

# Media Release

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



Friday, 26 November 2021

## NEW STANDARDS TO EMPHASISE RESPECT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

The Andrews Labor Government has launched new school policies and resources to promote the importance of collaboration and respectful behaviours between parents and carers and school staff.

The new Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy will help ensure schools remain safe and positive places to work, after a concerning rise in incidents of aggression towards school staff from parents and carers.

The policy sets out clear guidelines on the expected standards of behaviour for parents, carers and other adults in the school community to reduce the risk and incidence of work-related violence towards school staff, ensuring all education workers feel safe and supported at work.

The new policy includes strategies and resources to help schools prevent and manage unacceptable behaviours from parents and carers, with posters and communication materials to be provided to schools to communicate the new policy – and the expectations around adult behaviours – to their school community.

The policy and resources are linked to the Labor Government's recently-passed *Education and Training Reform Amendment (Protection of School Communities)* legislation, which strengthens protections for school staff against parent and career aggression.

A School Community Safety Order scheme will be introduced to all schools in mid-2022, allowing school principals to issue safety orders in response to harmful, threatening, abusive or disruptive behaviour at work.

These new laws will also allow schools to prohibit parents and carers from engaging in threatening or abusive communication through social media and other channels.

To view the new Respectful Behaviours within the School Community Policy, please visit [education.vic.gov.au/Pages/Respectful-Behaviours-within-the-School-Community-Policy.aspx](https://education.vic.gov.au/Pages/Respectful-Behaviours-within-the-School-Community-Policy.aspx).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

*"School leaders and staff have been absolutely incredible supports to our kids, families and communities throughout the pandemic – and we're taking action to ensure they're treated with the respect they deserve at school."*

*"This important work is about keeping schools safe and supporting staff to make sure schools are places where everyone feels safe and respected – creating an environment where students can thrive."*

*"Everyone deserves to feel safe at work – and I urge families to think about how they're treating their children's school staff, who have given so much to our communities over the past two challenging years."*