

Media Release

Mr Tim Pallas MP

Treasurer

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Trade



Wednesday, 20 July 2022

NEW CAMPUS AT A FAMILIAR ADDRESS FOR VERNEY ROAD SCHOOL

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering a new home for Shepparton's Verney Road School with more learning, recreation and play space for students at a new location just down the road from the current campus.

Treasurer Tim Pallas today visited Verney Road to announce the school's new site, thanks to the Labor Government's investments of \$1 million in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* and \$23.8 million in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* to develop the new special school campus with better learning opportunities for every student.

The staged relocation of this special school will see a major upgrade of the former Wanganui Park Secondary School on Parkside Drive, a site vacated at the end of 2021 with the opening of the new, single-campus Greater Shepparton Secondary College.

The initiative is part of the Labor Government's promise to retain the former secondary campuses of Wanganui Park and McGuire College for future education purposes.

Perkins Architects Pty Ltd have been appointed to design the new school with a builder expected to be appointed and start works next year, with the school open and ready for students in 2026.

Verney Road School has a proud history of providing learning and purposeful pathways for students with mild to profound intellectual disability ranging in age from three to 18, and catering for families from Shepparton and Mooroopna and across the region including Nathalia, Murchison, Euroa and Numurkah.

Purpose-built for 74 students in 1999, today Verney Road School has 227 students and 85 teachers and support staff dedicated to delivering diverse learning opportunities – but is running out of space to further expand while still providing all the space children need to learn, grow and play.

Verney Road School is one of 36 special schools receiving funding for upgrades in the 2022/23 Budget – meaning every government special school will have had a major upgrade since the Labor Government was elected in 2014.

Thousands more young Victorians will benefit from new and improved facilities with this year's Budget delivering an extra \$1.8 billion to build new schools and improve existing ones across the state.

Secondary students in Shepparton and Mooroopna already know of these benefits and opportunities by making the most of their state-of-the-art Greater Shepparton Secondary College, which opened this year.

Quote attributable to Treasurer Tim Pallas

"Kids with special needs deserve access to the same opportunities as every other student – with a new campus for Verney Road School, and upgrades to every special school across the state, we're making sure that's happening."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp

"We are delivering for families and kids across the Shepparton region and it's fantastic that the old Wanganui Park Secondary School site will become a new home for generations of students."

Quote attributable to Verney Road School Principal Angela Buxton

"This is an exciting time for our school community as we plan and prepare for the new facilities and the learning and recreation spaces we need to continue to deliver skills, independence and life opportunities for our students."

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