

Media Release

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



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MORE TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE

The Allan Labor Government is helping more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people start a rewarding career as a teacher or return to teaching through the newly established Aspiring Koorie Teachers Now (AKT Now) initiative.

Minister for Education Ben Carroll today announced that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can register to participate in AKT Now and complete education qualifications while they work in Victorian government schools.

The \$13.6 million program aims to attract and retain new and returning First Nations people through VET and higher education.

Participants gain qualifications either through a vocational pathway in *Certificate IV in School Based Education Support*, the Initial Teacher Education program or while studying post-graduate teaching qualifications.

They will be employed in a Victorian government school as Education Support or teaching paraprofessionals for up to two years.

Delivered in partnership with Koorie Education, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), and other Koorie organisations, Initial Teacher Education and VET providers, and hosts, it aims to open more opportunities for First Nations people to pursue a rewarding teaching career.

All AKT Now participants will be supported by cultural mentors and will receive department-subsidised remuneration through schools while they study for 12 to 24 months, depending on their program and host placement.

The Labor Government is seeking expressions of interest from schools interested in hosting AKT Now participants as Education Support staff.

This program will operate as an employment program, and participating schools will recruit using their usual recruitment processes.

Schools interested in this opportunity can request more information from the Department of Education at marrung@education.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"The AKT Now initiative will add to the diversity of our teaching workforce and bring the benefits of First Nations people's lived experience into the classroom."

"We're providing more opportunities for First Nations people who want to join the school workforce – so they can pursue a rewarding career in education."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

"First Nations people are the original storytellers and teachers in Victoria. Increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in Victoria can only be a good thing for our young people."

"This announcement is important for Victoria's path to Truth and Treaty with First Nations people."

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Quote attributable to VAEAI vice-president Professor Mark Rose

“Teaching and learning is in our DNA as Koorie people and here is an opportunity to follow in the work of your ancestors. These programs will help you to create change for good.”