

1. If you were elected, what would be your first initiative within the electorate, to improve the outcomes for young people moving from school to work or further study?

All the evidence indicates that if a student completes secondary school, they effectively double their chance of obtaining a further qualification of any description, and they effectively double their chance of remaining in gainful employment for all of their adult working life.

A Rudd Labor Government understands and recognises that not all kids want to go to University. That means much more meaningful vocational education and training pathways must exist for our secondary students, in the lead up to years 11 and 12, and not just restricted to years 11 and 12. As a nation we have to raise the status and the standing of vocational education and training and the traditional trades in our schools and in our society.

A Rudd Labor Government will invest \$2.5 billion to build trades training centres in secondary schools across Australia, ensuring students are undertaking meaningful on-the-job training, and have their job ready skills assessed at the end of their vocational education and training course.

In post-school education and training, Federal Labor will fund an additional 450,000 skilled training places over the next four years, including support for 65,000 additional apprenticeship places.

2. What resources would you commit to better synchronise state and federal education, employment and training programmes operating throughout the electorate?

A Rudd Labor Government will work cooperatively with State and Territory Governments to maximise skills and training outcomes, including removing barriers to skills and training opportunities.

3. What will you do to improve the skills of the community and enhance the local regional economies and labour markets?

Labor's commitments to training in schools are outlined in the response to question 1.

Federal Labor will invest \$100 million over four years in a Manufacturing Network to foster innovation in small and medium Australian manufacturing businesses.

Up to 3,000 manufacturing businesses will benefit from the program each year – becoming more productive, better able to compete in global markets, and able to take advantage of new business opportunities arising from the

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challenge of climate change.

Federal Labor has a long held commitment to achieving full employment. Labor is committed to maximising the opportunity for Australians to be employed in secure, high-wage, high-skills jobs, by building a strong economy beyond the mining boom. Labor supports an active approach to building opportunity at the community level. An emphasis on participation is critical to improving outcomes. Labor believes that meaningful support for job seekers is vital. Without a support network that genuinely helps people find jobs, many Australians will be excluded from making the most of the opportunities our economy can offer.

Labor's economic policies will help to keep inflation low and preserve stable economic conditions for business to prosper. Labor's economic strategy is to equip the Australian workforce and businesses with the skills, infrastructure and incentives to help our economy move up the value added chain and compete successfully in the global economy. In the long run, this will mean more secure jobs, higher wages, increased exports and sustained prosperity.

4. How will you address youth unemployment across the electorate?

See answers above at questions 1 & 3.

5. What is your position on the immediate needs to better synchronise education and training provision in the electorate?

Federal Labor believes that there must be a coordinated and complementary effort by Federal, State and Territory Governments in vocational education and training.

A Rudd Labor Government will ensure an integrated approach to the overall trades and training effort in a particular region to ensure that education and training provision complements rather than duplicates existing activities in these areas.

6. What do you see as the future for the current federal government's Local Community Partnerships [LCP's] initiative?

Federal Labor believes that Local Community Partnerships are part of a comprehensive education and training system which includes the initiatives outlined above.

7. What role do you see for the use of high speed telecommunications infrastructure in this electorate?

Labor's plans for fast, affordable and accessible broadband will contribute to economic opportunities in the McEwen area. A range of studies from both

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Australia and abroad have reinforced the potential for broadband to stimulate future economic growth. It is important for business in ensuring the ability to significantly reduce costs and improve productivity through the use of information and communications technology. It will connect 98 per cent of Australians to high speed broadband internet services – at speeds over 40 times faster than most current speeds. The remaining two per cent of Australians in regional and rural Australia not covered by the FTTN network will have improved broadband services.

In coming years, a critical component of a world class education system in Australia will be use of a computer and access to reliable, high speed broadband. This will provide closer links between schools, teachers, students and parents, and help realise the true potential of e-education. It will change the way teachers teach, and the way students learn.

Under Labor's plan, 99 per cent of school children will also get access to broadband connections of speeds up to 100 megabits per second at school through fibre to the premises (FTTP) broadband infrastructure.

The other one per cent of students will get improved access at school, via the best available fixed line, wireless and satellite technologies.

Every secondary student in Australia will graduate into a digital world and a digital economy: that means every secondary school in the country needs to be a digital school.

A Rudd Labor Government will invest up to \$1 billion over four years to provide capital grants to Government, Catholic and Independent Secondary Schools and schooling systems to assist them to provide world class information and communications technology for every secondary student in years 9 to 12. Federal Labor's plan for a digital education revolution has five components:

- Providing grants of up to \$1 million – depending on enrolment – to schools to provide a computer on the desk of every upper secondary school student, revolutionising their classrooms with new or upgraded ICT equipment.
- Providing Australian schools with FTTP broadband with connections with speeds of up to 100 mbps.
- In conjunction with State and Territory Governments and the Deans of Education, ensuring every new teacher graduates with ICT skills and that existing teachers have access to training that enables them to use broadband to enrich children's educational experience.
- Developing national online curriculum resources for all students, selective additional content for gifted students and conferencing facilities for those studying specialist subjects such as languages.
- Developing web portals that enable parents to participate in their child's education.

8. Can you provide a commitment to increase resources/funding available to education and training providers in this electorate?

Some of Federal Labor's training and education commitments are outlined in the answers to question 1. They will increase resourcing of education and training across Australia.

As indicated above, every secondary school in McEwan will be able to access grants of up to \$1 million – depending on enrolment – to provide a computer on the desk of every upper secondary school student, revolutionising their classrooms with new or upgraded ICT equipment. Every secondary school in McEwan will also be able to access funding of between \$500,000 and \$1.5 million to build or upgrade trade workshops, Information, Communications and Technology labs and other facilities such as:

- o Metal or woodwork workshops;
- o Commercial kitchens;
- o Hairdressing facilities;
- o Automotive workshop;
- o Plumbing workshop;
- o Graphic Design laboratories;
- o Computer Laboratories; and
- o Other technical facilities.

In addition, Labor will make every Australian school a solar school, installing up to \$20,000 worth of solar technology in each school and offering up to \$30,000 worth of energy and water efficiency improvements.

9. Each community is unique and education providers need to be flexible to meet the needs of their students/community. What do you propose as an appropriate funding model or models that would support a student-centred education and training system?

Labor recognises that education is both a social issue – making sure all Australians have equal opportunity to live up to their full potential – and an economic issue – retaining our future prosperity, about ensuring our future international competitiveness.

That is why a Rudd Labor Government will invest more in education, in early childhood, primary schools, secondary schools, vocational education and training, on-the-job training and universities.

Labor recognises that local communities have different needs. In education, Labor has announced that we will invest \$62.5 million under our Local Schools Working Together program to fund the construction of shared facilities between Government and Non-Government schools.

Labor will also encourage more businesses to increase their local training programs, to enable Australian industry to develop, innovate and grow requires support to undertake higher level training, and expand the qualification base of its workers.