

Media Release

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



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SUPPORTING EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF TO BECOME TEACHERS

The Allan Labor Government is launching a new pilot program to allow more than 300 dedicated Education Support staff and Koorie Education Support Officers to gain teaching qualifications while working in schools.

The program will enable rural and regional education support staff—who are employed in various roles such as teaching assistants, integration aides, and cultural liaison officers—to pursue a full teaching qualification and help combat the Australia-wide issue of teacher shortages.

Minister for Education Ben Carroll launched the \$13.9 million initiative today to trial undergraduate-level employment-based teaching degrees to upskill staff working in Victorian government secondary and specialist schools.

The innovative and tailored program, set to start in 2025, will be delivered by Federation University Australia and La Trobe University and will support people in studying and qualifying as teachers while undertaking paid employment.

Participants will be supported with Department of Education-funded living expenses scholarships, relocation incentives, and mentoring support. In the final years of the program, they will be eligible to start teaching as paraprofessionals.

Both universities' programs will focus on supporting participation by Education Support staff in rural and regional Victoria. At the same time, La Trobe University's program will encourage participation from Koorie Education Support Officers.

The new undergraduate-level employment-based teaching degrees will further expand Victoria's nation-leading suite of employment-based teaching degrees – known as the *Teach Today* and *Teach Tomorrow* programs, currently available to postgraduate students.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"The Allan Labor Government is proud to invest \$13.9 million, so our outstanding Education Support staff have the support they need to pursue rewarding teaching careers."

"The undergraduate level employment-based teaching degree initiative opens up teaching to a broader pool of diverse candidates by supporting staff to gain teaching qualifications while working in our schools."

"The initiative is yet another example of the Victorian Government removing financial and geographical barriers so that our schools can recruit the next generation of dedicated teachers."