

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Medical Research



Thursday, 26 October 2023

STRENGTHENING SCHOOL TIES WITH INDIA

The Allan Labor Government is deepening Victoria's educational link to India by backing our female school leaders with international professional learning, and expanding the study of Indian languages in Victorian schools.

Minister for Education Ben Carroll today announced 12 Victorian principals will join the Indian education system for 10 days in October and November to develop their leadership and intercultural skills – all part of the 2023 Women in School Leadership (WISL) professional learning program.

In India, the principals will learn and work alongside their local colleagues in a series of workshops focused on leadership, cultural intelligence and education policy. They will also take part in school placements to observe best-practice approaches to learning, engagement and wellbeing.

The Victorian principals will also attend the DIDAC Conference – Asia's largest exhibition for teaching and skills – in Bengaluru, where they will have the opportunity to participate in the global discussion on topics such as women in leadership and the use of Educational Technology to support student wellbeing.

By participating, principals gain new approaches to student learning and wellbeing, and deepen their understanding of education in other cultures, which is then applied in Victorian schools to support students in our multicultural state to thrive.

WISL, which began in 2019, is part of *Victoria's India Strategy: Our Shared Future* and aims to enhance links between Victorian and Indian schools. A visit for 12 school principals from India will take place in Victoria in May 2024.

As part of a further \$3.5 million initiative to deepen ties with India, three schools in Melbourne's west, north and south-eastern suburbs will offer Hindi and/or Punjabi language programs from 2025 – creating important links for thousands of Victorians with their heritage.

The language programs will be open to all students enrolled in the participating schools, which will also increase the number of students state-wide who study Hindi and Punjabi at VCE.

Once created, the three initial Hindi and Punjabi school language programs will help teaching and leadership staff to support other schools across the state to implement their own Indian language program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"This professional learning program gives some of our best and brightest school leaders the opportunity to collaborate with educators and school communities from across the globe – bringing back lessons that will help shape Victoria's world-leading education system."

"We're giving more Victorian students the chance to study Hindi and Punjabi to VCE level – building cross-cultural ties and connecting local students with the rich heritage of India."

Quote attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt

"Creating strong ties with India is about sharing big ideas to make sure Victoria continues to be at the forefront of education in the nation – while embracing the cultural diversity that makes our state such a fantastic place to live."

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