

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



Friday, 15 October 2021

PRINCIPAL APPOINTED TO LEAD CENTRE FOR STUDENT EXCELLENCE

High-achieving VCE students are one step closer to getting a head start on their university education, with a principal appointed for the Victorian Government's new world-class high-ability learning centre.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced Stewart Milner's appointment as the founding principal of the new \$27.5 million Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) in South Yarra.

Mr Milner is a passionate educator who has worked as a teacher and principal for over 20 years – most recently as principal of Coburg High School, and as Assistant Principal at Suzanne Cory High School in Werribee.

Throughout his career, Stewart has driven innovation in education as the driving force behind the establishment of several university partnerships that have provided extra opportunities to staff and students – and will cement CHES as an inclusive centre of excellence for all Victorian students.

When it opens in 2023, CHES will improve educational outcomes for high-achieving Victorian secondary school students by offering first year university-level studies and select VCE subjects alongside an enhancement and enrichment program.

Victoria's most capable VCE students will have access to courses aligned to their skills and interests which contributes to their ATAR, with some subjects also enabling students to accrue university credits.

Students will remain enrolled at their chosen government secondary school and participate in courses at CHES as part of their VCE program, with courses to be delivered on-site and virtually, supporting access for rural and regional students.

The CHES site will be a modern, multi-storey learning centre on Chapel Street, constructed on land sold to the Government by the Melbourne High School Foundation – with construction already underway, the site is expected to be completed in the second half of 2022, ahead of the first programs beginning at the start of 2023.

The site will include an auditorium, technology-rich learning spaces and tertiary-standard science and design labs, ensuring students with a range of interests are supported to extend themselves.

CHES will also offer professional learning opportunities for Victorian teachers, delivering the very latest in research on understanding the emotional and academic needs of our most capable students.

In the past five years, the Victorian Government has invested more than \$10.9 billion in building new schools and more than 1,700 school upgrades, creating around 13,500 jobs in construction and associated industries.

Quote attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"I'm excited to announce that Stewart Milner will lead CHES when it opens in 2022, ensuring our high-achieving VCE students will have the opportunity to get a head start on their university education."

Quote attributable to Minister for Higher Education Gayle Tierney

"This announcement is an exciting next step for CHES, which will integrate secondary and post-secondary education to give Victorian students more opportunities and kick-start their futures."

Quote attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan Region Nina Taylor

"South Yarra will be home to CHES – a key part of our work to build an education system that promotes excellence and equity for all students in Victoria, and ensures every child is supported to thrive at school."

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