

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Emergency Services



Sunday, 28 October 2018

GIVING REGIONAL STUDENTS MORE OPTIONS IN THEIR VCE

The Andrews Labor Government will ensure every VCE subject is available to rural and regional students as part of a major expansion of virtual learning and a new collaboration fund to support schools working together.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced a \$22.6 million investment to provide students in rural and regional areas a greater choice of subjects, through new online and face-to-face learning options.

This includes partnering with Distance Education Centre Victoria, the Victorian Virtual Learning Network and the Victorian School of Languages to expand and improve virtual learning

Along with grants to support and enable collaboration between schools, this initiative will mean every student will be able to access every VCE subject – regardless of where they live or go to school.

Teachers will be able to deliver classes to students in multiple schools at the same time using technologies such as video conferencing, instant messaging, chat rooms and virtual whiteboards.

Through this innovative way of learning, students can interact and connect in real-time with teachers and other students outside of their school in these virtual classrooms.

The delivery of new VCE virtual subjects will start from the first semester next year, with all new subjects to be progressively rolled out by the end of 2021.

Distance Education Centre Victoria will be renamed Virtual School Victoria, reflecting its future focus.

The funding will be used for the design and delivery of new subjects, resources to support student learning and to explore whether VET VCE studies could also be expanded virtually.

A learning course will also be designed to help prepare regional and rural students for virtual learning before they enrol in VCE online study.

A new VCE Collaboration Fund will also create interschool partnerships between regional schools so they can offer more for students.

The fund will support more than 100 schools to create shared teaching arrangements and resources to increase the number of VCE subjects available in partner schools. These will be delivered collaboratively, either face-to-face or virtually.

The Labor Government is building the Education State, which is about providing all students access to a world-class education system no matter where they live.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

“For the first time, country students will have the access to the same range of VCE subjects as city students.”

“Selecting VCE subjects is a big decision and all students should be able to choose what’s right for them, regardless of where they live.”

Media contact: Stephanie Jones 0439 600 616 | stephanie.jones@minstaff.vic.gov.au