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Education plays a central role in New Zealand budget

ASG is pleased to see that the 2016 budget has allocated \$124 million in new education spending over the next financial year.

With the government set to achieve an estimated surplus of \$700 million in line with a positive economic outlook, education spending is one of the key focus areas for treasury as the government commits itself to continue building a strong and growing economy.

ASG CEO John Velegrinis says he is pleased the education spending initiatives outlined in the budget are holistic and comprehensive.

"As an education services provider ASG supports equitable access to education and the opportunity to gain a high quality education. We are happy to see that the budget has committed \$11 billion in early childhood, primary and secondary education to be spent in 2016-17.

It's also pleasing to see that 150,000 students who are most at risk of educational failure will be supported through increased school funding, and an additional \$15.3 million put towards extra teacher aides to provide in-class support to students with learning difficulties."

The budget handed down by New Zealand Finance Minister Bill English also sees an extra 480 classrooms and nine new schools to be built which will meet the needs of a growing population.

"Making sure the infrastructure is in place is another crucial part in delivering educational outcomes and in a literal sense, investing in nation building. It's also encouraging that these education initiatives also extend to higher education with \$257 allocated for more tertiary education and apprenticeship programmes which are designed to meet projected skill shortages and reduce welfare dependency," said Mr Velegrinis.

Ends.

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Editors notes:

ASG is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 520,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.3 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.co.nz