

Media Release

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



Friday, 24 May 2024

SUPPORTING FIRST NATIONS SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

The Allan Labor Government is supporting more Aboriginal school students to complete Year 11 and 12, thanks to the Marrung Education Scholarships program.

Minister for Education Ben Carroll today congratulated the recipients of the Marrung Education Scholarships, which recognise students who demonstrate a high potential to succeed in their chosen pathway, including strong academic results and dedicated involvement in their local Aboriginal community.

Recipients of a Marrung Education Scholarship receive \$5,000 each over two years as support to complete Year 11 and 12 in a Victorian Government school.

This year, there are 30 scholarships which can be used for a range of education-related items, like study supplies including books, devices, ebooks, desks and stationery. The scholarships can also be used for specialist equipment and tools for VCE subjects like cameras and graphics sets, additional tutoring and travel costs.

Through the *Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026*, the Labor Government is working to improve education outcomes for Koorie Victorians, with \$86.3 million already invested in programs that support excellence, equity and wellbeing for Aboriginal students.

There have been important improvements in outcomes across early childhood, schools and into higher education and training since the launch of Marrung.

The Aboriginal Four-Year-Old Kindergarten participation rate for 2023 was 100 per cent – 4.2 percentage points higher than the participation rate for all children of 95.8 per cent – making sure every young First Nations Victorian gets the best start in life with a quality early education.

The number of Aboriginal students completing Year 12 has increased from 523 in 2017 to 619 in 2023, up from 175 in 2005, and the proportion of Aboriginal Year 12 completers not in education, training or employment has decreased from 8 per cent in 2019 to 6 per cent in 2022.

The Labor Government's investment of \$51 million in the *Victorian Budget 2024/25* to improve outcomes for Victoria's First Nations students brings our total investment in Marrung to \$138 million since 2016.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"The Marrung Education Scholarships recognise the academic excellence and leadership of Aboriginal students in Victoria – creating more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach their full potential on whichever career pathway they choose."

"Marrung is all about ensuring the rich and thriving culture, knowledge and experience of our first peoples is celebrated by all Victorians and that our education system is inclusive, responsive and respectful of Koorie people at every stage of their learning."