

Question on notice no:	4
PAEC transcript page reference:	10

QUESTION

Please provide case studies related to how the *Safe Schools* initiative has been applied in government schools.

RESPONSE**Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary**

Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary is the only girls' secondary in the Geelong region and caters for students in years 7 - 12. Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary signed up as a Safe School member in 2014.

The school says that 'with the support of Safe Schools we have had the facts and resources (human and teaching) to be able to support the young people who are in the LGBTI community better than in the past, it has raised our awareness of issues and provided direction'.

Since becoming a member, Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary has done the following but also acknowledges 'there is much more to do':

- delivered principal speeches & student speeches at school assemblies
- celebrated International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBIT) Days
- raised awareness within the school community
- put up posters around the school celebrating diversity
- conducted surveys of students about their feelings of safety, issues at school etc.
- worked on Gender Affirmation Support Plans
- supported transgender and gender questioning students
- changed their language to be less gender specific
- run a number of professional learning workshops.

University High School

University High is an inner city co-educational year 7–12 college with a diverse student population. University High signed up as a Safe School in 2016.

One of the main reasons University High signed up was because of a 'desire from students to reactivate Spectrum [their student-led LGBTI action group] after a 2-year hiatus. There was also strong call from parent body'.

Since signing up there have been a number of student-led initiatives with the support of the school staff. This group has led the following in the school:

- LGBTI History Month activities
- teacher PD delivered by students on how to support LGBTI+ students in the classroom
- production of literature to support teachers with working with LGBTI students.

The student group has also:

- attended the LGBTI History Conference

- visited LGBTI Archives
- held fortnightly Spectrum meetings.

The school reports that due to its focus on being a Safe School there is now:

- a safer environment for students who are LGBTI;
- greater awareness of supportive vs destructive language and attitudes towards LGBTI students; and
- greater interest in developing best practice policies around gendered language.

Brunswick Secondary College

Brunswick Secondary College is a co-educational year 7–12 college of 970 students in northern Melbourne. The College joined Safe Schools in 2013 as it wanted to continue to create a safe environment for all students consistent with the school's philosophy. The school has recently worked hard to run a successful International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) event in conjunction with Merri Health, and has developed a community of practice with another school to develop their Stand Out group (a group of students who undertake actions and work to make their school more inclusive and supportive of gender and sexual diversity). Both these initiatives have been led by students. Next steps include working with another three secondary schools in the area and Merri Health to run leadership training in this space.

The school has enjoyed widespread support from its community, an absence of concerns from the school community including parents/carers and students, along with vocal support from parents who endorse the school being a Safe School. Support is further demonstrated from most school staff with stickers on laptops, posters in offices, wearing 'Ally' badges on lanyards to show their support of loving relationships. This visibility is deliberately high to visitors and prospective parents/carers.

Question on notice no:	5
PAEC transcript page reference:	11

QUESTION

In reference to funding from the Federal Government, how is the figure of a \$630 million shortfall calculated?

RESPONSE

Under the Heads of Agreement signed in 2013 between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria on national education reform, the Commonwealth and State committed to a new funding arrangement over six years covering the period of 2014 to 2019.

As at 16 May 2017, the Commonwealth had indicated it would renege on the final two years of the agreement.

Under the Commonwealth proposal State Government schools will not be provided with approximately \$630 million in 2019. The \$630 million represents the difference between the original Commonwealth funding amount agreed in the Heads of Agreement and what is proposed, as at 16 May 2017, under the Commonwealth's new funding arrangement.

Question on notice no:	6
PAEC transcript page reference:	17-18

QUESTION

With regard to performance measures for year 7 and year 9 NAPLAN results for Aboriginal students:

- Why have the targets for Indigenous students remained the same as last year's budget when an additional \$72 million is being invested?
- How many students in year 7 and year 9 are classified as Indigenous?
- What are the issues the Minister was referring to in relation to Marrung?

RESPONSE

With regard to performance measures for year 7 and year 9 NAPLAN results for Aboriginal students:

- Why have the targets for Indigenous students remained the same as last year's budget when an additional \$72 million is being invested?**

In 2015, the Department established new Budget Paper No 3 (BP3) performance measures that focus on improving academic achievement. The new measures moved from reporting on national minimum standards to focus on students achieving above the bottom three bands, to reflect Victoria's expectation for minimum standards for academic achievement.

Ambitious targets for Aboriginal students were established to reflect the Council of Australian Governments 'Close the Gap' target to halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements by 2018.

A methodology for alignment of the BP3 measures to the Education State School Target trajectories has been developed. The methodology considers recent NAPLAN performance (within the context of historical trend data), with a view to maintaining targets in instances where recent performance is below the relevant target range.

Based on NAPLAN performance in 2016, higher 2017-18 targets have been set for two of the eight NAPLAN measures for Aboriginal students, to reflect the ambition of the Education State for Excellence in Reading and Maths and to Break the Link between disadvantage and achievement. No NAPLAN targets (for Aboriginal students or overall measures) have been lowered, consistent with the government's commitment not to lower targets.

The impact of Education State and Marrung initiatives will not be immediately apparent in student achievement measures. It is expected that the Education State school targets will be reached over a 5-10 year timeframe, and the Department will continue to monitor progress against the targets.

b. How many students in year 7 and 9 are classified as Indigenous?

As shown in Table 1 below, approximately 1695 students in Years 7 and 9 identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in Victorian Government schools. Across all sectors, approximately 2080 students in Years 7 and 9 identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Table 1: Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Enrolments (FTE) by Year Level and Region

	Govt	All sectors
Year 7	882.8	1068.8
Year 9	812	1012
Total	1694.8	2080.8

c. What are the issues the Minister was referring to in relation to Marrung?

The Minister was referring to the range of over 30 initiatives or high-level actions to support improved education outcomes for Koorie learners in the *Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026* (Marrung). Further details of these initiatives are available in Marrung on the Department's public website at:

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/aboriginal/Marrung_Aboriginal_Education_Plan_2016-2026.pdf.

Question on notice no:	7
PAEC transcript page reference:	21

QUESTION

Programs for students with disabilities – Victorian Budget 2017-18, BP 3, p. 194 – How many specialist and specialist development government schools are running the Safe Schools program?

RESPONSE

As at 8 June 2017, there are eight specialist and government specialist development schools that have signed up to the Safe Schools program.

Question on notice no:	8
PAEC transcript page reference:	24-25

QUESTION

With respect to the Addressing Underperformance in Schools initiative¹:

- a. How does the Department identify which are the lowest 350 performing government schools? What are the criteria for that and what are the features of the lowest performing schools?
- b. Please provide the rest of the figures regarding the school turnaround teams referred to on page 24 of the transcript.
- c. How is the \$50 million over 4 years for the 350 lowest performing school divided between the schools?

RESPONSE

With respect to the Addressing Underperformance in Schools initiative:

- a. **How does the Department identify which are the lowest 350 performing government schools? What are the criteria for that and what are the features of the lowest performing schools?**

The Department assesses the performance of government schools using 34 improvement measures for primary schools and 40 improvement measures for secondary schools. Threshold standards are set against measures including student achievement, engagement, wellbeing and productivity.

- b. **Please provide the rest of the figures regarding the school turnaround teams referred to on page 24 of the transcript.**

Eight Turnaround Teams will be placed in up to 50 underperforming schools.

- c. **How is the \$50 million over 4 years for the 350 lowest performing school divided between the schools?**

The \$50.7 million over four years will provide targeted, differential support to underperforming schools through the following initiatives:

- Up to 40 Executive Principals placed in our most underperforming schools where a principal vacancy arises or where they may assist to lead and rebuild a school or group of schools in a local area
- School Improvement Partnerships teaming 64 leadership teams from underperforming schools with leadership teams from high-performing schools
- Specialist Teaching Teams delivering capability building to classroom teachers in up to 50 schools each year, over four years
- An expanded team of Employee Performance Advisers, which was established in 2016-17
- The Eight Turnaround Teams outlined above.

¹ Department of Treasury and Finance, *Budget Paper No. 3:2017-18 Service Delivery* (2017), pp. 53, 55

Question on notice no:	9
PAEC transcript page reference:	27-28

QUESTION

Please provide details of the new secondary school project in Wonthaggi.

RESPONSE

In the 2016-17 State Budget, Wonthaggi Secondary College and 35 other Victorian schools, shared in \$12 million of planning funding. The Department is continuing to work closely with the college to finalise its planning for future capital works.

Wonthaggi Secondary College also received a total of \$175,000 across the 2015-16 and 2016-17 State Budgets through the Planned Maintenance Program. The college is currently determining the scope of its maintenance works.

Question on notice no:	10
PAEC transcript page reference:	31-32

QUESTION

With reference to PPPs:

- a. What analysis has the Department carried out with regards to the effectiveness of the PPP model of delivering new schools?
- b. What did the analysis find in terms of the additional upfront costs, the benefits of PPPs and striking a balance between the upfront costs and the opportunity cost of not being able to construct other school buildings?
- c. Which of the 15 schools (BP3 p. 62) referred to in the budget papers will be procured through the PPP model?

RESPONSE

With reference to PPPs:

- a. **What analysis has the Department carried out with regards to the effectiveness of the PPP model of delivering new schools?**
- b. **What did the analysis find in terms of the additional upfront costs, the benefits of PPPs and striking a balance between the upfront costs and the opportunity cost of not being able to construct other school buildings?**

The Department has used, or is using, a Public Private Partnership (PPP) delivery model for two projects:

- The Partnerships Victoria in Schools (PViS) project, which saw 12 new schools delivered on greenfield sites located in Melbourne's West, South and North growth corridors. These schools successfully commenced operations in the 2010 and 2011 school years.
- The New Schools PPP Project, which will see 15 schools delivered across 12 sites in some of Victoria's fastest-growing communities. Nine schools across eight sites successfully commenced operations in the 2017 school year; the remaining six schools across four sites are on track to open for the beginning of the 2018 school year.

The investment decisions on which these projects were based were informed by a range of analysis undertaken by the Department over the last 12 years, which assessed the effectiveness of the PPP model for the delivery of new schools. The analysis identified several key benefits for delivering schools within Victoria through a PPP procurement model, including:

- The ability to meet demand for school services within specified timeframes, at the same time delivering integrated packages of new schools that leverage significant economies of scale;
- Transfer of maintenance obligations and whole-of-life risk to the private sector, enabling principals and teachers to focus on improving student outcomes;
- Whole-of-life efficiencies achieved by linking capital investment decisions to ongoing maintenance obligations; and

- Improved asset quality through contracts that:
 - Specify minimum standards and incentivise the private sector to ensure those minimum standards are met; and
 - Ensure a consistent distribution of maintenance investment over the life of the asset.
- c. **Which of the 15 schools (BP3 p. 62) referred to in the budget papers will be procured through the PPP model?**

None of the new schools funded through the 2017-18 State Budget, as listed on page 62 of Budget Paper 3, are being procured or delivered through the PPP model.

The Department's website lists 15 priority schools being procured and delivered through the New Schools Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. The 15 new PPP schools, which were funded in the 2014-15 and 2015-16 State Budget and are being delivered across 12 sites, are:

- Armstrong Creek Education Precinct (including Primary School and Special School) (to open 2018);
- Bannockburn P-12 School (including Primary School and Secondary School) (to open 2018);
- Barton Primary School (opened 2017);
- Featherbrook P-9 College (opened 2017);
- Harvest Home Primary School (opened 2017);
- John Henry Primary School (opened 2017);
- Mernda Central P-12 College (including Primary School and Secondary School) (opened 2017);
- Mernda Park Primary School (opened 2017);
- North Geelong Special Developmental School (to open 2018);
- Torquay North Primary School (to open 2018);
- Tulliallan Primary School (opened 2017); and
- Wilandra Rise Primary School (opened 2017).

Question on notice no:	11
PAEC transcript page reference:	38-39

QUESTION

- a. Please describe the process of forecasting enrolment demand over a 5-20 year period, and how this informs the provision of new schools, including land acquisitions.
- b. How can the forecasting of enrolment demand be made more transparent?

RESPONSE

- a. Please describe the process of forecasting enrolment demand over a 5-20 year period, and how this informs the provision of new schools, including land acquisitions.**

The Department has developed an evidenced-based methodology and consultation process for planning for new schools over a 20-year period. These stages include demographic assessment, a site suitability assessment, followed by land acquisition, design and finally construction.

The Department annually reviews and models the need for new government schools using demographic modelling of residential growth, demographic change and enrolment trends at schools across Victoria over a 20-year time horizon, and refines its modelling in more detail over a 5-year time horizon.

The Department consults councils and other stakeholders, adjusting forecasts where relevant. Factors considered include the progress of developments that affect forecast population growth and the availability and suitability of sites.

The Department also considers the capacity of existing schools to meet demand and changes to the proportion of parents choosing a government education.

The Department works with State and local planning authorities, developers and land owners, to ensure that enrolment growth is effectively managed. This includes working with these stakeholders to identify and plan sites for proposed government schools in greenfields, in regional areas and in inner city areas that are experiencing significant population growth.

Consultation and engagement with stakeholders provides additional input to help inform the Department's planning decisions for complex established areas.

The Auditor-General recently confirmed (Managing School Infrastructure, tabled on 11 May 2017) that the Department is effectively planning to meet the growing demand for new school places, and that the Department provides robust advice to government on priority schools to be built based on greatest demand. The audit also concluded that the Department is effectively managing peak enrolments.

- b. How can the forecasting of enrolment demand be made more transparent?**

To improve transparency, the Department publishes actual and historic enrolment numbers for government and non-government schools online on the Victorian Government Data Directory. This includes Full Time Equivalent (FTE) enrolments by school type, year level and sex for each school. This data informs the Department's annual review and modelling for new schools. Ongoing consultation

with key stakeholders including local councils is an important part of ensuring the modelling is robust and transparent.

The Department is also ensuring the community is aware of projects underway to address the need for new school infrastructure, including land acquisitions, by publishing information on the Victorian School Building Authority's (VSBA) website. This includes over 1,000 infrastructure projects in schools and early childhood centres. The VSBA's website now contains project information and timelines for every project funded by this Government for over \$25,000, as well as land acquisitions. This information is updated regularly, ensuring that anyone can find out about school building projects going on across the State.

Question on notice no:	12
PAEC transcript page reference:	41

QUESTION

How will the two digital education initiatives, Critical IT Supporting Every Student and Improving Regional Connectivity², impact on internet speeds for rural and regional schools?

RESPONSE

The 2017-18 State Budget is providing \$67.9 million to enhance information technology support and boost internet services for all Victorian schools and students, including rural and regional schools.

The *Digital Education – Improving Regional Connectivity* initiative is a \$16.4 million statewide investment that will improve bandwidth, digital connectivity and access to the internet for students in 347 small rural and regionally based Victorian government schools.

This initiative will provide students and teachers in small rural and regional schools with the same level of bandwidth and access to online resources as their peers in metropolitan schools. It removes the ‘tyranny of distance’ for students and teachers in small rural and regional schools and will greatly enhance rural and regional students’ acquisition of critical 21st century digital skills.

The initiative will double the bandwidth in small rural and regional schools and establish a new statewide minimum of 20 megabits per second of scalable fibre optic bandwidth, regardless of a school’s geographic location.

The *Digital education – Critical IT supporting every student* initiative will renew the statewide enterprise grade Wi-Fi network infrastructure and deliver an expanded virtual conferencing service covering all Victorian Government schools.

The program of works includes lifting the level of all Victorian Government primary schools’ Wi-Fi technology to equal the provision in secondary schools.

These digital initiatives will enable faster and more reliable access to online teaching and learning resources and administration services across the Education State, covering all schools including rural and regional schools.

The *Digital Education – Improving regional connectivity* and *Digital education – Critical IT supporting every student* initiatives are being funded through the 2017-18 State Budget, and are referenced in Budget Paper No 3: Service Delivery on pages 53, 55 and 56.

² Department of Treasury and Finance, *Budget Paper No. 3: 2017-18 Service Delivery* (2017), p. 53

Question on notice no:	13
PAEC transcript page reference:	42

QUESTION

With reference to three FOI requests, relating to:

- Third-party consultants
- The seizure of harmful items – weapons
- New school demand analysis.

Can the Minister release the information that was sought?

RESPONSE

The Department is currently processing the FOI requests relating to the seizure of harmful items – weapons and new school demand analysis, and will provide a decision on access in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act).

The FOI request relating to third-party consultants was refused, consistent with the FOI Act and following extensive consultation with the Applicant, as it constituted an unreasonable diversion of resources.

Question on notice no:	14
PAEC transcript page reference:	43-44

QUESTION

Has funding for a holistic, age-appropriate sex education program in schools been considered?

RESPONSE

All Victorian government schools are required to deliver age appropriate sexuality education as part of the Health and Physical Education component of the Victorian Curriculum.

Schools allocate funding from their Schools Resource Package (SRP) towards delivering the sex education curriculum as they do for all areas of the curriculum. The amount of funding allocated is at school discretion. Schools may allocate funding to sex education program activities including professional learning for staff, bringing in community or other providers for specific sessions with students, staff and/or parents, or additional sexual health support for students.

School-based sexuality education is one of the learning and teaching responsibilities a school undertakes to equip its students for a healthy and fulfilling adult life. The goal of sexuality education in Victorian schools is to build on knowledge, skills, and behaviours, thus enabling young people to make responsible and safe choices.

Evidence-based curriculum resources such as *Catching on Early* and *Catching on Later* are available to help schools teach the sexuality education components in the Health and Physical Education and Interpersonal Development domains.

The Department recommends that schools take a whole school approach to sexuality education, which is:

- driven by the school leader
- comprehensive
- inclusive
- supported by the latest research
- ongoing and integrated into a student's cross-curriculum learning
- assessed and reported against student achievement in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards
- part of a student's whole-school learning experience.