

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Education

Minister for Women



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BACK TO SCHOOL FOR MORE THAN ONE MILLION STUDENTS

More than one million Victorian students head back to school this week, with thousands of families across the state benefitting from 12 new schools opening for Term 1.

Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins today officially opened the new Ngarri Primary School and welcomed its first students from Prep to Year 6. The school has space for 650 students with specialist facilities for learning about food, technology and science, music and drama spaces and a competition grade gymnasium.

The Andrews Labor Government is opening 12 brand new schools in Melbourne's growing west, north and south-east opening for Term 1 as part of a pledge to build 100 new schools across the state by 2026.

The other new schools include Barrawang Primary School, Donnybrook Primary School, Karwan Primary School, Kurrun Primary School, Lollypop Creek Primary, Mickleham Secondary College, Nearnung Primary School, Quarters Primary School, Thornhill Park Primary School, Wayi School and Wollert Secondary College.

All new primary schools will have a kindergarten on-site or next door, allowing children to make a smooth transition from pre-school and helping parents ditch the dreaded double drop-off. Seven of the primary schools will have kindergartens operating on-site or next door from 2023, with the remaining three kindergartens opening next year.

Students from 1,566 government, 499 Catholic and 230 independent schools start their studies in every corner of Victoria this week. More than 77,000 students will start secondary school, with a similar number set to begin their formal education journey in Prep.

Each Prep student at a government school will receive a free Prep bag with books like *The Two-Hearted Numbat* by Ambelin and Ezekiel Kwaymullina, a brother and sister team of Indigenous writers, a Meet the Mathscots ruler, a world map jigsaw, SunSmart stickers and a Get Your Move On frisbee

Since 2014, the Labor Government has invested \$12.8 billion in building new schools and more than 1,850 school upgrades, creating around 17,400 jobs. The Government is ahead of schedule in opening 100 new schools by 2026, with 75 new schools opening between 2019 and 2024 – ensuring every student can access a great local school.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

"I'd like to wish every student returning to school this week the best of luck in the coming year – it's an exciting time filled with new friends, learning and experiences that shape you forever."

"More students than ever have the facilities and first-class education they deserve, thanks to the Labor Government's record investment in school infrastructure and support for teachers – ensuring Victoria remains the education state."