

# Media Release

**The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP**  
Minister for Education  
Minister for Women



Friday, 31 March 2023

## TRANSPORT BOOST FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS STUDYING VET

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring students studying Vocational Educational and Training (VET) subjects can get to and from their vocational training providers, with free transport for regional and rural students.

Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins today announced the \$7.5 million Transport Fund, which will further support families grappling with the cost of living ensure students study VET subjects have the backing they need to achieve the great educational outcomes they deserve.

Recipients of the new initiative include students from Ararat Secondary College, who are accessing free transport to undertake subjects at the Wimmera Southern Mallee VET cluster, with subjects including Electrotechnology, Agriculture, Salon Assistance and Building and Construction.

In all, 81 rural and regional schools are using the fund in 2023 to provide buses and other transport to and from VET classes, benefitting nearly 2000 students across the state.

The fund is cross-sectoral and used by some rural and regional Catholic and independent schools.

The transport fund comes alongside the Labor Government's more than \$120 million initiative to expand access to VET certificates across Victoria, removing barriers for young Victorians wanting to undertake VET studies by reducing out-of-pocket expenses for families.

The funding package ensures schools can cover course materials for students, while providing access to VET courses in industries with strong workforce needs like building and construction, electrical and auto engineering.

The Labor Government is supporting every Victorian student to get the skills they need for the job they want, by investing more than \$315 million in senior secondary schooling reforms since 2018 to ensure the final years of school deliver for students no matter what their future goals.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

*"No matter what you want to be, in Victoria we have an educational pathway for you to achieve it – and with this additional funding support we're making it easier to arrive at your dream job."*

*"Starting the career you want shouldn't come down to whether you can afford it, that's why we're providing the additional funding needed to get students to VET classes and covering the cost of the course materials they need when they get there."*

### Quotes attributable to Ararat Secondary College Ellie McDougall

*"VET subjects are essential for the senior program at Ararat College. The free transport ensures our students can access a variety of studies, providing equity to rural students and removing transport as a barrier."*

*"Schools covering the cost of VET materials makes a real difference too, all our students deserve the same opportunity to succeed and these measures really help."*

**Media contact:** Corey Croft 0468 897 764 | [corey.croft@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:corey.croft@minstaff.vic.gov.au)