

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
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FAST-TRACKING PROFESSIONALS INTO TEACHING CAREERS

Teacher training programs will be fast tracked to fill hard-to-staff positions in schools and early childhood services – giving kids better teachers and helping people get new skills and a new career.

Minister for Education James Merlino and Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today announced a new \$15.49 million initiative to give 500 aspiring school teachers and 76 early childhood teachers the opportunity to boost their skills through accelerated Initial Teacher Education university programs.

The initiative will help schools employ local teachers to work in hard-to-staff roles in outer-metropolitan, rural and regional locations, in areas such as STEM, languages, applied learning and specialist education. It will also help early childhood educators become teachers as part of the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten.

Aspiring school teachers with a bachelor's degree will be able to complete their Masters of Teaching in 18-24 months through either an employment-based model – combining paid on-the-job training at a local school with studying – or through a hybrid model that combines intensive study with practical classroom experience.

Diploma-qualified early childhood educators will also be able to trim the three-year Bachelor of Early Childhood Education down to 18 months. The first graduates from this initiative will be ready to work as qualified teachers in local government secondary, specialist schools and early childhood services in 2022.

This investment in initial teacher education removes barriers for educators interested in upskilling, but who could not otherwise afford not to do so. Aspiring school teachers can earn more than \$47,000 per year while they learn on-the-job. Students completing the hybrid program will be eligible for a \$15,000 stipend to support their intensive study in their first year.

Financial support packages will also be available for participating early childhood educators valued at \$30,000 to cover course fees and materials, as well as helping with living expenses while they study.

Students will be supported to continue working part-time as educators while they study, potentially earning around \$20,000 per year. In addition, early childhood services will receive direct funding for each student to provide wrap-around support and mentoring to support educators while they train to become teachers.

The Government will partner with Deakin University, the University of Melbourne, Australian Catholic University, Federation University Australia and Monash University to deliver the accelerated Masters of Teaching in 2021. Deakin University will also offer the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education course in 2021. For information, visit vic.gov.au/teachthefuture.

Quote attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"We all know the difference a great teacher can make, which is why we're fast-tracking graduates into classrooms where they are needed most. This initiative will give aspiring teachers the opportunity to be paid while they train for local jobs, as well as delivering a pipeline of teachers for schools in outer-metropolitan, rural and regional areas."

Quote attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

"This investment will remove financial barriers for educators ready to take the next step in their career, and help to ensure there are more teachers across the state to help deliver Three-Year-Old Kindergarten."

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