



**LABOR GOVERNMENT HOLDS BACK
COMMONWEALTH FUNDING FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS
6 November 2002**

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold has slammed the State Government for jeopardising Commonwealth funding for building projects in State Government Schools.

"A Commonwealth grant of \$1 million dollars towards the \$5 million formerly allocated to upgrade Ceduna Area School is in the list. Mrs Penfold said.

The original completion date of September 2003 for Ceduna Area School has been deferred to September 2005, that is from 15 months to three years and three months.

The Federal Minister for Education, Dr Brendan Nelson, said the predicament has been caused by the State Government's failure to proceed with building projects for which it has already received Commonwealth funding.

He said an investigation by his department revealed that the South Australian Government has accepted commonwealth funding for up to 26 capital projects in State Government schools which have not been completed - and in some cases not even started.

Both Commonwealth and State Governments have promised this funding to the schools. The Commonwealth has kept its part of the contract and provided the funding.

"Just this year seven individual projects were signed off and meant to be 'underway' by the Rann Government when in fact they have been deferred, in some instances for up to three years," Dr Nelson said.

Dr Nelson has advised his department to withhold any further 2002 Capital Funding Program payments (amounting to about \$7 million this calendar year) until the State Government provides adequate explanations for the delays to school projects for which it has accepted funding, and commits to a starting date for these projects.

The Commonwealth provides more than \$17.6 million to South Australia annually for capital projects in South Australian Government schools.