

# Media Release

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



Wednesday, 20 December 2023

## SUPPORTING OUR AFRICAN AND PASIFIKA STUDENTS

The Allan Labor Government has awarded 23 schools with large cohorts of students from African and Pasifika backgrounds grants to support them to engage and reach their full potential in education.

Minister for Education Ben Carroll today announced the recipients of Round 5 of the *Strengthening School Engagement* grants as part of the *Place-Based Partnerships to Support School Engagement and Completion Initiative*, who will share in \$2.65 million of funding annually.

More than 34 government schools are already sharing in 51 grants, with \$4.06 million invested so far since the first grants were made available in 2018.

While many African and Pasifika youths are actively involved in the community, the initiative allows schools with high populations of young people from either background to design and deliver place-based approaches to increase students' school participation and completion rates.

The Labor Government provides funding through expressions of interest for schools to deliver targeted interventions and supports and employ Community Liaison Officers who help strengthen family-school connections, keeping young people connected to their school.

Grant recipients will receive support annually in 2024, 2025 and 2026 to employ a full-time Community Liaison Officer as a key contact who will support young people to engage with their education and provide targeted intervention programs.

Five of the schools will receive between \$130,000 and \$150,000 in funding annually through to 2026 to deliver the place-based initiative in partnership with other schools.

Programs funded for 2024 include:

- The Student and Family Engagement (SaFE) Program at St Albans Secondary College, with funding provided to employ a Student and Family Engagement Officer who will implement supports and programs to engage students and parents.
- The Flemington Partnership that will support African-Australian students' transition into and out of primary school, provide in-school and after-school programs to strengthen student engagement and leadership, and engage families to support their children's education while building stronger connections with schools.
- Greater Shepparton Secondary College's Building Tomorrow's Leaders program which will help African and Pasifika students become strong leaders who understand their culture by addressing the specific challenges and opportunities within these communities.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

*"Partnerships like these are the key to unlocking innovative approaches to tackle the challenges faced by students of African or Pasifika backgrounds and providing them with better opportunities to get ahead in life."*

*"Supporting students to engage and stay connected with their school helps build their confidence and enhances their opportunities to thrive."*

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### **Strengthening School Engagement grants – Round 5 recipients**

- Catholic Regional College St Albans
- Catholic Regional College Sydenham
- Charles La Trobe P-12 College (Macleod)
- Collingwood College P-12, in partnership with Fitzroy High School's Wurun Senior Campus (Fitzroy North)
- Copperfield College (Kings Park, Sydenham and Delahey campuses)
- Craigieburn Secondary College, in partnership with Roxburgh College
- Flemington Primary School, in partnership with Debney Meadows Primary School and Ascot Vale West Primary School
- Gladstone Park Secondary College
- Greater Shepparton Secondary College
- Hume Central Secondary College (Broadmeadows)
- Melton Secondary College (Melton West)
- Mount Alexander College (Flemington)
- Richmond High School, in partnership with Richmond West Primary School
- Robinvale College P-12
- Springside West Secondary College (Fraser Rise), in partnership with Lakeview Senior College (Caroline Springs)
- St Albans Secondary College
- St Francis Catholic College (Melton West)
- St John's Regional College (Dandenong)
- Staughton College (Melton South)
- Sunshine College (North, West and Harvester Technical College campuses – North Sunshine and West Sunshine)
- Tarneit Senior College
- The Grange P-12 (Hoppers Crossing)
- Victoria University Secondary College (Junior, Deer Park, and Senior campuses, St Albans)