



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Verity Firth MP
Minister for Education and Training

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SCHOOLS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BENEFIT FROM BER

The Minister for Education and Training, Verity Firth, said NSW public schools were being invited to donate their surplus classroom furniture to developing countries after the success of a program in south-west Sydney.

“Our schools are benefiting from a range of new resources under the Building the Education Revolution including new furniture, which means many schools have classroom furniture they no longer need,” Ms Firth said.

“So far, 18 containers have been shipped to various disadvantaged countries – that’s about 180 classrooms of furniture.

“Many students in these countries do not have chairs or desks in their classrooms, so this is a fantastic way for our schools to help improve the educational experience of students in disadvantaged parts of the world.”

Initiated by BER Managing Contractor Hansen Yuncken and Rotary, the *Furniture Goodwill Program* involves schools in the Education Department’s south-western Sydney region who are receiving new or refurbished classrooms under P21.

Schools in the area now have the option of donating furniture to schools in remote areas of developing countries, such as Vanuatu, Fiji, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

If they decide to donate the furniture, it’s collected by Rotary, dismantled and packed into shipping containers.

The containers are then shipped overseas and distributed to local schools without any additional cost or disruption to the school.

Rotary co-ordinator Graeme Boler the program aimed to create goodwill between schools and for students to share their experiences with students in other parts of the world.

“So far it’s been a great effort and I’m hopeful we can now expand the program to other schools in Sydney and obviously we’ll be looking to expand it to other regions in NSW where possible.”

Ms Firth also congratulated Hansen Yuncken for participating in the program and urged other managing contractors to get involved.

NSW public schools will receive \$1.9 billion for upgrades and \$270 million for maintenance this year through Commonwealth and state funding.

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