MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF MINISTER, ANDREW BARR

I hope you are all refreshed after the summer break. I’m sure, like me, you have a busy year ahead of you.

The ACT Government has a big agenda for 2016 including major investments in new health, education and transport infrastructure. We are targeting reductions in waiting times in our emergency departments and faster access to elective surgery. New schools and TAFE facilities are being constructed in Gungahlin, Tuggeranong and the Molonglo Valley. New roads, cyclepaths and footpaths are being built right across the city.

I look forward to updating you through future editions of Our Canberra.

For more stories and information from across Canberra, visit act.gov.au/ourcanberra or follow us on social media.
1. GET involved IN YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY
Getting involved in your school is a great way for the whole family to engage and stay connected with your school’s community. This year get to know your child’s teacher and other families, attend events or volunteer, and if you can, take part in school committees.

2. GET online FOR TIPS AND RESOURCES
To help make the 2016 school year a good one for your children, take a look at some of the fact sheets and resources available online. These include tips and advice on supporting and encouraging learning, and how to build confidence. For details visit edu.act.gov.au

3. GET engaged WITH YOUR CHILD’S LEARNING
Children do better and learn more when families and teachers work together. Take some time to explore the range of publications available on parental engagement, why it matters, how it works and how best to foster it.

4. GET talking COMMUNICATION IS KEY
Good communication between parents and teachers ensures everyone is on the same page.

HEALTHY CANTEEN GRUB
Canberra school canteens will be offered the opportunity to trial in a new online ordering service for healthy home-made lunches and snacks this school year. canberra.ymca.org.au or act.gov.au/ourcanberra

SUNSMART AT SCHOOL
From 11 am - 3 pm between September and April, UV levels are at their highest. Ensure your child takes a broad-brimmed or legionnaire style hat to school every day and a 30+ broad spectrum and water repellent sunscreen. Contact your child’s school for further information on their sun protection guidelines.

GET OFF TO A GREAT START THIS NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Term 1 for all Canberra Public Schools starts:
Monday 1 February for new students or Tuesday 2 February for continuing students.

Look up all 2016 term dates at edu.act.gov.au
Passengers can now be connected on the bus thanks to a 12-month ‘CBRfree Wi-Fi trial’ on five ACTION buses.

The buses selected for this trial will be clearly identified and available across several routes and services.

For more information visit action.act.gov.au

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There’s a new vision for Stromlo Forest Park. Now’s your chance to contribute your thoughts and ideas on the park’s future.

The plan is to create a vibrant and diverse sport and recreation precinct. A newly released master plan for Stromlo outlines the details for a pool, enclosed oval, district playing fields, tourist accommodation, a road cycling circuit and equestrian trails.

To see the master plan and have your say, visit haveyoursay.planning.act.gov.au before 5 February 2016

You can also follow Stromlo Forest Park on Facebook

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The National Arboretum will soon be the place to go for school excursions and birthday celebrations.

This popular and loved Canberra attraction now offers birthday parties and school excursions with a fun and educational twist. Your child can celebrate their birthday with kite-making or a forest adventure party.

For more information and bookings, call 6207 8484

Email arboretum@act.gov.au

Or visit nationalarboretum.act.gov.au
CELEBRATING CANBERRA’S DIVERSITY

Canberra’s biggest, loudest and much loved celebration of diversity is back. The National Multicultural Festival runs from 12-14 February and is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

This year’s headline act will be The Black Sorrows with lead singer Joe Camilleri. Also new in 2016 is the ‘Bellydance Spectacular Showcase’, held as part of the Saturday Carnival Parade.

For more information on the festival visit multiculturalfestival.com.au
follow @NatMultiFest on Twitter or National Multicultural Festival on Facebook

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60% of the ACT’s electricity will be renewable by 2017

100% renewable by 2025

Leading the nation on climate change action.