

Victorian Budget 2022/23



The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier
Minister for Education

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HEALTHY AND HAPPY STUDENTS IN THE EDUCATION STATE

The Andrews Labor Government is putting health and wellbeing at the heart of Victorian education, making sure every student has the support they need to succeed in the Education State.

Kids can't achieve their potential at school if they aren't happy and safe. The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* invests \$1.7 billion in extra support to help students reach their goals and get a first-rate education.

We heard from teachers that if they have more time to prepare lessons, plan, and mark work, their teaching will improve – that's why this Budget will invest \$779 million to recruit more than 1,900 extra teachers.

Weekly face-to-face teaching hours will be reduced by one hour in 2023, then a further half-hour in 2024 for each teacher – without reducing students' one-on-one attention at school – meaning more time for each teacher to prepare and focus on each student and their needs.

Next year, we'll see the biggest reform to the Victoria's senior secondary system since its inception, with the new VCE Vocational Major and Victorian Pathways Certificate replacing VCAL.

One certificate will be created to give every senior secondary student more choice, and make sure they have the academic and industry-specific skills they need for post-school education or work.

The VCE's transformation will be backed by a \$277.5 million investment, including \$87.9 million to boost the vocational teacher and support staff workforce. We're funding study to attract 400 extra VET trainers, professional development for up to 1,900 teachers and increased funding for jobs, skills and pathways coordinators in schools.

It also includes \$120.2 million for all mainstream government schools to provide a new core vocational offering and make sure every senior secondary student can access quality vocational and applied learning, no matter where they go to school.

This investment will also support professional development for teachers to implement the new curriculum, as well as a new campaign to encourage more young Victorians to undertake apprenticeships or training.

A \$69.4 million investment will expand the successful *Head Start* program statewide, giving every government school student the opportunity to sign up to an apprenticeship or traineeship while completing their VCE at school.

While Victorian students again recorded the nation's highest NAPLAN results in 2021, there is always more work to do. An investment of more than \$131 million will lift key literacy and numeracy outcomes to bring more Victorian students into higher achievement bands – setting them up for success throughout their education.

This investment includes \$87.2 million for the *Middle Years Literacy and Numeracy Strategy*, identifying students who need more support to leave high school with the skills they need for work and study, and \$27.4 million to support the rollout of the *Teaching Excellence Program* across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Funding of \$31.6 million will deliver more quality teaching and learning software to schools, \$37 million will help schools extend high-ability students and \$23.5 million will support the *English as an Additional Language Program*, giving new Victorians more support at school.

When we support school staff, students reap the rewards. On top of the new Enterprise Agreement for government school staff, the Labor Government will further support the workforce with \$58.9 million to attract more teachers, deliver work-based degrees for postgrad students and extend the *Teacher Financial Incentives Program*.

A further \$17.1 million will extend the *Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists Initiatives*, upskilling primary school teachers to become maths and science specialists, alongside an extra \$10.1 million for out-of-field teaching in science, technology and maths.

An investment of \$28.7 million will give regional and rural students have choices when it comes to their education – including the establishment of a Regional Blended Learning Hub so they can study subjects they previously couldn't at their school, through a mix of face-to-face and online learning.

As the Labor Government continues to deliver on every recommendation of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, schools are playing a key role in supporting students' wellbeing and access to mental health support services – building on more than \$297.5 million already invested to make sure kids are happy and healthy.

This Budget continues work on tailored support for every student who needs it, with \$41.3 million to deliver mental health services in schools – including \$23 million for continued mental health practitioners in special schools.

Kids at risk of disengaging with school and support services will be identified and supported more quickly, with a \$37 million boost to the Navigator Program, giving at-risk young people the individual case management they need to return to education, as well as \$4.5 million in projects to better engage students in learning.

An investment of \$13.4 million in *Respectful and Safe School Communities* will support staff to make sure every student feels safe and respected in Victorian schools, no matter their background or differences – creating an environment where they can thrive.

Families of students with disability will be supported to better manage the juggle of getting kids to school – with a \$30.7 million investment in the *Students with Disabilities Transport* program.

To help students get active again as we recover from the pandemic, the Budget will boost the critical *Active Schools* program with \$20.8 million, and make sure students have ongoing judgment-free health support with \$11.4 million for the School Nursing and Student Support Services initiatives.

To continue the work of the *Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan*, Victoria's Koorie communities will see more than \$5.8 million in extra support to prepare the education system for self-determination.

As learning becomes increasingly digital, the Budget is investing \$3.7 million to support students to be *Cyber Safe and Secure Learners* with a brand-new program to keep them protected online.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

“Every Victorian kid deserves the best start in life – no matter where they live, where they come from or what their abilities are – and we know that starts with a first-rate education.”

“We know kids can't learn at their best if they don't feel happy and safe – that's why we put health and wellbeing on an equal footing with academic achievement for Victorian students.”

“We’re investing in our teachers and our education workforce because it’s good for students and it’s good for Victorian jobs.”