

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Education

Minister for Women



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MILLIONS OF FREE MEALS CREATE HEALTHY APPETITE FOR LEARNING

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring students can start the school day with a full stomach and clear mind to learn and succeed – with more than 25 million free, healthy meals officially served at schools as part of the School Breakfast Clubs program.

Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins today visited Dallas Brooks Community Primary School – which is involved in the program and has provided more than 74,000 free meals to students, contributing to the milestone.

The school runs the program five days a week, serving around 45 students each day and supporting them to achieve their potential.

The program, which is delivered in partnership with Foodbank Victoria, provides free healthy food for students at 1,000 government schools.

The Labor Government has invested \$58 million in the program since its establishment in 2016.

Lunches and home food supplies are also provided to students requiring additional support and cooking classes focused on meal preparation and nutrition are delivered to families in 100 disadvantaged school communities.

Feedback from schools has shown the program has had benefits beyond making students happier and healthier – it has led to a sense of connection for students and the school community, improved student engagement and concentration, strengthened staff-student relationships, enhanced social skills and better academic performance.

The program supported students with access to healthy food during the pandemic and is working to provide food to flood-affected school communities.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

“Without breakfast, growing kids struggle to pay attention throughout the day, affecting their ability to learn and do their best. Our investment in this program is ensuring kids can start the school day with full stomachs and clear minds so they can learn and thrive.”

“The program has already made a huge difference to students who need a bit of extra support to have a nutritious, delicious meal every morning and we’re proud to reach a huge milestone of 25 million meals served at schools.”