

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Monday, 12 October 2020

## METRO STUDENTS HEAD BACK TO THE CLASSROOM

More than 584,000 primary, secondary and specialist school students in Melbourne will return to the classroom this week as part of a staggered return to face-to-face learning.

All primary school students, students in Year 7 and students studying VCE and VCAL subjects, as well as students at specialist schools will be back in the classroom from today.

Primary school and specialist school students in regional Victoria returned to face-to-face learning last week while all other students at regional schools, including Years 7 to 10 and VCE and VCAL students will return from today.

It will mean more than 846,000 students across government, Catholic and independent schools in Victoria will be back in the classroom by the end of this week.

Students in Years 8 to 10 in metropolitan Melbourne will return from Monday 26 October, in the final step of the staggered return of students and teachers to classrooms across the state.

This staged return is based on the advice of the Victorian Chief Health Officer and is designed to limit movement across the community as staff and students return to school, as well as enable monitoring of the impact of the first stage of students returning to school.

The staggered return will also allow for schools to work with parents to support the safe return of students to on-site learning and enable schools to review the implementation of risk-mitigation measures as all students return.

This will include staggered start and finish times, physical distancing at school entrances and drop-off points, and restrictions on the adults who can enter school sites.

As students return to face-to-face learning, schools will focus on supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students and identifying students who will need help catching up.

The Victorian Government recently announced a \$28.5 million package of initiatives to ensure more students can receive more support, including through the Navigator Program, LOOKOUT, Mental Health Practitioners and the Mental Health in Primary Schools pilot.

### Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"This is a great day for students, school staff, parents and carers who have all worked incredibly hard to get us to this point."*

*"Schools have extra measures in place to help students and teachers return safely – but everyone has a part to play by staying at home if you're sick and getting tested."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

*"Our focus for Term 4 is on making sure that every student is supported and getting our students back to the classroom is a significant step forward."*