rollout of more than 4,500 kilometres of optic fibre to more than 2,400 sites, with the investment creating around 150 jobs.

“Only ten contracted schools now remain and we expect those sites to be connected by the end of this year – which is still within schedule. The infrastructure rollout has now been officially met having exceeded the contracted target of 95% completion.”

Ms Firth said the NSW Government had delivered on its promise to provide one of the biggest broadband networks in the southern hemisphere.

“In western NSW for example, we now have teachers from multiple schools delivering HSC courses through the internet and Connected Classrooms which is improving the learning opportunities for remote students.”