

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Education
Minister for Women



Wednesday, 21 June 2023

SUPPORTING VICTORIAN STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Thousands more students with disability and additional needs will get the support they deserve earlier - thanks to a new investment by the Andrews Labor Government.

The Labor Government is delivering Australian-first *Disability Inclusion* package to all Victorian government schools over five years, with all school regions moving to the new approach by 2025.

Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins today announced a \$46 million package that will get more support flowing to remaining schools more than six months earlier than planned, in response to feedback from schools who said early release of funding would have enabled them to better train and hire staff ahead of the new school year.

The Disability Inclusion package is transforming support for students with a disability in every Victorian government school – reforming inclusive education to put the needs of each individual student at the heart of our response and shifting the focus towards what a child can achieve, rather than what they need extra support with.

More than 850 schools have already moved to the new funding model, with another 720 making the switch in the coming years.

Schools in Goulburn, Brimbank, Melton, North-East Melbourne and Southern Melbourne will receive the additional funding this week and are set to start operating the new model next year.

Schools in Outer Gippsland, Wimmera South-West, Inner Eastern Melbourne and Hume Merri-bek will receive the funding in early-2024 and move to the new model in 2025.

Specialist schools will now also receive extra preparatory funding, while English language schools will begin receiving it for the first time – making sure children who need extra support, no matter their background, have the opportunity to thrive and shine at school.

The extra investment builds on the \$235 million invested in inclusive education in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24* – giving more students easier access to the services they need to succeed at school and in life as we continue to build the Education State.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

“Everyone deserves to fully participate in school – by bringing forward this funding we are making sure students get the support they need when they need it.”

“Kids are more than a diagnosis – and this package will completely change the way we support children in our schools, focusing on what they can achieve rather than what they can’t.”