

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health



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INSTALLING SOLAR SYSTEMS IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

The Andrews Labor Government is cutting energy bills for public schools and making them more environmentally sustainable.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced 171 government schools across Victoria will receive solar power systems under the *Greener Government School Buildings* program.

The \$8.8 million program aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at schools and save them money by installing solar power systems. The program will contribute to the Labor Government's goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

A solar power system is a strategic investment that can pay for itself over several years. This program will remove the upfront costs of installing a system that may otherwise discourage schools from pursuing this option.

The *Greener Government School Buildings* program is established from the success of the pilot program rolled out across 42 schools in 2019.

The solar power systems installed as part of the 2020-21 *Greener Government School Buildings* program are expected to see 6,974 kW of solar installed, with an estimated saving of \$1.8 million per year and 10,200 tonnes of carbon emissions abated.

By June 2022, in total the program is expected to see 8,200 kW of solar installed, with an estimated saving of \$2 million per year and 11,500 tonnes of carbon emissions abated.

In the past five years, the Labor Government has invested more than \$9 billion in more than 1,600 school upgrades – creating more than 10,000 construction jobs.

The Government is now ahead of schedule its commitment to open 100 new schools by 2026, with 48 new schools opening between 2019 and 2022.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"We're taking action to make these schools more sustainable and more energy efficient, so we can all do our bit for the environment."

"Not only will the environment benefit from this program, installing solar panel systems will help reduce power bills for our schools."

Quote attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"By putting solar panels on the roofs of schools across Victoria, we are not only accelerating our transition to renewables, but we are also teaching students a real-life lesson about the importance of action on climate change."