

Worn-out school



ing apart: steps outside the Ringwood Secondary College building which the school says desperately needs repair.

Picture COLIN STUCKEY 905CS



sty downpipes: school council president Gary Semple
ects the outside of the building...

Holes in floor, rusty pipes, broken walls, creaky steps

RINGWOOD Secondary College students are using run-down, dilapidated classrooms that "desperately" need repair.

The classrooms are in an original school building that dates to 1954. The building has rusty downpipes, creaking steps, broken walls and holes in the floor.

School council president Gary Semple said the building, near the school's Bedford Rd boundary, "desperately needs work".

He said the school community was "battling hard to get things up to scratch" and had completed a lot of work over the past year.

This work included extensive refurbishment on several portables at the school, he said.

"We have improved the worst of them by reblocking, repainting and linking them with a covered walkway," he said.

"The portables are safe now but they are not the ideal teaching environment — they are too cold in winter and too hot in summer."

Mr Semple said the school council had spent \$200,000 (from government grants and reserves) on the refurbishment but a lot more work was still to be done.

He said the college had recently drawn up a school charter and master plan to ensure that the school had the facilities, resources and staff for the future.

To supplement any government contribution, the college had also launched building fund — Bring Good to Ringwood that aimed to raise \$1 million by the year 2000, he said.

Principal Michael Phillips said Education Minister Phil Gude had given an undertaking to include Ringwood Secondary College a priority for capital works funding.

"The college expects that significant funding will be provided to upgrade the 1950s school building and provide new facilities especially for technology, which are currently lacking," he said.

Mr Phillips said he expected the school's oldest portables would be replaced as part of the decommissioning program being established by the State Government.

Bayswater MP Gordon Ashley (Labor) said Mr Gude had given a commitment to make the school a priority in funding in the 1999-2000 budget year.

Bayswater Labor candidate Sue Craven said Ringwood Secondary College deserved the State Government's immediate attention.

"There should be an urgent allocation of funds to the school to allow refurbishment to proceed so a positive and safe environment can be provided for students and teachers," she said.