



Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

Inquiry: Inquiry into Public School Funding

Hearing date: 12 March 2026

Question taken on notice

Directed to: Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

Received date: 2 April 2026

1. **Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO, page 37**

Question Asked:

How many schools is this program being offered in?

Moin ZAFAR: What we see on the ground working with different schools is they have a triage mechanism rather than a case management, where they have referral pathways for kids with extra requirements or resource requirements. So they do not get the chance to follow through with those referrals.

Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO: But how many schools is that program?

Moin ZAFAR: At the moment, as I said, I cannot give you an exact number.

Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO: Would you be able to take it on notice?

Moin ZAFAR: Yes, sure.

Response: *See attachment below*

Response to Question Taken on Notice

In response to the question taken on notice, the ASRC's Refugee Education Support / School Program is designed to support refugee and asylum seeker children and their families to access, navigate, and remain engaged in the Victorian education system. The program's core focus is individual advocacy, working directly with school-aged children and their families to help address barriers they face in the educational setting.

This includes organising and facilitating information sessions to help families better understand their rights and entitlements within the school system, as well as how to navigate school processes and available supports. A key component of the program is connecting families with relevant services and financial assistance, including Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF), the Les Twentyman Foundation, and the Student Resource Scheme (SRS), ensuring that students are not excluded from educational opportunities due to financial hardship.

We are currently working with between 20 and 25 government and Catholic schools. It should be noted that the ASRC's primary role within this program is individual advocacy on behalf of our clients. The delivery of trauma-informed and culturally responsive training to schools is carried out independently by other support services.

The ASRC does not have a school program that operates in or is embedded in schools - we are not funded by the Department of Education. We are aware of two models that work in schools:

- The Berry Street Education Model (<https://www.berrystreet.org.au/learning-and-resources/berry-street-education-model>) is the primary training framework utilised by schools. However, as this training is independently funded and paid for by individual schools, not all schools are able to or choose to subscribe to this model.
- Foundation House offers a free one-day training program for schools as an alternative pathway to building trauma-informed and culturally responsive capacity (<https://foundationhouse.org.au/specialised-programs/schools/>)

We suggest that for any information about these programs, the inquiry approaches the above organisations directly.

The ASRC's school program commenced in 2025, and we are actively expanding our work with schools to further strengthen our advocacy work on behalf of refugees and people seeking asylum, students, and their families.

We are happy to provide further information or a more detailed breakdown if that would be of assistance to the committee.