

Media Release

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AFFORDABLE UNIFORMS HELPING TO SLASH THE COST OF LIVING

The Allan Labor Government has supported more than 23,000 government school students through the Affordable School Uniforms Program, backing families with the cost of schooling when they're doing it tough.

The program aims to make every Victorian student feel valued and included at school, regardless of their circumstances, by making sure they have a full uniform to wear to school.

Global cost-of-living pressures have seen a significant growth in applications for the first quarter of 2024, up 21 per cent compared to this time last year.

Since 2015, the Labor Government has invested more than \$75 million in the program, supporting more than 540,000 students with more than 1.9 million uniforms and other essential school items.

Short-term crisis and long-term chronic need are the primary qualifying criteria for support – with eligible families including those experiencing acute financial hardship, and those with refugee status, experiencing homelessness, family violence, house fire, natural disaster, illness or emergency.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* included an investment of \$32.9 million for the program, adding to the Labor Government's other cost-of-living support for families at schools.

The Government's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund also helps ensure kids doing it tough don't miss out on the school events and activities that make Victorian education so great – supporting them to take part in extracurricular activities and keep them active.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* included \$168.7 million for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund, giving more than 190,000 government and non-government students from lower-income families the opportunity to participate in camps, sports and excursions each year.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"With the cost of living continuing to rise, we understand how important programs like these are for families who are worried about being able to afford a school uniform for their child."

"School uniforms help create a sense of community and belonging for students – and every child deserves to feel valued and included at school, regardless of their background or circumstances."