

Helping Families

Victorian Budget 2024/25



The Hon Ben Carroll MP

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HELPING FAMILIES WITH BACK-TO-SCHOOL COSTS

Getting a world-class public education in Victoria will always be free – but supplies and extracurricular activities can really add up for families doing it tough.

That's why, with an investment of \$3.1 billion in education, the Allan Labor Government will tackle back-to-school costs for families, while continuing our nation-leading school-building agenda and completing our promise to deliver 100 new schools by 2026.

We'll build on our cost-of-living support for families, as part of a \$287 million package to deliver a once-off \$400 School Saving Bonus that families can use to cover the cost of uniforms, camps, excursions and other extracurricular activities through the year.

Support will be available in time for the start of the 2025 school year, for every child at a government school, as well as eligible concession card holders in non-government schools.

A \$1.8 billion investment will build new schools and better classrooms, gyms and libraries across Victoria – supporting growing communities and backing 4,800 local jobs in construction and across the supply chain.

We promised to deliver 100 new schools between 2019 and 2026. We've already opened 75, with a further six schools currently under construction, and another three in the planning and design stage.

The *Victorian Budget 2024/25* completes our promise – with \$1 billion for 16 new schools across Melbourne and regional Victoria and additional stages at two recently opened schools, creating future classrooms for more than 15,000 kids. A further \$227 million will upgrade schools across our state.

We're also tripling our Glasses for Kids program – benefitting an extra 74,000 young Victorians – providing free vision testing and prescription glasses to Prep to Year 3 students, with an extra \$6.8 million.

This Budget builds on the more than \$700 million we've invested in healthcare support in schools – adding to the doctors, nurses and mental health practitioners who support our kids.

We'll invest a further \$21.8 million for psychologists, speech pathologists and social workers, \$6.3 million for the Primary School Nursing Program and \$13.9 million to deliver mental healthcare in our schools.

Right across Australia, schools are facing workforce challenges. It's why we've already delivered more than \$1.6 billion to recruit and support teachers, with scholarships to make studying secondary teaching free, incentives to work in hard-to-staff schools and upskilling education support staff to become teachers in communities they know.

We're continuing to back our teachers and support staff with an extra \$17.9 million to boost our workforce, attracting more teachers from overseas and enabling school leaders to work more flexibly around their lives.

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An investment of \$63.8 million will also give our hardworking school staff more mental health and wellbeing support, helping to bolster recruitment, increase retention and support those returning to the workforce.

We're also investing \$10.7 million to reduce the admin burden on school staff – with initiatives that give principals more time to support staff and students, as well as extra support for teachers in their curriculum and assessment planning.

Victorian students lead the nation in NAPLAN results, and the Labor Government will continue investing in both our high achievers and those who need extra support to shine.

An investment of almost \$17 million will extend the Student Excellence Program, which helps support high achieving students across all government schools – from excursions to extra classroom resources and extension programs.

We'll also continue the Primary Mathematics and Science Specialist Program, training an extra 100 teachers as STEM specialists to make sure our students are getting the skills they need for the future, and we'll invest \$8.2 million to lift outcomes by supporting the English Online Interview, supporting learning literacy through phonics.

We know there is no singular path to setting up our kids for their future, with more and more students choosing to get hands-on skills and experience.

That's why we're investing almost \$109 million to help students kickstart their career goals sooner, as well as \$4.8 million for new programs that will give students in Year 9 and 10 the opportunity to experience vocational courses and studying at TAFE.

This includes support for vulnerable kids to stay in education and break the cycle of disadvantage, with \$71 million to support them to finish Year 12 and secure a post-school pathway. A further \$28.4 million is invested for a suite of initiatives to support students in the justice system.

We'll also invest \$8.4 million to better support students in out-of-home care and strengthen the LOOKOUT program in schools and kinders.

Our Community Language Schools are supporting more than 40,000 kids to learn or maintain nearly 50 mother and heritage languages this year alone – we'll make sure they can continue their important work with an investment of \$10.5 million, as well as delivering an extra \$41.5 million for the English as an Additional Language program.

The Budget makes a significant new \$51 million investment to improve education and wellbeing outcomes for Victoria's First Nations students. It includes more than \$32 million to support the Aboriginal community-controlled sector, and measures to strengthen self-determination and ensure cultural safety in schools.

The Budget delivers \$211 million for women's safety, to support victim-survivors of family violence and better hold perpetrators to account – we'll build on that work in schools, with \$39.1 million to embed respect and gender equality through our vital Respectful Relationships program.

After a summer of too many tragic, preventable drownings on our beaches and waterways, we'll invest \$115.8 million in the Active Schools program – including more than \$73 million for swimming and water safety education.

We're making sure distance isn't a barrier to students studying the things they want – with \$6 million to expand curriculum access for rural and regional students, and \$11.6 million for locally-driven projects across regional Victoria and our suburbs, supporting students to engage in education with local knowledge and expertise.

Some school communities in regional Victoria have faced significant floods and storms this year – an investment of \$4.9 million will help them recover and rebuild, getting their facilities – and families – back to normal.

Early childhood education gives the youngest Victorians a great start in life. That’s why the Labor Government is investing \$14 billion to expand Three-Year-Old Kinder to every child, and better yet – make Three and Four-Year-Old Kinder free.

This Budget continues these investments, with a further \$129 million to kickstart our kids’ education with two years of play-based learning, while also saving families up to \$2,500 for every child, every year.

We’re also investing \$19 million for Building Blocks Improvement and Inclusion grants, making sure our kinder facilities are modern, spacious and fit-for-purpose, and \$9.4 million to support more children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to engage and thrive in early childhood education.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has been building the Education State – with great classrooms, great teachers and more individual support, helping make sure students have every opportunity to succeed.

Our overall investment of more than \$30 billion has made Victoria’s school performance and attendance the best in the nation – we’ve invested more than \$16.7 billion in infrastructure investments at schools, delivered 121 new schools and more than 2,000 upgrades, giving every Victorian child access to a fantastic education, close to home.

This is a Budget that helps cover the cost of kids’ learning – because this is a Budget that’s helping families.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

“Every child, no matter where they live, deserves access to world-class facilities and an outstanding education – we’ve spent a decade building the Education State, and this Budget continues our investment in our kids’ future.”

“It’s tough for a lot of families right now. That’s why we’ll give families one less thing to worry about – helping them cover back-to-school costs, with \$400 for every eligible student.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

“Our early childhood reforms have opened up more free quality education for thousands of Victorian children – we’re continuing our work to give kids a great start, while saving families thousands of dollars and supporting more parents to return to work or study if they choose.”

New schools funded in the Victorian Budget 2024/25 and set to open in 2026:

- Horseshoe Bend Primary School (interim name)
- Leneva (Frederic St Road) Primary School (interim name)
- Tarneit Plains Primary School (interim name)
- Toolern Waters Primary School (interim name)
- Wallan East Primary School (interim name)
- Ballarto Road Primary School (interim name)
- Casey Central Primary School (interim name)
- Clyde Creek North Primary School (interim name)
- Mickleham South Primary School (interim name)
- Plumpton Primary School (interim name)
- Warralily Park Primary School (interim name)
- Wollert Andrews Road Primary School (interim name)
- Clyde Creek North Secondary School (interim name)
- Cobblebank Secondary School (interim name)
- Lockerbie Specialist School (interim name)
- Point Cook South Specialist School (interim name)