Billion-dollar battle for vote on education

Eliza Barr

LIBERAL and Labor state election candidates are battling to buy voters' support with billion dollar plans for the state's schools.

Education minister Adrian Piccoli announced a re-elected Baird government would spend $148 million on nearly upgrades for 60 secondary schools, $1 billion on 1600 new or refurbished classrooms, and $200 million on four new high schools.

The Liberal plans include upgrades at Ashfield Boys High School and Burwood Girls High School, and a new high school for the inner city.

"All children deserve a great education in a well-equipped school with up-to-date facilities," Mr Piccoli said.

"This funding will upgrade schools that need it most, enhancing their learning spaces and how they present to their local community."

Mr Piccoli also said that schools would receive additional support to improve teaching practices and engage with parents and students.

"We have been working with world-leading educators, designers and architects to create the classrooms of the future, which we will build across NSW if we are re-elected," Mr Piccoli said.

SCHOOLS THE BIG WINNERS

257,000 students are expected to be enrolled in NSW schools by 2031.

According to Infrastructure NSW, we need to build 6250 classrooms, including 5450 classrooms in Sydney - 4050 of them in Western Sydney.

16,000 more school places will be needed for children living in the City of Sydney local government area alone.

Ms Firth said that Labor wanted to help schools build better partnerships with their local communities.

"On weekends and during the holidays, many schools are locked away from the local community - there's a lot of potential to unlock these assets for wider use while allowing principals to tap into valuable sources of extra money for their school," Ms Firth said.