

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Tuesday, 12 September 2023

MAKING TEACHING FREE TO BACK OUR SCHOOL WORKFORCE

The Andrews Labor Government will make studying to become a teacher in secondary schools in Victoria free, with scholarships covering the cost of degrees to help boost our school workforce and support hardworking teachers.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins today visited Saltwater P-9 College in Point Cook to announce the scholarships, as part of a \$229.8 million package to grow the school workforce.

An investment of up to \$93.2 million will provide new scholarships to support teaching degree students with the cost of studying and living – joining the Labor Government’s Free Nursing initiative, which began this year to boost the state’s pipeline of healthcare workers.

The scholarships will be available to all students who enrol in secondary school teaching degrees in 2024 and 2025, with final payments if they then work in Victorian government schools for two years after they graduate – supporting around 4,000 future teachers each year.

The total scholarship for students who complete their studies and then choose to work in government secondary schools will match the HELP fees charged by the Commonwealth Government for Commonwealth Supported Places – \$18,000 for a four-year undergraduate program or \$9,000 for two years of postgraduate study.

A further \$27 million will continue and expand the Targeted Financial Incentives Program – providing incentives of up to \$50,000 to teachers from Victoria, interstate and overseas to take up rural, remote and otherwise hard-to-staff positions in government schools.

In addition, \$95.7 million will expand the successful Australian-first Career Start initiative to support and retain teachers – developing graduate teachers in government schools with extra preparation time, mentoring and other professional support to help them flourish in their first year of teaching.

An investment of almost \$13.9 million will support a trial of employment-based degrees for undergraduates. Set to start in 2025, the program will allow people to study and qualify as a teacher while undertaking paid work at a school, while also providing a pathway for education support staff to gain teaching qualifications.

The package supports five key priority areas agreed by all Australian jurisdictions, in recognition of national school workforce shortages, to tackle workforce pressures: attraction, recruitment and distribution, supporting early-career teachers, retention, and career pathways and flexibility.

The investment comes on top of \$204.8 million in workforce initiatives in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24*, and \$779 million to reduce the maximum face-to-face teaching time for our teachers – taking the Labor Government’s investment in the school workforce to more than \$1.6 billion since 2019 alone.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“Teachers change lives – it’s as simple as that. This will mean one less barrier for Victorians thinking of a career in teaching, and more great teachers for the education state.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

“The number of teachers in Victoria is increasing and that’s no accident – we’re delivering a range of initiatives that have helped grow the number of registered teachers in Victoria by nearly 5,000 between 2020 and 2022.”

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