

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Education
Minister for Women



Tuesday, 28 March 2023

MORE FIRST NATIONS NAMES FOR VICTORIAN SCHOOLS

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring better representation of Aboriginal language and culture across the state, with more Victorian government schools and campuses to be named using First Nations languages.

Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins today announced changes to the Department of Education's School and Campus Naming Policy, which will deliver more widespread use of First Nations languages when selecting school and campus names, through a stronger and simpler selection process.

The changes will ensure that only Traditional Owner groups will propose Aboriginal language names, with all new Government schools and campuses to have proposed names preferred, in an initiative to further promote Aboriginal self-determination.

The changes will also clarify and streamline the approach to engaging with First Nations groups and communities.

The policy was previously updated in March 2022 to introduce new requirements including mandatory consultation with Traditional Owner groups and extending the use of the Engage Victoria platform for public consultation on new names.

There are 14 new government schools scheduled to open in 2024 and the naming process for these is already under way, in close consultation with Traditional Owner groups and Regional Advisory Groups.

The changes do not affect the ongoing consultation with these groups but will be in effect for the naming process for new schools opening in 2025.

Several new government schools and campuses that opened this year have Aboriginal language names, including Barrawang PS, Karwan PS, Kurrun PS, Nearnung PS, Wayi School and Ngarri PS, and the Minister approved the renaming of Moreland PS to Merri-bek PS.

Victoria is the first and only Australian jurisdiction to action the Treaty and Truth elements of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, with this latest naming policy another step in providing First Nations recognition in Victoria.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has invested \$12.8 billion to build new schools and upgrade 1,850 others, creating around 17,400 jobs in construction and associated industries.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

"We're ensuring the history, culture and languages of Victoria's First Peoples are strongly embedded in our education system."

"Embracing First Nations languages in more school names will contribute to the ongoing process of reconciliation."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams

"How we name things, including schools, contributes to community understanding. This is particularly important on Victoria's path to Truth and Treaty with our First Peoples."

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