

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
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MORE AIR PURIFIERS ON THEIR WAY TO SCHOOLS

As winter approaches and schools begin to close doors and windows, the Andrews Labor Government is more than doubling the number of air purifiers in schools to keep students and staff safer and slow the spread of coronavirus.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced the rollout of an additional 60,000 air purifiers will begin this week – on top of the 51,000 already delivered before the beginning of Term 1, which will see a purifier in every single classroom, instead of just high-risk areas of schools.

After an open tender process, Samsung has been awarded the contract for the additional purifiers – matching the Samsung devices that have already been successfully delivered and used in schools across the state.

This winter allocation will provide enough purifiers to cover all classrooms and other high-risk spaces in all government and low-fee non-government schools by the beginning of winter – including general purpose classrooms and other specialist classrooms such as art and science rooms.

Of the 111,000 air purifiers, a few thousand purifiers will be kept in storage after winter begins to be distributed to schools whose enrolments increase or who commission extra classrooms throughout the second half of the year.

Eligible kindergarten services are also sharing in \$3.8 million in grants to support ventilation improvements and keep children and staff safer at kinder, and give families confidence that early learning is safe.

The grants, building on more than \$7.5 million the Labor Government has already delivered to early childhood services for ventilation, are supporting the purchase of air purifiers for learning spaces or other improved ventilation.

In 2021, the Labor Government announced the largest investment in ventilation in schools in the nation – investing more than \$190 million in initiatives to help keep schools COVIDSafe and protect the health of students, staff and school communities.

Mandatory third doses for staff and a strong campaign to get students vaccinated – including a third dose for students over 16 and the first and second doses for children aged 5-11 – is keeping schools safe and open, ensuring learning is as uninterrupted as possible.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

“Our students have returned to face-to-face learning in 2022 safely and successfully – and we’re supporting that to continue, with more purifiers for classrooms to complement our other vital COVIDSafe measures.”

“This is the largest investment in school ventilation in the nation – no other state is taking such strong steps to protect students, staff and school communities.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

“Strong ventilation measures are crucial to keep our youngest learners – and the dedicated staff who care for them – safe, and we’re proud to be delivering more support for them to improve ventilation and keep our early learning services open.”