



Department
of Education

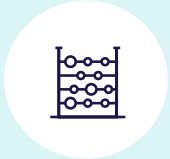
Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee Inquiry into Public School Funding

Tony Bates – Secretary, Department of Education

Scott Widmer – Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Secondary School Reform,
Department of Education

Andrea Del Monaco – Deputy Secretary, Financial Policy and Information Services,
Department of Education

Victoria has a large school system



Primary education



Secondary education



Specialist education



Language schools

1,575

Government schools



493

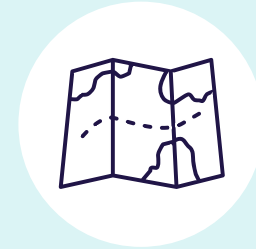
Catholic schools

233

Independent schools

4 Regions

organised into **17 Areas**



providing an interface between the department, schools and service providers

665,912

Government school students



218,696

Catholic school students

178,292

Independent school students

Government school workforce

49,839

Teachers



3,945

Principals

26,323

Education support staff

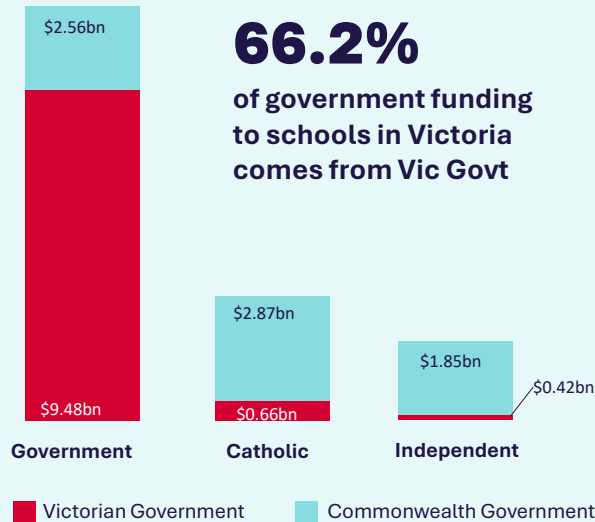
*Figures above are FTE for the government schools workforce (June 2025).
Government school headcount is ~95,000 staff*

Victoria is the majority funder of government schools

School Resource Standard (SRS)

The School Resource Standard (SRS) is Australia's national needs-based funding model developed from the Gonski review. It sets the total amount of public recurrent funding (excluding capital) required for schools to meet students' educational needs. The combined Commonwealth and Victorian SRS target for government schools is **90.43%** in 2026.

Total government funding source by school sector in Victoria (2024)



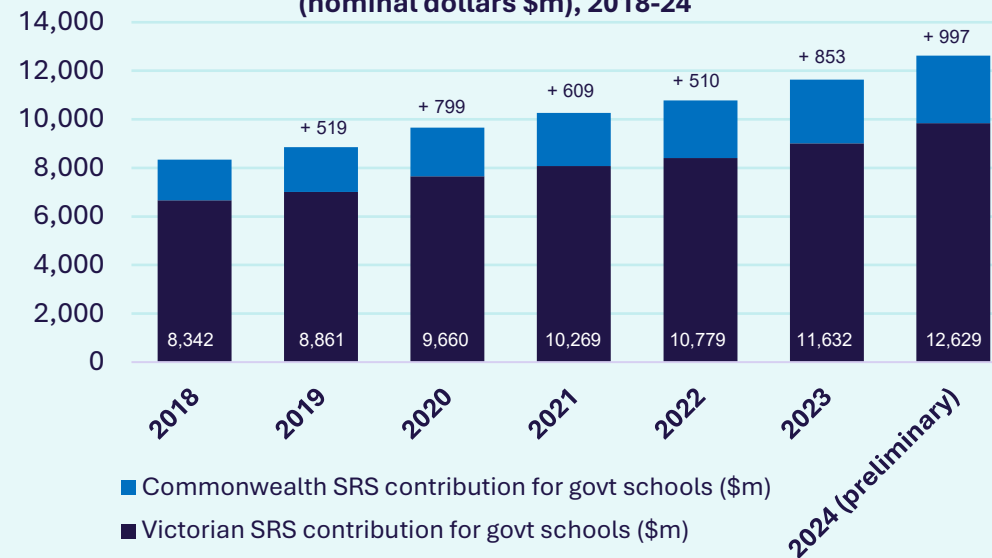
Source: ACARA/My School

Victorian expenditure against SRS continues to grow

The SRS model ensures school funding continues to reflect enrolments and student need, even if the SRS share is maintained. It does this by incorporating revised data on student enrolments and need into the model throughout the relevant school year, such as student census data and NCCD enrolments, and indexation of the SRS by at least 3% per year.

Acquittal of expenditure

Victorian SRS contribution for govt schools (nominal dollars \$m), 2018-24



Source: National Schools Resourcing Board. Reporting commenced in 2018.

Calculating the SRS

The SRS comprises 2 components:

- **Base funding**, funded on a per student basis at different amounts for primary and secondary students
- **Loadings**, to meet the costs of educating students with additional needs, or a school's circumstance.

There are 4 **student-based** loadings:

- students with disability
- low English proficiency
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status
- socio-economic disadvantage.

There are 2 **school-based** loadings

- school size
- school location.

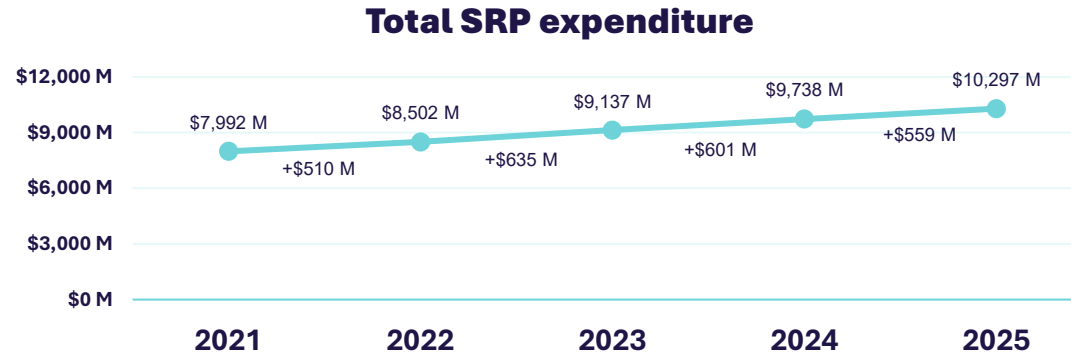
- The **SRS does not provide funding for school capital** (e.g., new schools). This is funded separately by the Victorian Government.
- The **Commonwealth does not contribute to the cost of capital for government schools** (e.g., school builds).
- The Commonwealth does deliver a **non-government schools capital fund**.

Victoria resources government schools through the Student Resource Package and other direct supports

Student Resource Package (SRP)

The **SRP** is Victoria’s needs-based funding model, used to allocate Commonwealth and Victorian Government funding to government schools.

The SRP is tailored to the specific needs of Victorian students and schools.



In 2025, the department distributed **\$10.3b** through the SRP

Non-SRP funding	Provides funding for...			The funding that goes to schools is provided as....		
Non-SRP based funding and initiatives	Initiatives delivered at a systemic level directly by the department rather than providing funding to schools e.g. Tech Schools, school breakfast clubs, Student Support Services (allied health staff) and others.			<p>~87% Student-based funding represents the main funding source for all schools and comprises approximately 87% of the total SRP provided to schools</p> <p>~13% School based funding and targeted Initiatives make up the remainder</p>		
SRP funding streams	Provides funding for...					
Student-based: per capita allocations	Core teaching and learning, including funding for core student learning, leadership, teaching support, professional development, relief teaching, and payroll tax and superannuation costs for the school	2025 allocation	\$6.94b (67%)			<p>Cash for schools to use to purchase materials, resources and other support (including CRT)</p>
Student-based: equity	Where additional funding is required to compensate for additional student learning needs - includes funding for social disadvantage, catch-up funding, and students with disability.		\$2.06b (20%)			
School-based	School-specific programs (including funding based on school size and location) and school infrastructure, such as maintenance and minor works, and grounds allowance.		\$0.63b (6%)			
Targeted initiatives	Programs with specific criteria or defined life spans, such as the Mental Health in Primary Schools and Respectful Relationships programs.		\$0.67b (6%)			
				<p>And department provided support...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly 200 primary and secondary school nurses Speech pathologists, psychologists, social workers and other allied health and other supports IT and software management support Legal advice Human resources support Staff wellbeing programs and support Koorie programs, cultural safety and Koorie Education Support Officers Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (VATL) 		

Since 2018 Victoria has entered into a number of agreements with the Commonwealth to secure funding for Victorian government schools

The **National School Reform Agreement**, signed in November 2018, was the first to fully implement the SRS and Gonski reforms.

- Implemented the findings of the 2011 Gonski review and 2018 Gonski 2.0.
- Included 3 National Reform Directions and 8 National Policy Initiatives.
- The Victorian Government fulfilled its school funding and reform obligations under the NSRA.

2018 - 2024 *Signed in November 2018*

National School Reform Agreement (Head Agreement)

Outlined the **national reforms and outcomes measures agreed by all governments to lift student outcomes between 2018 and 2024.**



2018 - 2024 *Signed in December 2018*

Victoria Bilateral School Funding Agreements

Set out the **respective SRS shares** for the Commonwealth and Victoria and state-level school education reforms between **2018 to 2024.**

The **Better and Fairer Schools Agreement**, signed on 30 January 2025 charts the way to 100% of the SRS.

2025 - 2034 *Signed in January 2025*

Better and Fairer Schools Agreement (Head Agreement)

Secured a pathway to **100% of the SRS** for all Australian government schools **by 2034.**



2025 & 2026 *Signed in December 2025*

Interim Victoria Bilateral School Funding Agreements

Set out the **respective SRS shares** for the Commonwealth and Victoria for 2025 and 2026.



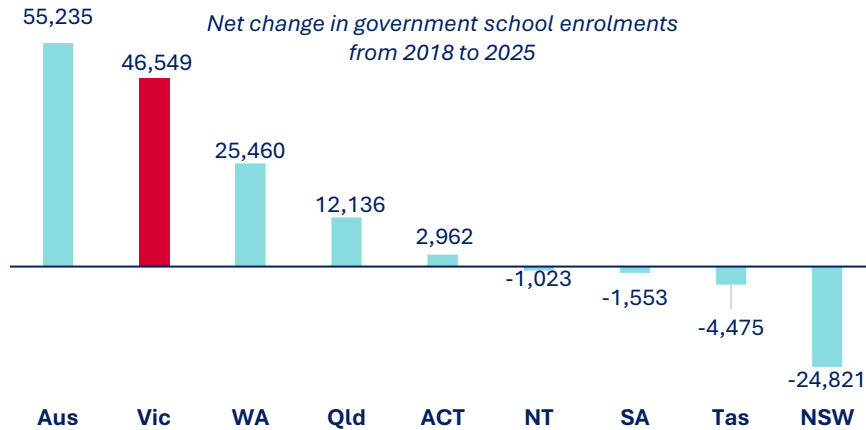
Under negotiation *Subject to ongoing negotiations in 2026*

Long-term Victoria Bilateral School Funding Agreement

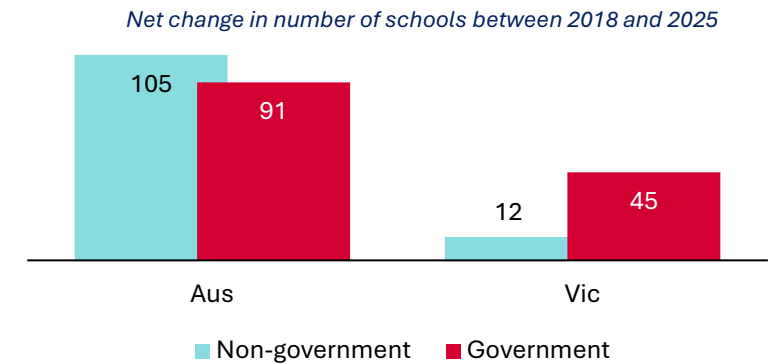
Will set the **specific pathway to 100%** of the SRS for Victorian government schools to 2034, including when Victoria will deliver 75% of the SRS.

The Victorian government school system continues to grow at a faster rate than other jurisdictions

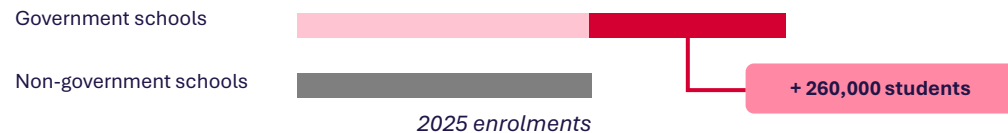
In Australia, there was a net increase of 55,235 enrolments in government schools between 2018 and 2025. **Victoria's government school enrolments grew by 46,000 over this time.**



Victoria's net increase of 45 government schools between 2018 and 2025 is the **highest in the country**



Last year **260,000 more students** chose Victorian government schools than non-government schools



The share of Victoria's students in government schools has remained **relatively stable** (down 0.4 pp since 2015).

Between 2015 and 2025 across Australia, government **school enrolments have declined 2.4pp**. NSW has seen a 3.8pp drop; Qld 3.5pp decline.

The Victorian school building program has **kept up with population growth**, delivering new schools where they are needed.

The Victorian government **teacher and education support workforces have increased** substantially from 2015 to 2025.



Teachers

40,854 to 54,743

34.0%



Victoria's government sector growth of **13,889 FTE teachers** from 2015 to 2025 was **more than any other jurisdiction**.

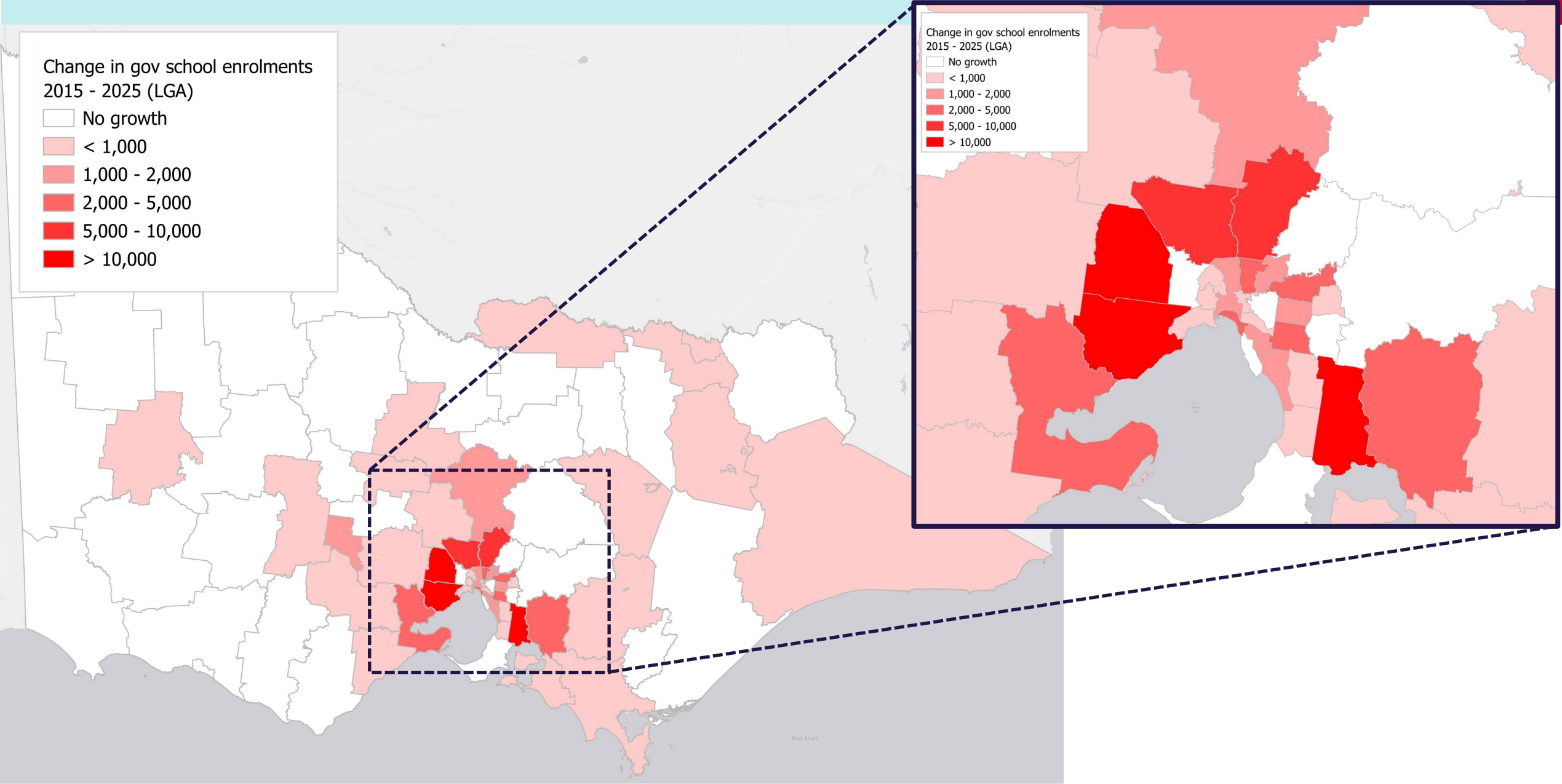
Since 2015 total enrolments in Victorian government schools have grown by 89,070

Change in gov school enrolments
2015 - 2025 (LGA)

- No growth
- < 1,000
- 1,000 - 2,000
- 2,000 - 5,000
- 5,000 - 10,000
- > 10,000

Change in gov school enrolments
2015 - 2025 (LGA)

- No growth
- < 1,000
- 1,000 - 2,000
- 2,000 - 5,000
- 5,000 - 10,000
- > 10,000



Recent investments in school infrastructure have kept up with growth

\$17.1b

since 2015-16



123

new schools
open or funded

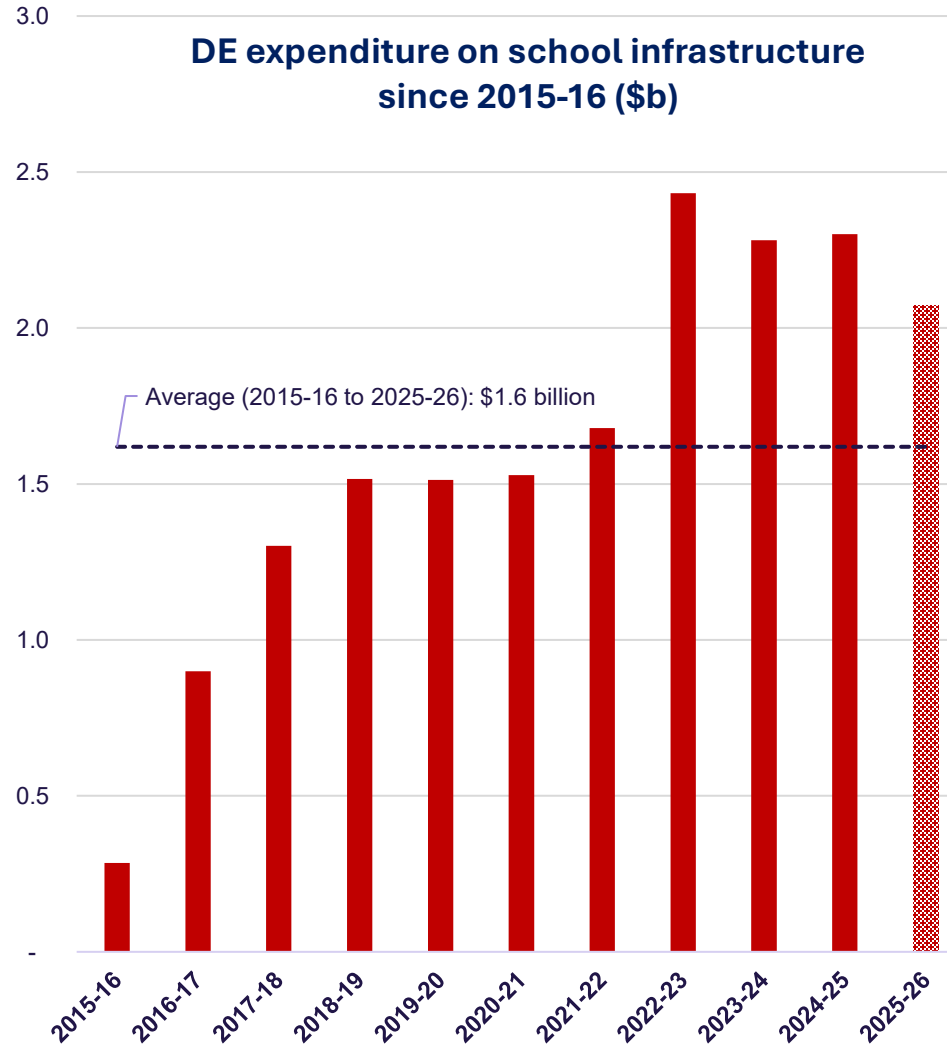


2,300+

school upgrade
projects

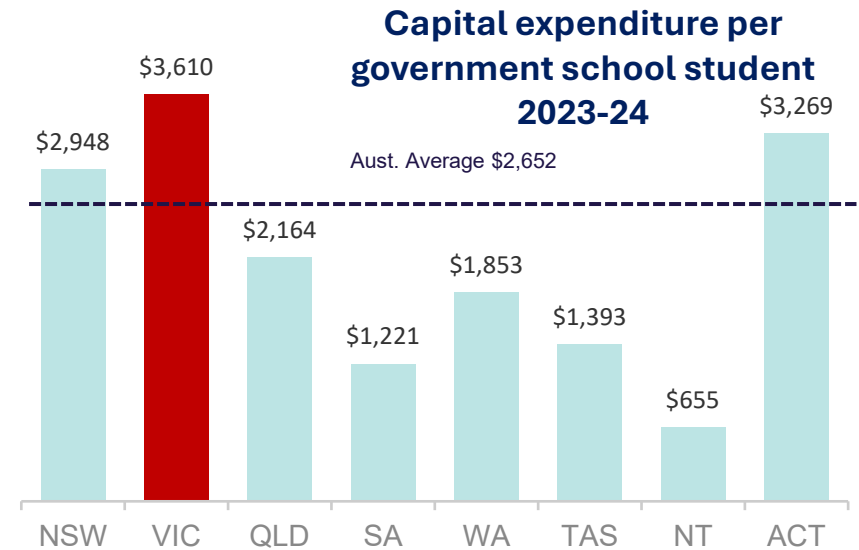
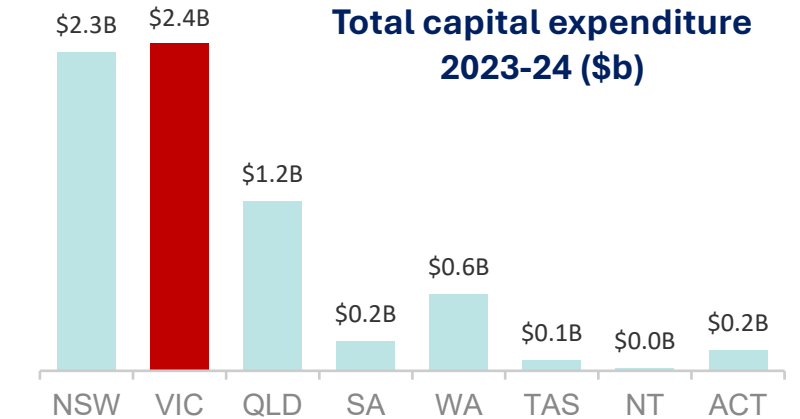


More than **50%**
of all the schools opened
in Australia between 2015
and 2025 are in Victoria



Source: DE internal data

Note: 2025-26 is projected and may not include all education capital spend



Source: ACARA/MySchool (most recently published data is shown)

Victoria has invested in significant workforce growth to attract and retain teachers

Investing in a high-quality workforce is the most effective way to improve student outcomes...

The Victorian **government school workforce has grown by over 10,000 FTE** since 2016

Victoria's teaching workforce is **growing steadily** and exceeds national growth

Victoria's student-to-teacher ratios are steadily improving and remain amongst the **best (i.e., lowest)** in the country

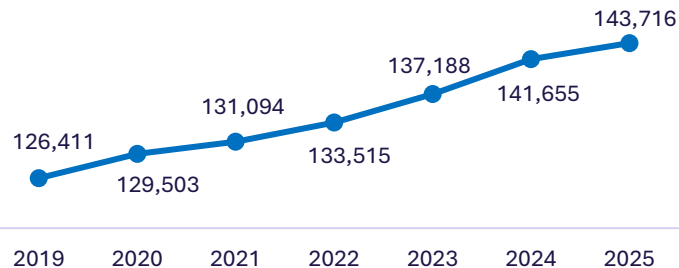


Over **\$1.8b** invested in school workforce since 2019



+1,300 FTE teachers between June 2024 and June 2025

Registered school teachers in Victoria continue to **increase steadily**



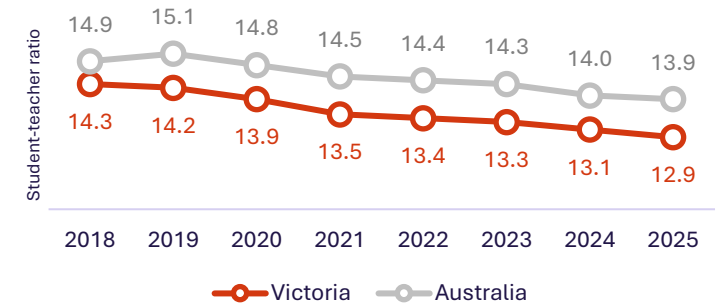
Primary (FTE)



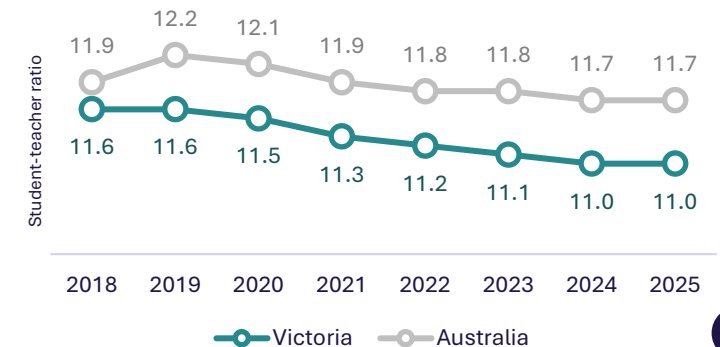
Secondary (FTE)



Primary



Secondary



Victoria's NAPLAN results are strong, while some challenges remain



Highest scores:

- Victoria ranked **first or second** in **18 of 20** measures
- Victorian primary school students ranked **first or second** in all **10 domains**

Year level		Victoria's ranking				
		Reading	Numeracy	Writing	Spelling	G&P
Primary	Year 3	1	1	2	2	1
	Year 5	2	1	1	2	1
Secondary	Year 7	2	2	1	-	2
	Year 9	2	1	1	-	2



Greatest improvement:

- mean scores were **higher in 17 of the 20** measures, compared to 2024
- Victorian secondary students **exceeded** the results of their 2024 peers on every measure



- **70%** of Victorian students were **'strong'** or **'exceeding'** in 18 of 20 measures
- **7.3%** of students **needed additional support**



Challenges remain, particularly for priority cohorts

- Compared to their peers, a **disadvantaged student falls significantly behind by Year 9**



- Gaps for **First Nations** students persist
- **Gender** gaps remain

We have a clear strategy for the future directions of schooling in Victoria

Embed evidence-based teaching and learning across all schools

The Victorian Teaching and Learning Model (VTLM) 2.0
Progress to date:



98% of government schools have identified VTLM 2.0 as a 2026 Key Improvement Strategy.



3,419 Victorian Lesson Plans released, plus



5,200+ supporting resources across key learning areas.

Increase school completion rates and implement senior secondary reform

Victorian students complete secondary certificates at **high and improving rates**

Senior secondary certificate completion rate, 2024 (all sectors)

97%



up from **92%** in 2021

In 2023, Victoria had the **highest VET participation rates** for 15- to 19-year-olds in Australia and the **highest growth from 2022**.

Improve support for students with disability

As of 2025, **all schools** have transitioned to the new **Disability Inclusion model**



The 2025-26 budget delivered **\$319.8 million** over 4 years, on top of the **\$1.56 billion** in the 2020-21 budget to introduce the reforms.

Working with the Commonwealth on the delivery of Thriving Kids to ensure all students have the support they need.

Continued focus on emerging challenges

Improving **attendance rates**, which are still lower than they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overcoming the impact of **disadvantage** on learner outcomes, as well as improving outcome gaps for **First Nations** and **regional students**.

Addressing **workforce** pressures, including out of field teaching, particularly in science and maths.

Continuing to manage for **significant growth** – which continues at a rate not experienced in other jurisdictions – requires our continued focus on workforce and infrastructure.

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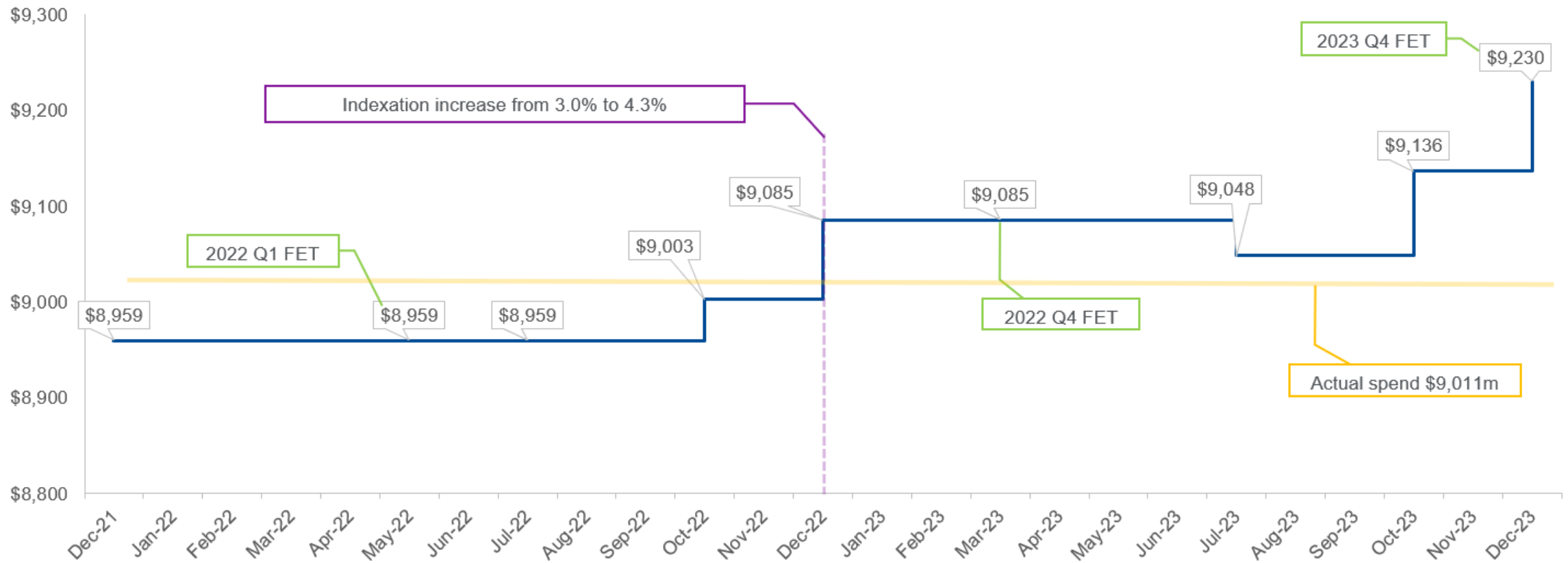
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The Education State

Victoria – SRS target for government schools, 2023 (\$m)



↑
Indicative SRP

↑
Final SRP

The target increased by \$182 million in the second half of 2023.