

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for the Coordination of Education and Training – COVID-19

Minister for Education

Minister for Mental Health



Tuesday, 6 October 2020

NEW CAREERS AND PATHWAYS FOR REGIONAL STUDENTS

The Victorian Government is boosting access to mentoring, role models and information about post-school options for regional and rural students through a range of new programs.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced a \$2.5 million investment to help raise rural and regional students' understanding and confidence in pursuing post-school education and training.

The investment will create six programs aimed at exposing students to a range of training and career options for jobs in industries relevant to local communities and beyond – including agriculture, trades and high-tech STEM industries through activities such as visits to workplaces, TAFES, universities and research organisations like CSIRO.

A mentor network will be established to provide practical advice on job skills as well as information and guidance about what it's like to work in an industry or profession. Students will also have opportunities to attend workshops and panel discussions led by industry experts.

The organisations that will deliver the programs are Ardoch, Baw Baw Latrobe Local Learning and Employment Network, CQUniversity Australia, Gippsland East Local Learning and Employment Network, Swinburne University of Technology – KIOSC and Country Education Partnership.

Programs will be adapted in line with coronavirus restrictions where required and will be rolled out in regional and rural areas including Gippsland, Ballarat, Bendigo, Horsham, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta and Warrnambool.

The programs are funded as part of the Victorian Government's \$82.8 million package to implement recommendations from the Expert Advisory Panel for Rural and Regional Students.

These reforms are improving educational outcomes for rural and regional students by better supporting them in these areas and addressing the disparity between regional and metropolitan schools.

Quotes attributable to Education Minister James Merlino

"We're closing the gap between the country and the city – giving country students access to support, information and opportunities that allow them to pursue higher education and training needed for the jobs of the future."

"These programs are just one way we're helping regional and rural students reach their full potential and aspirations."