

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee



2026–27 Budget Estimates questionnaire

Department of Education

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Questionnaire information

The Committee's Inquiry into the 2026–27 State Budget Estimates examines the Victorian Government's expenditure and revenue raising plan.

The Committee's Budget Estimates inquiry aims to benefit the Parliament and the community by:

- promoting the accountability, transparency and integrity of the executive and the public sector
- encouraging effective and efficient delivery of public services and assets
- enhancing understanding of the budget estimates and the wider economic environment
- assisting members of Parliament in their deliberation on the appropriation bills.

This questionnaire seeks information about how the budget affects each department, including how budget allocations are connected to service delivery, infrastructure projects and assets, and other key economic, financial management and emerging issues.

Timeline and format

Responses to this questionnaire are due by **5.00pm on 8 May 2026**.

It is essential that the Committee receive responses by this date to allow sufficient time to consider them before the budget estimates hearings.

The completed questionnaire and Excel worksheet in response to Question 10 should be sent (in the format received) to: paec@parliament.vic.gov.au.

Consistency with the budget papers

Wherever referring to an initiative (including output, asset and savings initiatives) that is also referred to in the budget papers, please use the name used in the budget papers. This ensures that the Committee can correlate the information provided by the department with the information in the budget papers.

Wherever providing details about the department (including amounts of funding, anticipated expenditure and revenue and savings targets) please provide figures for the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the budget papers, unless otherwise specified.

Machinery of government changes

For initiatives (including output, asset and savings initiatives) that have been subject to any prior machinery of government changes, the department with responsibility for the initiative at the time of the 2026–27 Budget is the relevant reporting department for this inquiry.

Specific guidance

Additional guidance is provided for particular questions in the questionnaire.

For any inquiries about this questionnaire, please contact the Committee secretariat:

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Major initiatives

Question 1

What progress has been made in implementing the major initiatives/programs identified in the 2025–26 Budget for the department. Please identify a minimum of five initiatives/programs.

Response

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
1.	Best Start, Best Life	<p>Best Start, Best Life includes four key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support Free Kinder for three- and four-year-old children. • Continue the staged transition of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten to Pre-Prep, which will provide a universal 30 hour per week play-based learning program for every four-year-old child by 2036. • Continue to deliver Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, ensuring every three-year-old can access up to 15 hours per week of play-based learning. 	Kindergarten Delivery	<p>The department continues to support the sector to implement the Best Start, Best Life reforms, including the staged roll-out of Pre Prep.</p> <p>This support covers service delivery, change management, infrastructure planning and investment, and workforce attraction and retention.</p>	<p>The following 2025–26 performance measure outcomes are linked to Best Start, Best Life. Noting these outcomes apply to the 2025 calendar year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Three-Year-Old Kindergarten enrolments were 73,300 children, against a target of 70,000 children. • Average number of hours per week of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten delivery per child was 14.4 hours against a target of 13.8 hours. • The participation rate in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten was 	<p>In 2025, Pre-Prep commenced in 6 rural Local Government Areas (LGAs). In 2026, the rollout expanded to a further 12 LGAs and became available for priority families everywhere in Victoria.</p> <p>As of 2026, 18 government-owned early learning and childcare centres have opened to families, operated by Early Learning Victoria (ELV). A further 6 centres are on track to open in 2027.</p> <p>Free Kinder benefited more than 145,000 three- and four-year-old children in 2025, with a similar amount expected to benefit in 2026. All funded kindergarten services in Victoria are eligible to participate, and approximately 97% have opted in.</p>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver 50 new government owned and operated early learning centres by 2032. 			92.2% against a target of 90.0%.	Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is now an established part of Victoria's early childhood system, available to families statewide.
2.	Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program	This initiative seeks to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for First Nations primary school learners through provision of funding to schools for eligible students identified as needing additional support.	Promoting Equal Access to Education	<p>The department is delivering the Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program.</p> <p>This provided additional funding to Victorian government schools to support 3,592 First Nations primary students assessed as needing additional support in literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p>First Nations students in Victoria across all school sectors achieved the strongest NAPLAN results nationwide in 2025, with the highest or second highest mean scores in 18 of 20 domains.</p> <p>The percentage of First Nations students in Victoria who were assessed as <i>"needs additional support"</i> for Reading, Writing and Numeracy in 2025 was well below the national average for all Year levels.</p> <p>While gaps in NAPLAN outcomes for non-First Nations students persist, Victoria's gaps were among the smallest nationally.</p>	<p>Implementation of this initiative supports key government commitments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026. The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework and the Self-determination Reform Framework. National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
3.	Investing in Victoria's school infrastructure	The Victorian Government is prioritising investment to deliver current infrastructure commitments and optimise existing assets.	Supports for Schools and Staff	<p>The department continues to invest in school infrastructure by delivering new schools and expanding existing facilities, including through the Modular Classrooms Program. This includes funding significant upgrade and modernisation projects as well as smaller scale projects through initiatives such as the Capital Works Fund, and planning for future growth by acquiring land for new school developments.</p> <p>In addition, the department continues to invest in maintenance and compliance programs. This will help to ensure that education facilities are safe,</p>	Not applicable –Investing in Victoria's school infrastructure in the 2025–26 Budget is not directly associated with a BP3 performance measure but is an accumulation of all investment in school infrastructure.	<p>19 new schools opened on Day 1, Term 1 2026 which acquits the Victorian Government's election commitment to build 100 brand new schools between 2019 and 2026.</p> <p>2 new schools funded in the 2025–26 budget are tracking on time for delivery Day 1, Term 1 2027. These schools are Aintree North Primary School (interim name) in Aintree and Officer Brunt Road Specialist School (interim name) in Officer.</p> <p>In the 2025–26 State Budget, the final 29 school upgrades under the 2022 election commitment to upgrade and modernise 96 schools were funded. Across the full program, 22 projects have been completed, with 74 currently in progress.</p>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
				secure and well-maintained.		
4.	Excellence in reading, writing and mathematics including curriculum implementation	Learning and development are central to the department's ambition for education services and support. The department has undertaken a range of activities to support schools, teachers and students to excel in	School education – primary and secondary Supports for Schools and Staff	Phonics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools were supported to purchase materials essential for phonics instruction, and the delivery of 2 early years literacy 	Number of Year 1 Phonics Checks administered	Phonics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2025 Year 1 Phonics Check, 84.9% of students participated in the 2025 Check, with 59.1% of students achieving 'at or above the expected level', providing a benchmark to monitor progress

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
		mathematics, reading and writing.		<p>assessments: the Year 1 Phonics Check and Foundation Literacy Assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further, casual relief teacher (CRT) funding were provided to schools to support delivery of the mandated Year 1 Phonics Check. <p>Literacy and numeracy – teacher support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 Numeracy Check was provided to support teachers to identify students at risk of falling behind in maths and provide early interventions. • Schools have free access to the progressive achievement tests 		<p>over time and strengthen literacy practices.</p> <p>Literacy and numeracy – teacher support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately, 530 Victorian government schools across two tranches in the pilot of the Year 1 Numeracy Check. This participation rate will provide substantial evidence for the evaluation to inform the development and delivery of a Year 1 Numeracy Check state-wide from 2027.

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
				<p>in mathematics and reading (PAT-M and PAT-R) that enable teachers to identify learning challenges, monitor progress and report on student achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 high-quality accredited micro credentials, delivered by Charles Sturt University, to support Year 7–10 teachers of mathematics, building capability and confidence. <p>Literacy and numeracy – student support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the Literacy and Numeracy Early Intervention Program (LNEIP) to government primary school 		

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
				<p>students who are significantly below the expected standard in one or both of literacy and numeracy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of maths camps across 2026-2028, enabling nearly 1,000 high-ability government school students in Years 9 and 10 to engage in real-world, team-based projects. 		
5.	Completing the rollout of disability inclusion	<p>To complete the rollout of the Disability Inclusion reform to Victorian government schools state-wide. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring schools state-wide have access to Disability Inclusion Tier 2 school-level funding • ensuring Disability Inclusion individualised 	Promoting Equal Access to Education	<p>All Victorian government schools have now transitioned to the new Disability Inclusion funding and support model.</p> <p>School engagement with the new strengths-based Disability Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 99% of government schools resourced through the Disability Inclusion funding and support model, in line with target. • 35 teachers and regional staff supported to undertake the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation was completed as planned and is leading to practice change. • Findings from a range of sources, including the independent evaluation of the reform¹, show that schools are providing greater levels of support and are demonstrating strengthened

¹Department of Education, *Disability Inclusion Evaluation - Summary of Findings*, August 2025, see <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/disability-inclusion-evaluation-summary.docx>

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
		funding for students with disability with high and complex needs can keep up with demand.		<p>Profile has been a defining feature of the reform, with over 28,000 Profiles completed for students with disability between 2021 and the end of Term 1, 2026.</p> <p>All schools are receiving annual allocations of Disability Inclusion Tier 2 school-level funding and are using this funding to expand and enhance support for students with disability.</p> <p>There has also been a significant increase in school workforce engagement with inclusive education professional learning opportunities, while Disability Inclusion Tier 3 student-level funding has been</p>	<p>Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties). Target is 50.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 72 regional staff supported to undertake the Master of Inclusive Education Program. Target is 75. <p>Note: Insufficient data available at this point of the year to report on remaining targets.</p>	<p>d awareness of the needs of students with disability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools report that a perceived benefit of the Profile process is the increased conversations between school staff and families. These meetings provide a platform for collaborative planning and informed decision-making regarding student support, ultimately leading to improved supports. There has been a significant increase in system-wide engagement with professional learning.

	Major initiatives/programs	Objectives	Output	Activities undertaken	Progress against performance measures as at 30 April 2026	Progress achieved against key Government objectives
				widely adopted and viewed as transformative.		

Question 2

What initiatives or programs have been streamlined or eliminated from the 2025–26 and 2026–27 Budget in line with the Government’s response to the Independent Review of the Victorian Public Service?²

Response

Initiative/program	Reason for streamlining/elimination	Anticipated saving in 2026–27	Anticipated impact on department/agency	Anticipated impact on service delivery
Reduction of a grant program – Tech Schools Equipment Renewal Fund	Small change to allocation per Tech School to better reflect the needs and context of service delivery.	0.4	No anticipated material impacts on the department’s service delivery.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or that relate to core functions or activities of schools.
Reduce underspends from the Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund	To utilise underspend for higher priority schools’ programs.	4.0	No anticipated material impacts on the department’s service delivery, as this is an entitlement program based on number of families with Health Care Cards.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or that relate to core functions or activities of schools.
Increase retained revenue from the International Student Program	To better utilise the distribution of international student program fees between the related school activity delivery and operational costs.	10.0	The target is expected to be met through the redistribution of international student program fees between the related school activity and the operational costs.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or that relate to core functions or activities of schools.
Reduce kindergarten funding to long day care providers	Small change to allocation of per child kindergarten funding to better reflect the	23.5	Negligible impact on departmental positions and functions.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery.

² Victorian Government, *Ensuring the public sector is focussed on what matters most*, Melbourne, 2025.

	needs and context of kindergarten service providers.			
Reduce low priority school programs - various	To change focus to higher-priority programs that provide better value to students.	4.8	No anticipated material impacts on the department's service delivery.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or that relate to core functions or activities of schools.
School to Work Program	More efficient and effective delivery of School to Work program connecting schools to employers to source work-based learning placements.	1.5	No impact	More efficient and effective program expected to double placements and provide additional support to rural and regional schools within reduced funding envelope.

Question 3

For each of the output initiatives detailed in the 2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update, 2023–24 Budget, 2023–24 Budget Update, 2024–25 Budget, 2024–25 Budget Update, 2025–26 Budget and the 2025–26 Budget Update that have allocated funding in 2025–26 and 2026–27,³ please detail (on the same basis of consolidation as the budget papers):

- the original funding allocation for 2025–26 and 2026–27
- the current expected funding allocation for 2025–26 and 2026–27
- an explanation for any variances between the current funding and what was originally published in the budget papers when the initiative was announced. If machinery of government changes affected the implementation of these initiatives, please detail how.

Response

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update	Mental Health in Primary Schools	86.7	85.5	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to earlier years to align with program commitments.	93.7	93.7	N/A
2022 Victorian Economic and Fiscal Update	Best Start, Best Life	717.1	717.1	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Targeted initiatives to attract more teachers	34.8	42.8	Variance due to carryover from 2024–25.	35.1	33.1	Decrease from approved rephase (2024–25) from 2026–27 to 2024–25 (\$2.0m for Attraction and

³ Please include any programs that originally had funding allocated for 2025–26 and 2026–27 but no longer have funding.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
							Retention of First Nations Peoples component)
2023–24 Budget	Best Start, Best Life: Infrastructure	14.0	13.4	Budgeted amounts have been reclassified as operating instead of capital expenditure in line with accounting standards. Cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.	45.2	46.9	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.
2023–24 Budget	Essential Maintenance and Compliance	65.0	88.0	Budgeted amounts have been reclassified as operating instead of capital expenditure in line with accounting standards.	65.0	65.0	N/A
2023–24 Budget	New schools construction	16.3	17.5	Budgeted amounts have been reclassified as operating instead of capital expenditure in line with accounting standards. Cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.	20.4	20.5	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.
2023–24 Budget	Non-Government Schools Capital Fund	33.8	50.6	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.	33.8	62.5	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.
2023–24 Budget	Relocatable Buildings Program	4.9	4.9	N/A	5.0	5.0	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2023–24 Budget	School upgrades: established areas growth	0.0	0.0	N/A	1.5	1.5	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund	42.7	42.7	N/A	43.8	43.8	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Anti-bullying Supports for School Students	2.6	2.6	N/A	3.1	3.1	N/A
2023–24 Budget	School wide Positive Behaviour Support	3.0	5.0	Variance due to rephase of funding from earlier years to align with program commitments.	2.8	2.8	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Expanding access to tech schools	10.8	47.0	Total 2025–26 budget is \$47.0m. Variance due to conversion of funding from capital to operating, release of funding from contingency and rephase request of \$2.6m funding into out years.	14.2	16.3	Variance due to conversion of funding from capital to operating, release of funding from contingency and rephase of funding from 2025-26.
2023–24 Budget	Fighting for Students with Disability and their families	52.5	47.4	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2023-24, transfer of funding to DJSIR/DH/DFFH, and funding approved to be rephased from 2025-26 to 2026-27.	51.2	46.6	Variance due to rephase of funding in 2023-24, 2024-25 and funding approved to be rephased from 2025-26 to 2026-

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
							27. Additional funding has been transferred to DJSIR/DH/DFFH.
2023–24 Budget	Free Period Products in All Government Schools Initiative	3.9	3.3	\$1m was carried over from 2024-25. Variance due to rephase of \$1.6m funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27 and 2027–28.	4.0	4.3	Variance due to implementation of program efficiencies and rephase of 2025–26 funding.
2023–24 Budget	New school at the Royal Children's Hospital	1.0	1.0	N/A	1.9	1.9	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Providing Victorian students with the essentials to support their engagement in learning	28.2	28.2	N/A	29.4	29.4	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Refugee Education Supports	6.3	6.3	N/A	4.7	4.7	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Schools Mental Health Fund	0.4	0.4	N/A	0.4	0.4	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Supporting our multicultural and multifaith communities	1.7	1.7	N/A	1.6	1.6	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Books in prep bags	1.1	1.4	Variance due to carryover from 2024–25 to align with program delivery timelines.	0.9	0.9	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Engaging At-Risk Youth	4.7	4.6	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27 to align with program commitments.	2.3	2.4	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27 to align

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
							with program commitments
2023-24 Budget	Our place partnership and place-based education plans	5.8	5.8	N/A	5.8	5.8	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Supporting teachers with detailed lesson planning and high-quality curriculum planning and assessment support	3.3	0.6	The initial announcement was supplanted by the 2023–24 budget update after report back (Taking the Burden Off Government Schools and Teachers with Detailed Lesson Planning Support).	2.0	0.0	The initial announcement was supplanted by the 2023–24 budget update after report back (Taking the Burden Off Government Schools and Teachers with Detailed Lesson Planning Support).
2023-24 Budget	Best Start, best Life: Free Kinder	0.0	0.0	N/A	372.7	372.7	N/A
2023-24 Budget	Best Start, Best Life: Pre-Prep	0.0	0.0	N/A	152.9	152.9	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Best Start, Best Life: Best Kinders for Victoria Kids	9.1	9.1	N/A	9.4	9.4	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Supporting Inclusion in Kindergarten for Children with Additional Needs	4.4	4.4	N/A	3.8	3.8	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2023–24 Budget	Supporting Independent Kinder	0.5	0.5	N/A	0.5	0.5	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Three-Year-Old Kinder	0.0	7.6	Variance due to contingency released for Kinder Kits.	20.9	80.5	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2024–25 and 2025–26 to 2026–27
2023–24 Budget	A new clean energy pathway for schools	1.1	1.1	N/A	0.6	0.6	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Cheaper energy for Victorians, Victorians (WoVG bid - DE component)	5.4	5.4	N/A	4.8	4.8	N/A
2023–24 Budget	Engaging students to remain in learning	5.2	5.2	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2023–24 Budget Update	Growing the pipeline of teachers across all Victorian government schools	25.8	25.3	Variance due to conversion of funding from operating to capital and carryover from 2024–25.	25.8	25.8	N/A
2023–24 Budget Update	Career Start program	31.7	39.4	Increase due to approved carryover from 2024–25	0.0	0.0	N/A
2023–24 Budget Update	Educational Supports for Children in Out Of Home Care	7.1	3.5	Variance due to transfer of funding from DE to DFFH to deliver Out of Home Care and rephase of funding from 2024–25 to 2025–26.	0.0	0.5	Variance due to rephase of funds from 2024–25 to 2026–27

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2023–24 Budget Update	Taking the Burden Off Government Schools and Teachers with Detailed Lesson Planning Support	1.2	6.7	Variance due to carryover from 2024–25.	0.6	0.8	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2024–25 to 2026–27.
2023–24 Budget Update	Lifting student outcomes - Tutor Learning Initiative	120.5	120.5	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Reducing the administrative burden on principals	3.6	3.6	N/A	3.5	3.5	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Building the government schools' teaching workforce	5.4	8.4	Increase from approved carryover (International Teachers).	0.0	0.0	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Kindergarten Building Blocks improvement and inclusion grants	13.1	11.8	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.	0.9	2.1	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.
2024–25 Budget	Essential Maintenance and Compliance	40.0	152.0	Budgeted amounts have been reclassified as operating instead of capital expenditure in line with accounting standards and cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.	40.0	10.0	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.
2024–25 Budget	New schools construction	20.3	26.8	Budgeted amounts have been reclassified as operating instead of capital expenditure	27.6	27.6	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
				in line with accounting standards.			
2024–25 Budget	Relocatable Buildings Program	4.0	6.5	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.	4.1	4.1	N/A
2024–25 Budget	School cleaning reform	36.8	34.8	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.	36.8	38.8	The cashflow has been revised in line with a revised project schedule.
2024–25 Budget	School upgrades: expansions	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.6	0.6	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Safer Victorian faith-based schools	2.0	2.0	N/A	2.0	2.0	N/A
2024–25 Budget	School Saving Bonus	2.7	2.7	N/A	2.7	2.7	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Improving school staff mental health and wellbeing support	18.4	18.4	N/A	18.0	18.0	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Active Schools	31.2	31.2	N/A	31.8	32.1	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2024–25.
2024–25 Budget	English as an Additional Language	21.5	21.5	N/A	0.7	0.7	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Place Based Education and Wellbeing Programs	3.8	3.8	N/A	3.4	3.4	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Respectful Relationships for Children and Youth	10.0	10.0	N/A	9.3	9.3	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2024–25 Budget	Improving curriculum choice for rural and regional students	1.5	1.5	N/A	1.5	1.5	N/A
2024–25 Budget	School wide positive behaviour support	4.5	4.5	N/A	4.5	4.5	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Strengthening ongoing support for Tech Schools	1.8	2.4	Variance due to rephase of \$14k from 2024–25 and \$0.7m requested to be rephased from the future years.	1.8	1.5	Variance due to rephase of \$41k from 2024–25 and \$0.3m requested to be rephased to 2025–26.
2024–25 Budget	Student health and wellbeing	12.6	13.1	Variance due to carryover of \$0.5m from 2024–25.	12.4	13.1	Variance due to rephase of \$0.7m from 2024-25.
2024–25 Budget	Advanced professional training to teachers and leaders	10.3	10.3	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Curriculum and assessment implementation	0.5	0.5	N/A	0.3	0.3	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Community Language Schools	1.9	3.1	Variance due to carryover from 2024–25 to 2025–26.	2.2	2.2	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Education supports for students at risk	9.6	10.1	Variance due to carryover from 2024–25 to 2025–26 and rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27 and transfer of funding to DFFH.	10.2	9.4	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27 and transfer of funds to DFFH.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2024–25 Budget	Student Excellence Program	8.5	8.5	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Primary Mathematics and Science Specialist Program	10.3	10.3	N/A	5.3	5.3	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Strengthening School Performance Program	11.1	11.1	N/A	11.3	11.3	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Support for regional and small schools' Outside Schools Hours Care (OSHC)	3.7	3.9	Variance due to carryover of funding from 2024–25 to 2025–26 and rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27.	3.8	3.9	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27.
2024–25 Budget	Supporting delivery of early years literacy assessment	4.2	4.4	Variance due to carryover of funding from 2024–25 to 2025–26.	0.0	0.0	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Victorian African Communities Action Plan	3.5	3.4	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27.	3.4	3.5	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27.
2024–25 Budget	Improving outcomes for Indigenous children	14.9	12.4	Variance due to \$1.5m carryover from 2024–25 and \$4m requested to be repensed to the future years.	14.1	14.6	Variance due to \$0.5m requested to be repensed from 2025–26.
2024–25 Budget	Strengthening participation of CALD children in early childhood education	3.6	3.6	N/A	3.8	3.8	N/A
2024–25 Budget	Senior Secondary Pathways Reform	19.0	19.0	N/A	1.4	1.4	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2024–25 Budget	Supporting senior secondary completion in non-school settings	18.2	18.2	N/A	20.7	20.7	N/A
2024–25 Budget Update	Strengthening Women's Safety - Expansion of the Respectful Relationships program	2.0	2.0	N/A	1.6	1.6	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Career Start program	29.2	29.2	N/A	0.0	31.5	Variance due to funding released for 2026 calendar year.
2025–26 Budget	School Workforce Reforms	27.9	27.4	Decrease due to savings applied through back-office staffing efficiencies.	22.8	22.8	Decrease due to savings applied through back-office staffing efficiencies and rephases requested (\$508k) not yet approved.
2025–26 Budget	Coordinated facilities, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and workers compensation support for small schools	0.0	0.0	N/A	7.1	7.1	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Essential Maintenance and Compliance	30.6	30.6	N/A	137.2	137.2	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Modular Classrooms Program	26.1	26.1	N/A	4.2	4.2	N/A
2025–26 Budget	New Schools construction	0.1	0.1	N/A	5.4	5.4	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2025–26 Budget	Precincts and Activity Centres Planning Fund	0.5	0.5	N/A	0.5	0.5	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Increasing the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund	38.1	38.1	N/A	38.1	38.1	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Securing Connected Learners	3.0	3.0	N/A	3.0	3.0	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Early childhood intervention services for non-permanent residents	3.1	3.1	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Address chronic absenteeism and support students to remain in learning	3.0	3.0	N/A	6.8	6.8	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Continue education supports for children in out of home care	6.2	6.2	N/A	13.6	6.2	Transfer of \$7.4m to DFFH.
2025–26 Budget	English as an Additional language (EAL)	28.3	28.3	N/A	28.3	28.3	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Locally Driven Education Programs	5.9	6.5	Variance due to \$0.6m carryover from 2024–25.	3.5	3.5	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Operational support for Tech Schools	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2025–26 Budget	School-wide positive behaviour support	2.3	2.3	N/A	2.3	2.3	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Statewide rollout of disability inclusion	237.3	237.3	N/A	22.9	22.9	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Supporting Rural and Regional Students	1.4	1.4	N/A	0.3	0.3	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2025–26 Budget	Advanced professional training to teachers and leaders	25.3	25.3	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Excellence in Mathematics Education	15.3	11.0	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to out-years.	15.3	16.8	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27.
2025–26 Budget	Excellence in Reading and Writing Education	10.7	9.3	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2029–30.	9.9	9.8	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2026–27 to 2029–30.
2025–26 Budget	Student Excellence Program	12.7	12.7	N/A	11.9	11.9	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Targeted investment to improve educational outcomes in youth justice	0.7	0.7	N/A	0.3	0.3	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Koorie literacy and numeracy program	4.1	4.1	N/A	4.4	4.4	N/A
2025-26 Budget	Supporting schools with curriculum implementation	2.7	2.7	N/A	2.6	2.6	N/A
2025-26 Budget	Keeping school staff safe from violence	0.9	0.9	N/A	1.4	1.4	N/A
2025-26 Budget	Increasing community use of school facilities	0.6	0.6	N/A	0.9	0.9	N/A
2025-26 Budget	Students with disabilities transport program	33.4	33.4	N/A	0.0	0.0	N/A

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2025–26 Budget	Best Start, Best Life	160.4	139.8	Variance due to aligning funding to the roll-out schedule of the initiative.	92.5	105.4	Variance due to aligning funding to the roll-out schedule of the initiative.
2025–26 Budget	Family violence risk assessment and information sharing schemes	4.2	4.2	N/A	4.3	4.3	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Kindergarten Building Blocks Improvement and Inclusion Grants	4.2	3.4	Variance due to carryover of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27. Funding is being provided to grant recipients as they meet project milestones.	10.1	10.9	Variance due to carryover of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27. Funding is being provided to grant recipients as they meet project milestones.
2025–26 Budget	Self-Determination for Aboriginal Early Childhood Education	0.7	0.7	N/A	1.4	1.4	N/A
2025–26 Budget	Supporting equal participation in early education and care	3.9	3.4	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27.	4.1	4.6	Variance due to rephase of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27.

	Output initiative	Original funding allocation for 2025–26	Current expected funding allocation for 2025–26	Explanation of variance (if any)	Original funding allocation for 2026–27	Current expected funding allocation for 2026–27	Explanation of variance (if any)
2025–26 Budget	Enabling Equitable Pathways Reform	11.3	11.0	Variance due to application of \$343k salaries savings decision.	11.3	11.0	Variance due to application of \$343k salaries savings.
2025–26 Budget Update	Disability Inclusion	92.9	92.9	N/A	266.8	266.8	N/A
2025–26 Budget Update	Community Safety (WoVG initiative – DE component)	1.4	1.4	N/A	2.9	2.9	N/A
2025–26 Budget Update	Immediate uplift and overhaul of child safety and early childhood sector (WoVG initiative – DE component)	18.0	18.0	N/A	22.2	22.2	N/A

Strategic issues

Question 4

In order of priority, please list the five most significant strategic issues that influenced the development of the department's estimates for the 2026–27 financial year. Please describe how the department will address these issues in 2026–27.

Response

	Strategic issue	How the department will address the issue in 2026–27	What progress, if any, has been made as at 30 April 2026, if applicable?
1.	Building for the future	<p>School infrastructure</p> <p>Funding provided in the 2026–27 State Budget ensures Victoria continues to build and improve school across the state, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$419.5 million across the forward estimates to build and expand schools, delivering around 4,100 spaces for Victorian students. • \$104.0 million to acquire land for new and expanded schools. • \$216.7 million for Modular Classrooms to relieve capacity pressure on schools, accommodating around 8,650 additional spaces for 2027. • Additional funding for future planning, upgrades, modernisation, maintenance and compliance. 	<p>School infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Day 1 of Term 1 2026, 19 new schools opened. • 2 new schools (in Aintree and Officer) funded in the 2025–26 budget are tracking on time for delivery Day 1, Term 1 2027. • 22 of the 96 upgrade and modernisation projects have been completed, with 74 in progress.
		<p>Early childhood Infrastructure</p> <p>The 2026–27 State Budget supports new and improved early childhood infrastructure, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$498.2 million over 4 years to continue the Best Start, Best Life reforms for facilities opening in 2029 and 2030. 	<p>Early childhood Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2025–26, 41 new kindergartens have opened on or near school sites with 3 more to be delivered by the end of the year. • In 2025–26, Early Learning Victoria has opened 18 ELV centres, creating more than 1,800 new places in childcare and three- and four-year-old kinder.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$9.764 million to support kindergarten services to maintain, upgrade and create inclusive kindergarten facilities. 	
2.	Supporting growth, inclusion and delivery of the curriculum	<p>Victoria’s government school system continues to grow more quickly than that of any other state or territory.</p> <p>Victoria accounts for more than half of the national increase in government school enrolments seen since 2018.</p> <p>The 2026-27 State Budget allocates \$391.8 million in funding over 4 years and \$93.2 million ongoing to meet student enrolment growth in government and non-government schools.</p> <p>As the Victorian government school system grows, so does the need for equitable and inclusive education and care for all Victorian children and young people.</p>	
		<p>Disability Inclusion</p> <p>The 2026–27 State Budget invests an additional \$2.1 billion over 5 years as part of the Disability Inclusion reform package to continue to meet forecast growth for individualised funding for students with disability with high needs. This brings the total investment since 2020–21 to \$4.4 billion.</p>	<p>Disability Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Victorian Government has implemented Disability Inclusion as planned and sponsored an independent evaluation of the reform. Reports indicate stronger awareness and delivery of disability supports, and increased engagement between schools and families as a result of the reform.
		<p>Supporting students with English as an Additional language (EAL)</p> <p>The 2026–27 State Budget invests \$61.9 million over four years and \$1.7 million ongoing to meet demand for EAL teaching, Multicultural Education</p>	<p>Supporting students with EAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new campus of the Noble Park English Language School in Cranbourne opened at the start of 2026.

		<p>Aides (MEAs) and interpreting and translation services.</p> <p>Supporting students with the curriculum The 2026–27 State Budget invests \$10 million over 2 years to continue the Literacy and Numeracy Early Intervention program providing additional support for students who need it to build key foundational knowledge. It also invests \$1.8 million to support implementation of the Year 1 Phonics Check in 2027 and 2028.</p> <p>The Victorian Government has commissioned a Year 1 Numeracy Check, to be piloted in around 500 Victorian government primary schools across Terms 2 and 3 2026.</p> <p>Supporting teachers with the curriculum The 2026–27 State Budget invests \$49.2 million over 4 years to continue to support the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (the Academy)</p>	<p>Supporting students with the curriculum See response to Question 1: Major initiatives/programs 4 – Excellence in reading, writing and mathematics including curriculum implementation</p> <p>Supporting teachers with the curriculum Between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2025 over 54,000 Victorian education-based staff commenced in a Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (the Academy) professional learning program.</p>
3.	Quality early learning	<p>Under the Victorian Kindergarten Teaching Excellence Approach, world-leading professional learning tools are being expanded to strengthen teaching practice - supporting teachers and educators to foster rich interactions, deliver intentional play-based learning, and deepen their subject matter expertise.</p> <p>Direct kindergarten program interventions will continue such as the Bush Kinder grants and the Early Childhood Languages program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the launch, over 3,000 early childhood teachers, educators and support professionals working in Victorian kindergartens have signed up to the Teaching Excellence Early Childhood Hub; the new online platform/‘one-stop-shop’ through which kindergarten professionals access professional development. • Professional learning now available includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction to Intentional Teaching ○ Introduction to Disability Inclusion ○ Introduction to Team Teaching ○ Leading Effective Team Teaching

	<p>Quality uplift initiatives targeted to priority cohorts of children will also continue to be expanded including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School Readiness Funding (targeted quality uplift for children at risk of disadvantage) ○ Kindergarten inclusion support (including Kindergarten Inclusion Support and Preschool Field Officer programs) <p>Victoria's service quality intervention, the Kindergarten Quality Improvement Program, continues to be expanded in line with the reforms to ensure those facing more significant quality growth opportunities improve.</p> <p>Home learning is also being supported through the continued Kinder Kits initiative in 2027, providing every child starting funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten with books, toys and educational materials.</p> <p>Funding allocated in previous State Budgets will be used to continue delivery of the Best Start, Best Life reforms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continued provision of Free Kinder statewide, ○ The roll-out of Pre-Prep to a further 12 rural local government areas in 2027, ○ The development of more government-owned and operated early learning and childcare centres, with 6 centres to open in 2027, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Teaching Toolkit ○ Induction Supports ○ Victorian Kindergarten Learning Progressions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Over 1,300 kindergarten services have received a Bush Kinder grant ● Approximately 7,000 children are accessing an Early Childhood Languages program ● In 2025, just over 1,500 services accessed support through the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program. ● Since 2018, over 600 services have participated in the Kindergarten Quality Improvement Program ● All children starting funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten in 2026 in Victoria are eligible to receive a Kinder Kit, which families can access through their kindergarten service. ● School Readiness Funding includes the provision of Allied Health sessions, which enables services access the expertise of Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Psychologist to build their capability and adapt the programs to better respond to children's needs. <p><i>See response to Question 1: Major initiatives/programs 1 – Best Start, Best Life for further details.</i></p>
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		Continued delivery of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for up to 15 hours per child per week.	
		<p>Promoting child safety</p> <p>The department will continue to build on recent reforms to strengthen safeguarding in early childhood education and care, including through implementation of the recommendations of the Victoria’s Rapid Child Safety Review.</p> <p>For example, the department is developing resources to build the capacity of families and the ECEC workforce to identify and report concerns, in line with the recommendations of the Rapid Child Safety Review.</p> <p>The department also continues to drive Victoria’s strong advocacy through intergovernmental channels for reforms to address remaining Rapid Review recommendations that require national action to progress.</p>	<p>Promoting child safety</p> <p>Substantial progress has been made to implement Victoria’s child safety reforms, including recommendations made by Victoria’s Rapid Child Safety Review released on 20 August 2025. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The independent Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA) was established through the <i>Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority Act 2025</i>. VECRA commenced operations on 1 January 2026 and has stronger regulatory powers. • The Victorian Government is increasing the number of Authorised Officers for the regulator. This means more compliance visits to services, including an unannounced visit every 12 months to ensure they are delivering quality ECEC services that the community can trust. As host jurisdiction of the National Law, Victoria passed legislation to strengthen safety and quality in ECEC settings in December 2025. • This legislation includes a range of new provisions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ making the safety, rights and best interests of children the paramount consideration for everyone working in the early childhood education and care sector ○ increasing penalties for offences ○ introducing a new offence of inappropriate conduct

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ mandating child safety training and child protection training for people working in ECEC ○ establishing a National Early Childhood Worker Register ○ restricting the use of personal devices in ECEC settings; and ○ providing Regulatory Authorities with a broader range of powers to respond to individual misconduct by imposing supervision, suspension or mandatory training orders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● These new legislative provisions came into force in January and February 2026. ● Victoria also introduced restrictions on personal devices in early childhood education and care services in September 2025, ahead of changes to the National Law. <p>In line with the Rapid Child Safety Review, the department has established a partnership with Early Childhood Australia to expand their professional support program on child safeguarding topics to build capability in the ECEC sector.</p>
4.	Continue to improve outcomes for First Nations students	<p>The department has a strong commitment to improving First Nations education outcomes and closing the gap in educational achievements.</p> <p>The State Budget 2026–27 provides continued funding for the First Nations Curriculum Clusters Project (Clusters project) to operate for a further 4 years. The Clusters Project supports schools to</p>	<p>Schools that have participated in the Clusters Project has developed teachers’ confidence and capability to partner with local First Nations communities to co-design and deliver curriculum resources that support the teaching of First Nations histories, cultures, and perspectives using approaches that centre self-determination. Funding to continue the Clusters project builds on the 2025–26 State Budget, where the Victorian government</p>

		<p>partner with Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) to co-design curriculum resources that support the teaching of First Nations histories, cultures, and perspectives, centred in self-determination.</p> <p>Funding will support RAPs with the cost of providing cultural knowledge and expertise.</p> <p>Throughout 2026–27, the department will continue to deliver and implement initiatives that have been funded through the 2024–25 and 2025–26 State Budgets.</p>	<p>invested \$18.5 million over 4 years to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for First Nations primary students in Victorian government schools.</p> <p>Targeted academic support is provided by Victorian government schools through the Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program for First Nations primary school learners who are assessed as “needs additional support” in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy, or according to Teacher Judgement data.</p> <p>Through the 2024–25 State Budget, the department is developing professional learning modules to support schools in strengthening culturally safe and responsive environments. The first tranche of 4 modules will commence delivery in Term 2, 2026.</p>
5.	Strong and Secure Systems	<p>It is important that information is secured and systems are reliable to maintain trust in a connected and digital world.</p> <p>The 2026–27 State Budget provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$30.4 million for the <i>Securing School IT</i> initiative to continue to mitigate digital security risks by migrating schools to department-managed technology platforms providing safer learning environments without having to independently manage the growing cybersecurity, privacy and compliance requirements. • \$17.9 million for the <i>Whole of Victorian Government Data Centre Exit</i> initiative, which supports the transition from legacy, 	<p>Investments in the 2026–27 State Budget build on the 2025–26 State Budget investment of \$9 million in the <i>Securing Connected Learners</i> initiative.</p> <p>The department has implemented a Technologies and ICT Service Policy that requires all schools to migrate onto department managed platforms where they exist. Since its launch, more than 258 schools have migrated onto department digital workspaces, and 1,572 schools have implemented multi-factor authentication protecting data in Student Management Systems.</p> <p>In 2024–25 the VRQA and its review bodies conducted 621 assessments of compliance with the Child Safe Standards – this assessment is required for all school sector reviews, applications for new registration and re-registration.</p>

		<p>on-premises infrastructure to secure, cloud-based environments by 2027–28.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$11.3 million for a digital learning platform for the 2027 to 2030 school years, providing continued support for delivery of teaching and learning resources and advice.• \$12.9 million in IT reform and critical infrastructure over 5 years for the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). <p>Additional funding is provided to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Agency (VRQA) to continue to ensure all Victorian schools meet the Child Safe Standards and standards for school registration, and start replacing the VRQA State Register.</p>	
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Revenue and expenditure – variances

Question 5

Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances provides a comprehensive operating statement that details each department's revenue and expenses on an accrual basis reflecting the cost of providing its output.

For each line item of the comprehensive operating statement if there is a variance greater than 10 per cent (positive or negative) or greater than \$100 million (positive or negative) please explain the reason for the variance between the budget for 2025–26, the revised estimate for 2025–26 and the budget for 2026–27.

Guidance

Where the variance is in 'Other operating expenses', please supply the relevant expense category.

Response

Line item	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	2025–26 Revised estimate (\$ million)	Explanation for any variances greater than ±10% (or greater than \$100 million) 2025–26 Budget vs. 2025–26 Revised estimate
Income from transactions			
Output appropriations	17,396	17,619	<p>The variance is primarily driven by funding released after the 2025–26 Budget, including funding released from contingency for initiatives such as <i>Disability Inclusion, Career Start program and Best Start, Best Life: Infrastructure</i>, investment in the uplift and overhaul of child safety, funding to meet school enrolment growth and Commonwealth funding for the <i>Preschool Reform Agreement</i>.</p> <p>In addition, the variance also reflects the output carryover approved from 2024–25 to 2025–26 and the budget supplementation for depreciation driven by increases to the asset base as a result of building asset revaluations and capitalisations over the past years.</p> <p>The increase is partially offset by rephases of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27 for initiatives such as Ready for school: kinder for every three-year-old and the impact of savings measures.</p>

Other income	366	300	The variance is driven by decreased growth expectations for schools' other revenue, which includes items such as revenue for essential and optional education items, fundraising activities, other locally raised funds and donations.
Expenses from transactions			
Employee benefits	10,640	10,807	The variance is primarily driven by funding decisions after the 2025–26 Budget, including for initiatives such as <i>Disability Inclusion</i> , <i>Career Start program</i> and <i>Immediate uplift and overhaul of child safety and early childhood sector</i> . Additionally, the variance reflects new funding for school enrolment growth.
Grants and other transfers	1,804	1,693	The variance primarily reflects rephases of grants and other transfers expenses from 2025–26 to 2026–27. This includes initiatives such as <i>Ready for school: kinder for every three-year-old</i> , <i>Pre-Prep Infrastructure</i> , <i>Non-Government Schools Capital Fund</i> and <i>Early Childhood Grants</i> .
Other operating expenses	4,651	4,787	The increase in other operating expenses is primarily due to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new 2025–26 funding announced in the 2026–27 Budget for initiatives such as <i>Securing School IT</i> and <i>Essential Maintenance and Compliance</i>. • Commonwealth funding for the <i>Preschool Reform Agreement</i> announced as part of the Commonwealth's 2025–26 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO). • carryover approved from 2024–25 to 2025–26. This includes initiatives such as <i>Planned Maintenance Program</i>, <i>Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Maintenance</i>, and <i>Best Start</i>, <i>Best Life</i> and <i>Three-Year-Old Kindergarten</i>. • expected increase in other operating expenditure in schools. • partially offset by rephases from 2025–26 to 2026–27 for initiatives such as <i>Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Maintenance</i>.
Line item	2025–26 Budget (\$ million)	2026–27 Budget (\$ million)	Explanation for any variances greater than ±10% (or greater than \$100 million) 2025–26 Budget vs. 2026–27 Budget
Income from transactions			

Output appropriations	17,396	18,237	<p>The variance is primarily driven by ongoing investment in Disability Inclusion in Schools to meet program growth, expansion of the <i>Best Start, Best Life</i> reform and early childhood infrastructure investment, Essential Maintenance and Compliance, school enrolment growth, supporting the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, and indexation to support wage increases for VPS, schools and early childhood workforces.</p> <p>Other factors contributing to the increase include Commonwealth funding for the Preschool Reform Agreement announced as part of the Commonwealth's 2025–26 MYEFO and rephases of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27..</p>
Grants	14	87	The increase is primarily driven by anticipated grant revenue to be received from the Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution fund for 2026–27 Budget initiative <i>New schools construction</i> .
Other income	366	307	The variance is driven by decreased growth expectations for schools' other revenue, which includes items such as revenue for essential and optional education items, fundraising activities, other locally raised funds and donations.
Expenses from transactions			
Employee benefits	10,640	11,006	The variance is primarily driven by enrolment growth in schools resulting in an increase in school staff, and support staff to meet <i>Disability Inclusion in schools</i> program growth, and indexation to support wage increases for VPS, schools and early childhood workforces.
Depreciation	723	817	The increase reflects an anticipated increase in depreciation expense driven by increases to the department's asset base as a result of school building asset revaluations and capitalisations in recent years.
Other operating expenses	4,651	4,920	The variance is primarily driven by the expenditure relating to the expansion of the <i>Best Start, Best Life</i> reform, Essential Maintenance and Compliance and Commonwealth funding for the Preschool Reform Agreement, partially offset by expected decrease in other operating supplies and consumables in schools.

Line item	2025-26 Revised estimate (\$ million)	2026-27 Budget (\$ million)	Explanation for any variances greater than ±10% (or greater than \$100 million) 2025-26 Revised estimate vs. 2026-27 Budget
Income from transactions			
Output appropriations	17,619	18,237	The variance is primarily driven by ongoing investment in Disability Inclusion in Schools to meet program growth, expansion of the Best Start, Best Life reform and early childhood infrastructure investment, Essential Maintenance and Compliance, school enrolment growth, and indexation to support wage increases for VPS, schools and early childhood workforces. Other factors contributing to the variance include rephases of funding from 2025–26 to 2026–27 partially offset by the impact of savings measures.
Grants	15	87	The increase is primarily driven by anticipated grant revenue to be received from the Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution fund for 2026–27 Budget initiative <i>New schools construction</i> .
Expenses from transactions			
Employee benefits	10,807	11,006	The variance is primarily driven by enrolment growth in schools resulting in an increase in school staff, and support staff to meet growing demand for Disability Inclusion in schools, and indexation to support wage increases for VPS, schools and early childhood workforces.
Grants and other transfers	1,693	1,877	The variance is primarily driven by increased investment in early childhood infrastructure and rephases to align funding with anticipated delivery milestones. Other contributing factors include increased grants to non-government schools driven by enrolment growth and funding to be provided to DTP for the <i>School Crossing Supervisor Program</i> .

Other operating expenses	4,787	4,920	<p>The variance is primarily due to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expenditure relating to the expansion of the <i>Best Start, Best Life</i> reform. <p>Partially offset by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expected decrease in other operating supplies and consumables expenditure in schools. • rephase of funding from 2026–27 to 2025–26 for maintenance expenses relating to the <i>Essential Maintenance and Compliance</i> program. • the impact of savings measures.
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Revenue initiatives – new and changed

Question 6

For all new revenue initiatives in the 2026–27 budget papers and for all existing revenue initiatives that have changed in the 2026–27 budget papers as compared to the previous financial year, please provide the:

- a) name of the initiative in the 2026–27 budget papers
- b) objective/s of the initiative
- c) reason for the new initiative or change to the initiative
- d) expected outcome/benefit for the Victorian community of the new initiative/change to the initiative
- e) anticipated revenue in the financial year 2026–27 and over the forward estimates gained or foregone as a result of the new initiative/change to the initiative.

Response

Name of the initiative in the 2026–27 budget papers	Not applicable.
Objective/s of the initiative	Not applicable.
Reason for new initiative or change	Not applicable.
Expected outcome/benefit for the Victorian community of the new initiative/change to the initiative	Not applicable.
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2026–27 gained or foregone	Not applicable.
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2027–28 gained or foregone	Not applicable.
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2028–29 gained or foregone	Not applicable.
Anticipated revenue in financial year 2029–30 gained or foregone	Not applicable.

Expenditure – new programs and initiatives (output and asset)

Question 7

For all new programs and initiatives (output and asset) in the 2026–27 budget papers, please provide the:

- name of the program/initiative
- objective(s) of the program
- factors that have driven the creation of the initiative (including social, environmental or economic factors)
- budgeted expenditure in financial year 2026–27 on the program/initiative
- how it will be funded (i.e. through new output appropriation, Commonwealth funding, internal reprioritisation etc.)
- how the outcomes and impacts will be measured (such as relevant indicators, evaluations, routine monitoring).

Response

Name of the program/initiative	Objective(s) of the program	Factors driving creation of the initiative	Budgeted expenditure in FY 2026–27 on the program/initiative (\$ million)	How it will be funded	How the outcomes and impacts will be measured
Strengthening child safety in schools	Enhancing the VRQA's ability to ensure schools meet minimum standards, focusing on the Child Safe Standards, and for children to feel and be safe at school.	The significant increase in school regulation and complexity and to ensure funding and resourcing keeps pace with growth and complexity.	\$2.112	Output appropriation	Number of school reviews undertaken.
Commencing replacement of the VRQA state register	To improve proactive regulation, reduce	The current state register reached end of life and is no longer supported	\$3.700	Output appropriation.	The funding will enable the VRQA to commence replacement of the VRQA state register. Once the build is completed (subject to further funding), an evaluation strategy will be designed to assess both

	administrative burden, increase productivity and enhance information sharing.	by the Microsoft platform			implementation effectiveness and achievement of intended outcomes across multiple stakeholder groups while ensuring continuous improvement throughout the project lifecycle. Measurement metrics include successful implementation assessment, system performance indicators, user experiences, regulatory effectiveness, value for money and return on investment.
Securing school IT	This program supports schools to migrate their school-managed technologies to department-provided technologies where available from the department.	This initiative is required because it is no longer appropriate for schools to operate separate technology environments due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing cyber security incidents, resulting in privacy breaches and extended outages • challenge of department supporting risk mitigation or responding to incidents in the currently diverse system 	\$15.200	New output appropriation.	Increased number of schools operating on department managed platforms, and reduced security, privacy or safety incidents related to technology platforms.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the increased risk of harm from technology that is adopted without the necessary privacy, security and child safety controls. 			
Rebuilding the VCAA	This initiative is to ensure the VCAA delivers high-quality curriculum, assessment and reporting and can implement the recommendations from the Blacher Review, including delivering new IT infrastructure to support schools, teachers and students.	The Independent Review of the VCAA recommended that the VCAA has a sustainable budget to deliver its functions.	\$49.215	New output appropriation and internal reprioritisation.	Routine monitoring.

Expenditure – lapsing programs (output initiatives, including grants)

Question 8

For all programs (output initiatives, including grants) with total funding of equal to or greater than \$5 million that were to lapse in the financial year 2025–26, where funding is to be extended in the 2026–27 Budget, please provide the:

- a) name of the program
- b) objective(s) of the program
- c) expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and where relevant, future years)
- d) details of how the program will be funded (i.e. through new output appropriation, Commonwealth funding, internal reprioritisation etc.)
- e) confirmation that an evaluation of the program has been conducted as per *Section 6.1 Evaluating lapsing programs* of the Resource Management Framework (RMF). Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation in the questionnaire response. If ‘appropriate evidence’ or annual outcomes reporting was provided in lieu of an evaluation report (as permitted under the RMF for lapsing programs with less than \$20 million in funding), please briefly describe the evidence provided.⁴
- f) evidence of the continued need for the program, and Government’s role in delivering it
- g) evidence of the program’s progress towards its stated objectives and expected outcomes, including the alignment between the program, its output (as outlined in *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*), departmental objectives and any Government priorities
- h) evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices
- i) extent and level of efficiencies realised in the delivery of the program
- j) information about the nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts
- k) evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program.

Guidance

Lapsing program—the Committee uses the definition of lapsing program as set out in the Department of Treasury and Finance, *Resource Management Framework*: A lapsing program is a program to deliver services (output-related) that is funded for a specified time period only (and not ongoing in nature). Programs of a ‘one-off’ or a time-specific nature (e.g. funding provided for specific events) are considered ‘fixed-term’ and do not fall under the definition of a ‘lapsing program’.

⁴ Department of Treasury and Finance, *The Resource Management Framework Part 1 of 2 – Main document*, Melbourne, 2026, p. 137

Response

Name of the program	Keeping kids in school and on the right track					
Objective(s) of the program	<p>Three lapsing programs have received further funding in the 2026-27 Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools Support Program (SSP), delivered by Foundation House, provides consultations, professional learning, advice and resources to schools on demand, including recorded webinars, guidance and tipsheets via the Schools In For Refugees website, and referrals to torture and trauma counselling. The SSP also comprises a targeted stream of support for Multicultural Education Aides, including professional learning, resources, peer support networks and an annual conference. - Learning Beyond the Bell (LBB), delivered by the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY), provides training, networking and sector guidance to homework clubs operating around Victoria. The LBB also administers an annual grant program providing small one-off funds to homework clubs, with funding supplementing predominately philanthropic sources. - Early Years Program (EYP), delivered by Foundation House, convenes place-based communities of practice, each comprising around 10-15 early years services that undertake professional learning, service audits and action planning (similar to the Refugee Education Support Program that operates in schools). The EYP also delivers community advisory projects to seek advice of parents and families from refugee background, and consultations, professional learning, advice and resources including a newsletter for early years services. 					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding	3.121	1.599	-	-	-
	Approved in 2026-27	-	1.934	3.956	2.525	0.643
Details of how the program will be funded	<p>2026–27 State Budget has been committed from the Community Support Fund, as per line above.</p> <p>Common funding agreements with the providers are still active, with current service delivery in place until the end of the 2026 school year. Extensions and/or new agreements will be negotiated with the providers, enabling two more years of the Schools Support Program and Learning Beyond the Bell (service delivery to end of the 2028 school year) and four more years of the Early Years Program (service delivery to end of 2030).</p>					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please	The department engaged Grosvenor to evaluate these three programs in 2025. See the executive summary, Question 8, Attachment 1.					

advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government's role in delivering it	<p>Refugee supports play a critical role in supporting children and students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds across early childhood, school, and homework club (learning support programs outside of school hours) settings. The 2025 evaluation highlighted a sustained and growing need for SSP, LBB and EYP due to persistent barriers to inclusion, language, and academic engagement. Each program addresses distinct but complementary gaps in the education system, offering targeted support, sector coordination, and capability building. Continued and coordinated government support is essential to ensure inclusive education across all stages of learning.</p> <p>Commonwealth funded services provide for the basic and immediate needs of newly arrived refugees, such as initial housing, establishment with Medicare and Centrelink, and referral to local service providers for health and education. No ongoing support is provided by the Commonwealth to support participation in early childhood services or school education.</p>
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	<p>Evaluations have consistently found that the suite of Refugee Education Support initiatives (including these three programs) builds the capacity of education providers to better understand and meet the needs of children, students and families, and that there is widespread evidence of improved communication and engagement with families and an increased focus on wellbeing and a sense of inclusion and connection as a direct result of these specific programs. The 2025 evaluation also found that the providers demonstrated a commitment to ongoing and continuous improvement throughout the program lifecycle.</p> <p>Extensions and/or new agreements will be negotiated with the providers to ensure objectives and outcomes continue to be met and delivered.</p>
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	<p>The department has longstanding, productive relationships with Foundation House and CMY. Both organisations bring deep understanding of both the Victorian education sector and matters relating to refugees, asylum seekers and young multicultural Australians to the programs they run. Both organisations have to date met all key performance indicators and targets in their current funding agreements, and demonstrated the capacity to deliver to a high standard. Extensions and/or new agreements will be negotiated with the providers to ensure this continues.</p>
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	<p>This program has been extended in the 2026-27 State Budget.</p>

Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	The programs are being delivered effectively within the current funding envelope. The further funding allocated from the 2026-27 Budget will enable the programs to continue to be delivered effectively and meet the growing need and demand for support for children and students from refugee backgrounds and their families.
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Name of the program	Supporting best practice teaching and learning – Literacy and numeracy early intervention component					
Objective(s) of the program	This component is delivered through the Literacy and Numeracy Early Intervention Program (LNEIP) which provides funding for targeted literacy and numeracy intervention through small group learning to Grade 1 to 6 students identified as not meeting their age expected standards and needing additional support. The objective of this funding is to arrest the risk of a widening academic achievement gap for students as they progress through their schooling.					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding (Excellence in Mathematics Education – Small group tutoring)	5.000	5.000	-	-	-
	Existing funding (Excellence in Reading and Writing Education – Small group tutoring)	5.00	5.00	-	-	-
	Approved in 2026–27	-	3.700	6.300	-	-
Details of how the program will be funded	New and existing output appropriation					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	As the 2026 school year is the first year of delivery for LNEIP, a lapsing evaluation has not yet been conducted.					
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	The Government’s delivery of teaching and learning reforms through the Education State priorities and investment in key reforms, like the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 and Victorian Lesson Plans, are strengthening the effectiveness of teaching and learning that students experience every day. However, even the most successful systems have a cohort of students that fall behind and need intensive literacy and numeracy support. To achieve equity in literacy and numeracy teaching and learning, continuation of targeted					

	literacy and numeracy interventions are required to ensure students are supported to make learning gains and achieve their full learning potential.
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	In 2026, funding has been delivered to Victorian government primary schools to support all students identified as 'needs additional support' in NAPLAN (or equivalent for non-NAPLAN years) who are not otherwise funded under existing programs. Schools have identified students receiving support through LNEIP via the department's administration system, and learning growth data will be analysed at the conclusion of the 2026 school year.
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	Funding to deliver LNEIP in the 2026 school year was distributed to schools through the Student Resource Package, to fund 34,691 students. This fully expended the existing 2025-2026 output appropriation and additional funding required was supported through internal reprioritisation, to ensure all schools received funding in line with the model in which the percentage of 'needs additional support' students in Years 4 to 6 is also applied for Years 1 to 3. The delivery of this initiative was carried out in line with the governance processes for government school reforms which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Policy and Priorities Committee provision of strategic oversight on the policy design and implementation of LNEIP. • School Funding Policy Project Control Board oversight of funding to deliver LNEIP to schools through the Student Resource Package.
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	Funding has been provided for the 2026-27 year.
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	Following the recent change in NAPLAN assessments, the department will design the program including how much is paid and to which students to ensure support is aligned with expenditure.

Name of the program	Supporting best practice teaching and learning – CRT support for the implementation of Year 1 phonics check component						
Objective(s) of the program							
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding (Supporting Delivery of Early Years Literacy)	3.992	4.164	-	-	-	-

	Assessment – CRT release)						
	Approved in 2026-27	-	-	0.900	0.923	-	-
Details of how the program will be funded	New and existing output appropriation.						
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program is ongoing with the final report delivered in June 2027.						
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government's role in delivering it	The English Online Interview was decommissioned at the end of 2025. The Year 1 Phonics Check (the Check) was piloted in 2025 as an optional assessment for Year 1 government school students ahead of its mandated use from 2026 to align with Victoria's reading position and provide a robust phonics assessment. In 2025, 84.9% of Year 1 students participated in the Check.						
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	The introduction of the Year 1 Phonics Check mandate in 2026 supports government schools' implementation of Victoria's reading position which requires a daily minimum of 25 minutes of systematic synthetic phonics in Foundation to Level 2. Annual Implementation Plan data for 2026 shows that 93% of schools have a reading program that includes this minimum requirement.						
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	The casual relief teacher (CRT) support for assessing students' phonics knowledge and skills has been delivered within scope, budget and timeframes since 2023.						
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	This program has been extended in the 2026-27 State Budget.						
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	The funding is calculated on estimated Grade 1 enrolments consistent with the approach for previous years. A reduction in CRT funding, from 2 days per Grade 1 teacher in 2025 and 2026 to 3 hours per Grade 1 teacher in 2027 and 2028, reflects teachers' increased efficiency in administering the assessment and that the Year 1 Phonics Check takes less time than the English Online Interview to administer.						

Name of the program	Supporting high ability students and student leadership
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Objective(s) of the program	To support Victoria's high-ability students to reach their full potential.					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding	21.159	11.974	-	-	-
	Approved in 2026-27		12.072	24.723	25.317	12.964
Details of how the program will be funded	New output funding					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of the Student Excellence Program (SEP), undertaken by ACIL Allen, was finalised in September 2024. See Executive Summary, Question 8, Attachment 2.					
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government's role in delivering it	The Victorian government has committed to making Victoria the Education State by building a world-class education system that produces excellence and reduces the impact of disadvantage. ⁵ Continued investment will instil students, families and the broader Victorian community with confidence that their local government school can provide high-quality opportunities for high-ability students to reach their full potential.					
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	Evidence from the implementation of SEP has shown it is making a positive impact. ⁶ The program evaluation demonstrates it is appropriately designed, reaches its intended cohort, has a positive impact on student achievement and wellbeing, provides good value for money and is positively received by stakeholders. Evidence also demonstrates that the program provides opportunities to further stimulate high-ability students' interest in their learning. ⁷					
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	The 2024 evaluation found that SEP has reached intended cohorts and delivered planned outputs.					
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	This program has been extended in the 2026-27 State Budget.					

⁵ Department of Education (DE), About the Education State, vic.gov.au website, n.d., accessed 16 September 2025

⁶ No public reference available: Data sourced from internal department records.

⁷ No public reference available: Data sourced from internal department records.

Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	Further funding maintains funding rates as per 2026 investment, with indexation.
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Name of the program	Supporting students at risk of suspension, expulsion and contact with youth justice through early intervention					
Objective(s) of the program	To improve education engagement for children and young people at risk of offending or already involved with the Youth Justice system, with a focus on early intervention.					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding	0.685	0.343	-	-	-
	Approved in 2026–27	-	1.056	1.408	1.558	1.558
Details of how the program will be funded	From an appropriation of the 2026-27 Budget					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	Urbis, in partnership with Department of Education (DE), undertook an evaluation of the <i>Education Early Intervention Officer</i> (EEIO) pilot program in late 2025. See the executive summary, Question 8, Attachment 3.					
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	<p>Crime Statistics Agency of Victoria data shows youth offending has continued to increase over the past 12 months.</p> <p>This program provides funding for early intervention with a focus on keeping children and young people engaged in education. Education is a key protective factor in diverting children and young people from future offending. School attendance and engagement with learning can reduce the risk of offending and recidivism and improve life outcomes for children and young people. A learning environment underpinned by stable, positive relationships is a crucial factor in supporting children and young people to remain engaged and experience success in education. Early intervention can be effective in achieving significant reductions in crime involvement.</p>					

Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	The program aligns with Victorian Government and DE priorities to provide early intervention and support for children and young people at risk of youth justice involvement. Evaluation of the <i>Education Early Intervention Officer</i> component of this program found that it is demonstrating positive signs of impact, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • average total school absences for all children and young people decreased from the term at first referral to the third term post referral (23% decrease), though there was a marginal increase in absences in the fourth term post referral. Average unapproved absences followed a similar pattern. • for First Nations children and young people, there was a 27% decrease in absence days from the term at first referral to the fourth term post referral. Positively, for these children and young people, there was a continuous decrease from the term at first referral to fourth term in both approved and unapproved absences.
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	This program comprises salary costs for a total of 8 FTE, with no associated program or grant funds included with the budget. The 8 FTE are occupied, and the program is currently being delivered on budget and within the expected timeframes. Both components are embedded within the regional structure, providing oversight, risk management and intersection with broader DE initiatives.
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	This program has been extended in the 2026–27 State Budget.
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	Funding provided to continue this program reflects the cost of the 8FTE which support the two components of the program. There are no additional program or administrative costs required beyond salary expenses.

Name of the program	Continuing Vocational Education and Training (VET) and applied learning in schools					
Objective(s) of the program	This initiative supports school students to participate in vocational education and training (VET) as part of their final years of school education, with a focus on priority industry areas. Improved participation in VET aligns with government priorities for education and the Victorian economy. Providing suitable senior secondary education options contributes to student retention, senior secondary completion and a strong Victorian economy. School student participation in VET aligns with government priorities for education and the Victorian economy, and is a key element of the government's Senior Secondary Pathways Reform. Support in this initiative includes resourcing to reduce administrative burden of coordinating VET on schools, transport that improves access to VET, and local coordination of VET delivery.					
		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30

Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)	Existing funding	3.677	-	-	-	-
	Approved in 2026-27		10.293	20.036	19.486	19.486
Details of how the program will be funded	<i>New and existing output appropriation</i>					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program was included as required as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2026–27 State Budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.					
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	Surveys and other consultation with school leaders, school staff and area-based DE employees has highlighted that continued support is required to meet student demand for VET, address associated school workload and overcome distance barriers to participation, particularly in regional Victoria.					
Evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	In 2025, 61,513 school students undertook VET studies in Victoria, increasing by 6.3% from 2024 and marking the fifth consecutive annual increase. 44.3% of VCE VET subject enrolments were in priority industry areas. Participation in VET contributed to a 97.4% VCE completion rate in 2025, and the year 10-12 apparent retention rate reaching an 8-year high of 85% in 2025.					
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	Programs funded through this initiative have been delivered within scope and budget and within expected timeframes. A strong governance and reporting framework for these programs is in place.					
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	This program has been extended in the 2026-27 budget.					
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	Funding is based on delivery costs in previous years and a trend of significant growth to school student participation in VET. Elements of the program have been redesigned for efficiency, in line with evaluation findings.					

Name of the program	In-Demand Careers for Secondary Students
Objective(s) of the program	This initiative supports school students to choose and engage in the secondary education pathway that fits them best, finish school confident and prepared for their next steps, and progress into jobs, further study or

	roles that align with their interests and strengths. This is facilitated through initiatives for government schools across career education, exploratory work-based learning, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, and support for early school leavers. Funding is provided for lapsing programs, or elements of programs, including My Career Insights, Head Start, School to Work, Victorian Early Leaver Connection Initiative, Vocational Taster Experiences pilot, Trade & Tech Fit, WorldSkills Australia, and the Bellum Bellum Blended Learning Hub.					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding					
	Approved in 2026-27		26.495	24.505	16.563	7.879
Details of how the program will be funded	New and existing output appropriation					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	Evaluations of programs funded in this initiative were included as required as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2026–27 State Budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.					
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	Levels of disengagement from school in years 7-12 have not yet substantially declined following the COVID-19 pandemic. Student responses to the department’s Attitudes to School Survey show the proportion of year 10-12 students in government schools with a positive view of their transition to life after school is increasing, but is not yet exceeding pre-pandemic levels.					
Evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	In 2025, 90% of Year 9 government school students participated in the My Career Insights program. Supportive career education and related initiatives have facilitated successful introduction of the VCE Vocational Major, undertaken by 30,460 students in 2025. Students at 317 schools received support from Head Start in 2024, with retention in training after 12 months at 78.4%, exceeding program targets. Programs funded through this initiative contributed to the year 10-12 apparent retention rate reaching an 8-year high of 85% in 2025.					
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	Programs funded through this initiative have been delivered within scope and budget and within expected timeframes. A strong governance and reporting framework for these programs is in place.					
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been	This program has been extended in the 2026–27 State Budget.					

identified to minimise any negative impacts	
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	Funding is based on delivery costs in previous years. Significant elements of the program have been redesigned for efficiency, in line with evaluation findings.

Name of the program	Delivering critical school workforce reforms					
Objective(s) of the program	<p>The 2026–27 State Budget provides additional funding for Paid Placements and Placement Supports, including the Pre-Service Teacher Placement Grant (PPG) program, the Placements Plus initiative, and the Teach Rural program.</p> <p>PPG supports and incentivises pre-service teachers (PSTs) to undertake placements in a rural, remote and specialist Victorian government school, including pre-service teachers already living in those areas.</p> <p>Placements Plus programs are department-funded partnerships between universities and clusters of Victorian government schools that aim to enhance the quality of PST placements in target locations. PSTs participating in Placements Plus programs receive tailored wraparound supports during their placements, such as additional professional learning and supports to strengthen connections with peers and their local school community.</p> <p>The Teach Rural program involves Country Education Partnership coordinating and supporting groups of participating PST's to undertake placements in clusters of rural and regional Victorian government schools, with a suite of wraparound supports including subsidised accommodation.</p>					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding	5.661	4.904	-	-	-
	Approved in 2026-27	-	5.015	10.525	5.958	-
Details of how the program will be funded	Existing and new output appropriation					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and	An evaluation of placement initiatives was included as part of the business case submitted for consideration in the 2026–27 State Budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.					

attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government's role in delivering it	<p>Investment in school workforce initiatives is having a positive impact. However, some schools, such as those in high population growth areas, rural and regional locations, and specialist schools are experiencing greater recruitment challenges.</p> <p>This funding will provide grant payments and other supports to assist PSTs to complete placement days in rural, regional, growth area and specialist schools, helping these schools to attract and recruit teachers.</p>
Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	<p>The suite of placement support programs includes PPG, the Placements Plus initiative, and the Teach Rural program.</p> <p>Since its launch in 2023, PPG has supported over 9,000 placements in target schools. The number of placements supported by this initiative was 12% higher in 2025 compared to 2024. School leaders in rural and regional schools report that PPG has had a positive impact on the supply of teachers to their schools.</p> <p>As of June 2025, 930 Placements Plus placements and 243 Teach Rural placements have been completed in target schools. Placements Plus and Teach Rural have both been supported by initial teacher education providers. Teach Rural has a high proportion of PSTs who would recommend the program to a peer.</p>
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	<p>The program has been delivered within scope and budget and within expected timeframes. A strong governance and reporting framework for these workforce initiatives is in place.</p>
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	<p>This program has been extended in the 2026–27 State Budget.</p>
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	<p>The funding for these initiatives is based on the previous cost of delivering these initiatives.</p>

Name of the program	Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership
Objective(s) of the program	The Academy is legislated to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve outcomes for students through the provision of specialised teaching and leadership excellence programs for exceptional teachers and school leaders • increase equity of access to professional learning to lift the quality of teaching across Victoria • raise public awareness of the capability and status of teachers and school leaders in the science and practice of teaching • provide a dedicated pathway for established exceptional teachers to contribute to school and system improvement • improve the quality of school leadership. 					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding	35.655	-	-	-	-
	Approved in 2026-27	-	8.206	16.412	16.412	8.206
Details of how the program will be funded	Existing and new output appropriation, including funding sourced from internal reprioritisation.					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	A Lapsing Program Evaluation of this program was submitted as part of the business case for consideration in the 2026–27 State Budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.					
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	Evidence indicates providing ongoing, high quality professional learning for teachers and school leaders leads to system-wide improvements in education, and that the impact is greatest when that learning is ongoing and in line with changing system needs. The Victorian Government’s funding of the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership enables a system-wide approach to continuously improving the quality of teaching and leadership at scale.					
Evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	Evidence indicates the Academy is meeting its legislative objectives and intended outcomes. The Academy has exceeded all its Department Performance Statement targets for participation in, satisfaction with and quality of its cross-sectoral professional learning programs.					
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	The program is being delivered within its scope, budget and timeframes, with robust governance and risk management practices.					
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been	This program has been extended in the 2026–27 State Budget.					

identified to minimise any negative impacts	
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	Further funding received through the 2026–27 State Budget process is reduced from the Academy’s previous years’ funding allocation. The Academy will scale operations to fit within the budget envelope.

Name of the program	Kindergarten Building Blocks Improvement and Inclusion grants					
Objective(s) of the program	The Building Blocks Improvement stream offers grants to help kindergartens refurbish or renovate early childhood buildings and facilities, and purchase information technology to assist in the delivery of educational programs and service administration. The Building Blocks Inclusion stream provides funding to kindergartens to upgrade early childhood buildings and facilities (including playgrounds), and purchase equipment to provide safe and more inclusive environments for children of all abilities.					
Expenditure in the financial years 2025–26 and 2026–27 (and, where relevant, future years) (\$ million)		2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
	Existing funding	10.238	10.970	0.700	-	-
	Approved in 2026-27	-	2.468	6.858	0.438	-
Details of how the program will be funded	2026–27 State Budget provision					
Confirmation that an evaluation for the program has been conducted. Please advise who undertook the evaluation and attach a copy of the executive summary of the evaluation	An evaluation of this program was included as required for the business case submitted for consideration in the 2026–27 State Budget process. As a component of a business case prepared for Cabinet consideration, this is Cabinet in Confidence and unable to be provided.					
Evidence of the continued need for the program and the Government’s role in delivering it	Evidence of the continued need for the Building Blocks Improvement and Inclusion Grants streams is demonstrated by the continued demand for the program from the sector. Continuing support to the sector to maintain and improve existing facilities is a critical part of the sector’s continued engagement with early childhood education.					

Evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes	Since the Building Blocks Improvement Grants stream was launched in 2020, it has supported 361 infrastructure projects. 323 of these are complete and the remaining are in progress. Projects have included the development of outdoor learning spaces, upgrades to bathrooms and kitchens, and new flooring and windows. Additionally, the stream has funded 4,914 information technology projects since 2020. Since the Building Blocks Inclusion Grants stream was launched in 2020, it has supported 205 infrastructure projects. 155 of these are complete and the remaining are in progress. Additionally, the stream has funded 1,257 equipment projects since 2020 to make educational environments more inclusive for children of all needs and abilities.
Evidence of the program being delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices	All grant applications are submitted via an online grant system. Before being recommended for approval by the Minister for Children, an assessment panel assesses their merit and eligibility against program guidelines. This ensures funding is allocated to projects that align with each program. Project timeframes are then established and are regularly monitored to ensure timely delivery of the program.
Nature of the impact of the program ceasing and what strategies have been identified to minimise any negative impacts	This program has been extended in the 2026–27 State Budget.
Evidence that the further funding reflects the actual cost required to deliver the program	Funding is based on the cost of project delivery in current and previous years.

Question 9

For all programs (output initiatives, including grants) with total funding of equal to or greater than \$5 million that are to lapse in 2025–26, please provide the:

- a) name of the program
- b) objective(s) of the program
- c) expenditure in the financial year 2025–26
- d) reasons why the program was established
- e) details of who (describe the type of users, for example, health care providers, families, volunteers etc.) and how many used the program, and evidence of the outcomes achieved
- f) reasons why further funding is not being sought
- g) impact of ceasing the program
- h) strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts.

Response

Name of the program	<i>Out of field teaching – Components A, C, D, E (lapsed December 2025), and F, I (lapsing June 2026)⁸</i>
Objective(s) of the program	To support out-of-field (OOF) teachers in secondary science, mathematics, and the technologies to gain a qualification in their OOF discipline.
Expenditure in the financial year 2025–26 (\$ million)	1.456
Reasons why the program was established	To build capability of OOF secondary teachers to support student engagement and achievement in mathematics.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	Since its establishment in 2021 a total of 343 teachers completed a secondary graduate certificate: 206 teachers in mathematics, 64 in science, 43 in design and technologies and 30 in digital technologies. Principals and teachers reported increased teacher confidence and capability following completion of program.
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	The 2025–26 State Budget included \$4.2 million over 3 years to develop 2 mathematics micro-credentials (MEMC) aligned to the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 (VTLM 2.0) to build the confidence and capability of Years 7 to 10 teachers, including OOF teachers. The MEMC will provide a flexible and scalable approach to professional learning in mathematics. A full suite of Victorian

⁸ Note this initiative was previously included in the 2025-26 Budget Estimates questionnaire. It is being repeated for completeness as it is to lapse in 2025-26.

	Lesson Plans (VLPs) in mathematics, science and the technologies will also be available by 30 June 2026 to support all teachers, including OOF teachers.
Impact of ceasing the program	See above. 2 MEMC in mathematics will be available to upskill OOF Years 7 to 10 mathematics teachers, with delivery commencing July 2026. VLPs in mathematics, science and the technologies will also support all teachers, including OOF teachers, by providing quality teaching and learning programs aligned to the Victorian Curriculum and the VTLM 2.0. The MEMC and VLPs will mitigate challenges associated with OOF teaching.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	Teacher recruitment for the 2 MEMC is currently underway, with delivery commencing July 2026. To help maximise participation, the MEMC have face-to-face and online components and are being delivered in metropolitan and regional locations. Professional learning is available to support OOF teachers to implement VLPs.

Name of the program	<i>Side by Side (SbS) Partnership for Addressing Disadvantage</i>
Objective(s) of the program	To support students in Years 1 to 4 in participating primary schools to improve their school attendance, engagement and learning outcomes by strengthening learning environments at school and at home. The program is funded as a Partnership Addressing Disadvantage (PAD) – an outcomes-based funding model which builds on the concept of Social Impact Bonds (SIBs).
Expenditure in the financial year 2025–26 (\$ million)	1.480
Reasons why the program was established	To better understand how early intervention and intensive support in primary years works to improve educational and social outcomes for vulnerable students, the extent to which this impact is sustained over time, and the effectiveness of the PAD funding and delivery model.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	Approximately 300 students and their families from nine Victorian government primary schools participated in the program across three locations in Victoria (North East Melbourne, Inner Gippsland, and Western Melbourne).
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	SbS was set up as a time-limited PAD arrangement and was scheduled to conclude implementation at the end of 2025. Monitoring and evaluation activities show that the program has not met attendance improvement and learning targets.
Impact of ceasing the program	As planned from the outset, the program concluded in the nine participating schools at the end of 2025, with evaluation and outcome monitoring continuing over 2026.

Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	The department worked with program partners and schools over 2025 to support transition out of the program, emphasising that supporting students to remain engaged with their education remains a priority. Participating schools have the option to use funding provided through the Mental Health Fund and Menu to directly engage the program service providers.
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Name of the program	<i>Tutor Learning Initiative⁹</i>
Objective(s) of the program	To support students who are performing significantly below their age-expected standard in literacy and numeracy through the delivery of targeted small group tutoring.
Expenditure in the financial year 2025–26 (\$ million)	115.000
Reasons why the program was established	The Tutor Learning Initiative was established in response to the impact of periods of remote and flexible learning experienced by Victorian students during the COVID pandemic in 2020 and 2021.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	Over five years, from establishment in 2021 to the end of the 2025 school year, more than 704,000 ¹⁰ student places were provided in government and low-fee non-government schools for students to benefit from focused support from a tutor through the Tutor Learning Initiative. The Tutor Learning Initiative has had positive impacts on student learning outcomes. Using standardised tests, students participating in the Tutor Learning Initiative in 2023 demonstrated learning growth in both reading and mathematics. The extent of improvement was greatest in the early years of schooling.
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	Small group learning for a targeted group of primary school students is being delivered through the Literacy and Numeracy Early Intervention Program in 2026.
Impact of ceasing the program	The impact of ceasing the Tutor Learning Initiative at the end of the 2025 school year has to date been minor in Victorian government schools given the complementary funding streams that support focused intervention in 2026.

⁹ Note this initiative was previously included in the 2025-26 Budget Estimates questionnaire. It is being repeated for completeness as it is to lapse in 2025-26.

¹⁰ Support provided across government and non-government schools:

- 2021 – over 8,000 tutors supported more than 185,000 students
- 2022 – over 7,000 tutors supported almost 160,000 students
- 2023 – over 5,400 tutors supported more than 120,000 students (government schools only)
- 2024 – over 4,000 tutors supported more than 146,000 government and non-government students.
- 2025 - over 3,700 tutors supported more than 93,000 students (government schools only).

Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	In 2026, schools receive funding through Equity (Catch Up), the Middle Years Literacy and Numeracy Support Initiative and the new Literacy and Numeracy Early Intervention Program, which provide support for schools to deliver focused interventions, including small group learning, for students in primary and secondary school who are identified as significantly below their age-expected level of learning in literacy and numeracy.
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Name of the program	<i>Growing the pipeline of teachers in Victorian Government Schools (International teacher recruitment component)</i> ¹¹
Objective(s) of the program	Support Victorian government schools to attract teachers from overseas.
Expenditure in the financial year 2025–26 (\$ million)	1.300
Reasons why the program was established	The International Teacher Recruitment initiative was established to help Victorian government schools to recruit international teachers. It includes specialist recruitment expertise to source international teachers and funding to support international teachers with relocation and visa costs. The Migration Support Service was established to provide access to free specialist migration legal advice to support Victorian government schools to recruit and retain international teachers.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	Since the initiative launched in 2022, the program has recruited 214 teachers through the International Teacher Recruitment initiative with the provision of relocation support. The program has also supported over 510 visa grants through the Migration Support Service. This means the program has facilitated over 720 visa grants for the employment of international teachers in Victorian schools.
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	Following the initial success of investments in workforce initiatives, the 2025–26 Victorian Budget and 2026-27 Victorian Budget continue funding for a more targeted suite of initiatives that focus on sustaining efforts to attract, recruit and retain Victorian teachers in schools and subject specialisms facing workforce challenges.
Impact of ceasing the program	There will no longer be funding to support with international teachers with relocation and visa costs, which may lead to less international teachers seeking to migrate to Victoria and work in Victorian government schools. There will no longer

¹¹ Note this initiative was previously included in the 2025-26 Budget Estimates questionnaire. It is being repeated for completeness as it is to lapse in 2025-26.

	be funding to support the department’s migration support service. Schools will still be able engage migration agents, but schools may experience increased administrative work and financial obligations due to this central support ceasing.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	<p>Through the 2025–26 Victorian Budget and 2026–27 Victorian Budget, the Victorian Government is investing in a range of strategies to support Victorian government schools to recruit teachers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach Today and Teach Tomorrow programs: 1,200 places in employment-based teaching degrees across 2026, 2027 and 2028, which integrate paid work in schools into the structure of teaching degrees. Priority is given to participants studying an in-demand specialism. • Teach the Future Fellowships: 200 fellowships for students commencing undergraduate secondary, dual primary-secondary or specialist school teaching degrees in 2026 focused on in-demand specialisms. • Paid Placements and Placement Supports: supports to pre-service teachers to complete placement days in rural, regional, growth area and specialist schools across 2026, 2027 and 2028. • Teacher Financial Incentives: 100 financial incentives across the 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years to support teachers to move to hard to staff Victorian government schools in rural and regional areas. <p>Teach the Future Campaign: paid advertising, media and public relations to raise the profile of the teaching profession across the 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years.</p>

Name of the program	<i>Growing the pipeline of teachers across all Victorian government schools - Secondary scholarships and graduate incentives component</i> ¹²
Objective(s) of the program	Provide financial support to attract people to study secondary teaching degrees; support people to complete their teaching degrees; and incentivise teaching degree graduates to go on to work in Victorian government schools.
Expenditure in the financial year 2025–26 (\$ million)	20.5
Reasons why the program was established	The Secondary Teaching Scholarships initiative provided scholarships to support all students enrolling in an eligible secondary school teaching degree in 2024 and 2025. The scholarships support Victorian students while studying their secondary school teaching degree, with further payments available to eligible applicants who work as a teacher in a Victorian government secondary or specialist school setting for 2 years after graduation. The 2025–26 Victorian Budget established a new program which will provide 200 targeted scholarships to students commencing undergraduate secondary, dual primary-secondary or specialist school teaching degrees in 2026 focused on in-demand specialisms.
Details of who and how many used the program and evidence of the outcomes achieved	The Secondary Teaching Scholarship initiative contributed to a 32% increase in students enrolling in secondary and dual primary/secondary initial teacher education courses in Victoria between 2023 and 2024.
Reasons why further funding is not being sought	Following the initial success of investments in workforce initiatives, the 2025–26 Victorian Budget and 2026–27 Victorian Budget continue funding for a more targeted suite of initiatives that focus on sustaining efforts to attract, recruit and retain teachers in schools and subject specialisms facing workforce challenges.
Impact of ceasing the program	Targeting scholarships to people studying in-demand specialisms in undergraduate secondary teaching degrees in 2026 could lead to less incentive to enrol in any other secondary teaching degree. Significantly lower numbers of scholarships available in 2026 and ceasing scholarships for students commencing in 2027 may negatively impact the overall uplift in secondary teaching ITE degree

¹² Note this initiative was previously included in the 2025-26 Budget Estimates questionnaire. It is being repeated for completeness as it is to lapse in 2025-26.

	enrolments observed in 2024 and reduce retention rates in initial teacher education.
Strategies that are being implemented to minimise any negative impacts	<p>Through the 2025–26 State Budget and 2026–27 State Budget, the Victorian Government is investing in a range of strategies to support Victorian government schools to recruit teachers including:</p> <p>Teach Today and Teach Tomorrow programs: 1,200 places in employment-based teaching degrees across 2026, 2027 and 2028, which integrate paid work in schools into the structure of teaching degrees. Priority is given to participants studying an in-demand specialism.</p> <p>Teach the Future Fellowships: 200 fellowships for students commencing undergraduate secondary, dual primary-secondary or specialist school teaching degrees in 2026 focused on in-demand specialisms.</p> <p>Paid Placements and Placement Supports: supports to pre-service teachers to complete placement days in rural, regional, growth area and specialist schools across 2026, 2027 and 2028.</p> <p>Teacher Financial Incentives: 100 financial incentives across the 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years to support teachers to move to hard to staff Victorian government schools in rural and regional areas.</p> <p>Teach the Future Campaign: paid advertising, media and public relations to raise the profile of the teaching profession across the 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years.</p>

Capital asset expenditure

Question 10

Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances provides cash flow statements for departments.

Budget Paper No. 4: State Capital Program provides the capital projects undertaken by departments.

For the 'Payments for nonfinancial assets' line item in the 2026–27 budget cash flow statement, please provide a breakdown of these costs and indicate which capital project they relate to.

If any other line items in the cash flow statement comprises expenditure on Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), please list the PPP it relates to and the cost.

Guidance

Capital projects extracted from the cash flow statements are expected to correspond to capital projects listed in *Budget Paper No. 4: State Capital Program* as 'New projects', 'Existing projects', or 'Completed projects'.

Response

Please see Excel Worksheet for response

Public Private Partnerships – expenditure

Question 11

Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances provides a comprehensive operating statement that details each department's revenue and expenses on an accrual basis reflecting the cost of providing its output.

- a) In the 2026–27 comprehensive operating statement please identify all expenditure on Public Private Partnerships (PPP) by line item and provide a breakdown of these costs and indicate to which project they relate.

Guidance

If the line item 'Other operating expenses' in the comprehensive operating statement comprises expenditure on PPPs, please also list the PPP it relates to and the cost.

- b) Please also provide the estimated/forecast expenditure for all PPPs across forward estimates.

Response

a)

	2024–25 Actual (\$ million)	2025–26 revised Budget (\$ million)	2026–27 Budget (\$ million)	Related project(s)
Partnerships Victoria in Schools	37.3	27.4	32.8	
PPP Schools – Public Private Partnerships	40.5	31.1	33.7	
Total	77.8	58.5	66.5	

b)

Partnerships Victoria in Schools	2024–25 Actual (\$ million)	2025–26 revised Budget (\$ million)	2026–27 Budget (\$ million)	2027–28 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)	2028–29 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)	2029–30 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)
Interest	10.1	7.5	7.0	6.4	5.8	5.1
Other Operating Expenses	15.8	9.1	14.9	15.4	15.9	16.4
State Based Costs	1.4	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.2
Depreciation/Amortisation*	10.1	10.1	10.1	10.1	10.1	10.1
Total	37.4	27.4	32.8	32.8	32.8	32.8

PPP Schools – Public Private Partnerships	2024–25 Actual (\$ million)	2025–26 revised Budget (\$ million)	2026–27 Budget (\$ million)	2027–28 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)	2028–29 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)	2029–30 Estimated/Forecast (\$ million)
Interest	13.4	13.0	12.7	12.3	11.9	13.4
Other Operating Expenses	15.8	9.1	12.1	12.3	12.5	10.8
State Based Costs	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.7
Depreciation/Amortisation*	9.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8
Total	40.4	31.1	33.7	33.7	33.7	33.7

Public Private Partnerships – expected and actual benefits

Question 12

For Public Private Partnerships (PPP) projects in operation and in procurement and delivery, please provide detail on:

- the expected benefits of the PPP project in the uncommissioned (planning and construction) stages
- the value to the State of the expected benefits of the PPP project in the uncommissioned stages
- the actual/existing benefits of the PPP project in its commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage
- the value of the actual/existing benefits of the PPP project in its commissioned stage per year
- how benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported.

Response:

PPP	Expected benefits in uncommissioned (planning and construction) phases	Value of expected benefits to the State (\$ million)	Actual/existing benefits of commissioned (operations and maintenance) stage	Value of actual/existing benefits per year (\$ million)	How benefits are monitored, measured and publicly reported
Partnerships Victoria in Schools	Not applicable	Not applicable	<p>The transfer of design, construction and facilities maintenance risk to the private sector.</p> <p>School infrastructure and equipment managed under a whole-of-life model that includes the lifecycle replacement of assets across the 25-year contract term.</p> <p>Provision of additional infrastructure, such as Early Learning Centres, Learn to Swim pools, and expanded gymnasiums</p>	32.8	<p>The benefits associated with the risk transfer of design, construction and facilities maintenance to the private sector have been realised as the project is in its operational stage. This includes the delivery of additional infrastructure, such as Early Learning Centres and Learn to Swim Pools that</p>

			delivered via efficiencies achieved by the consortium, at no extra cost to the State.		are operated by the YMCA. Consortium must maintain facilities to the high standards specified in the specification and meet KPIs, as assessed on a monthly basis by the Department of Education, in order to receive quarterly service payments.
PPP New Schools	Not applicable	Not applicable	Transfer of design, construction and facilities maintenance risk to the private sector. School infrastructure and equipment managed under a whole-of-life model that includes the lifecycle replacement of assets across the 25-year contract term. Provision of additional infrastructure, such as Early Learning Centres, Learn to Swim pools, and	33.7	The benefits associated with the risk transfer of design, construction and facilities maintenance to the private sector have been realised as the project is in its operational stage. This includes the delivery of additional infrastructure, such as Early Learning Centres and Learn

			expanded gymnasiums delivered via efficiencies achieved by the consortium, at no extra cost to the State.		to Swim Pools that are operated by the YMCA. Consortium must maintain facilities to the high standards specified in the specification and meet KPIs, as assessed on a monthly basis by the Department of Education, in order to receive quarterly service payments.
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Major project contracting – DTP only

Question 13

- a) For all the major transport projects (TEI >\$100 million), please provide the following details:
- i) project name
 - ii) total estimated investment at announcement
 - iii) budget year of announcement
 - iv) revised total estimated investment in the 2026–27 Budget
 - v) delivery model – please specify if the major projects are delivered through PPP, alliance contracting or other financing arrangement outlined in the *Whole of government infrastructure procurement framework*.¹³ If other, please specify the arrangement
 - vi) estimated completion date at the announcement
 - vii) revised estimated completion date in the 2026–27 Budget
 - viii) explanation for variances in project cost and timeliness

Response

Project name	Total estimated investment at announcement	Budget year	Revised total estimated investment	Delivery model (PPP, Alliance contracting or other – please specify)	Estimated completion date at announcement	Revised estimated completion date	Explanation for variances in project cost and timeliness

- b) Please note which of the above projects have a publicly available business case and where this can be found.

¹³ See Department of Treasury and Finance, *A modernised infrastructure procurement framework for Victoria*, September 2023, p.1.

c) What is the owner’s cost¹⁴ (i.e. cost to the Government) of delivering the projects via alliance contracting as opposed to PPP projects?

Please provide the following details:

- i) project name
- ii) project value
- iii) project delivery model
- iv) expense category
- v) expenses incurred.

Please fill in the below table according to DTP’s major projects.

Response

Project name	Project value	Project delivery model (PPP, Alliance contracting, etc.)	Expense category	Expenses incurred by the Vic Government (\$ million)
Total cost				

¹⁴ Owner’s costs under traditional contracts may include, direct costs, contingency for risks, profit margin and contribution to corporate overheads, and internal contract administration expenses.

Savings initiatives

Question 14

For each of the savings initiatives detailed in the 2025–26 Budget,¹⁵ please detail:

- the department's saving target for 2025–26 and 2026–27
- a breakdown of how the department will meet the savings targets in 2025–26 and 2026–27
- the impact that these actions will have on the delivery of services and assets/infrastructure during 2025–26 and 2026–27.

Response

Initiative	2025–26			2026–27		
	Savings target for (\$ million)	Breakdown of how the department met savings targets	Impact these actions had on the delivery of services and assets/infrastructure	Savings target (\$ million)	How the department will meet savings targets	Impact these actions will have on delivery of services and assets/infrastructure
Whole of Government savings and efficiencies	149.5	The target is expected to be met through general savings and efficiencies measures across the department, including reduced spending on corporate and back-office functions, administrative efficiencies such as streamlining processes, and realignment of priorities and identifying surplus funds for re-investment	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or asset/infrastructure projects. For some savings, funding model changes will support better targeting of funding to eligible students and will result in changes in funding distribution between schools, as well as more efficient and effective program delivery.	224.2	The target is expected to be met through general savings and efficiencies measures across the department, including reduced spending on corporate and back-office functions, administrative efficiencies such as streamlining processes, and realignment of priorities and identifying surplus funds for re-investment	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery or asset/infrastructure projects. For some savings, funding model changes will support better targeting of funding to eligible students and will result in changes in funding distribution between schools, as well as more efficient and effective program delivery.

¹⁵ Department of Treasury and Finance, *Budget Paper No. 3: 2024–25 Service Delivery*, Melbourne, 2024, p. 92.

		in school education where appropriate.			in school education where appropriate.	
Other	N/A			N/A		

Question 15

For each of the savings initiatives detailed in the 2026–27 Budget, please detail (on the same basis of consolidation as the budget papers):

- a) the department's saving target for 2026–27
- b) how the department will meet the various savings targets in 2026–27
- c) the impact that these actions will have on the delivery of services and assets/infrastructure during 2026–27.

Response

Initiative	Savings target for 2026–27 (\$ million)	Savings target for 2027–28 (\$ million)	Savings target for 2028–29 (\$ million)	Savings target for 2029–30 (\$ million)	How the department will meet various savings targets	Impact these actions will have on delivery of services and assets/infrastructure
Whole of Government savings and efficiencies – see 2026–27 Budget, Paper 3, Chapter 1, page 102.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data cannot be provided at this stage, as details of individual savings initiatives are subject to the final whole of government implementation approach and consultation with impacted staff.	Data cannot be provided at this stage, as details of individual savings initiatives are subject to the final whole of government implementation approach and consultation with impacted staff.

Use of funds saved from other programs or initiatives

Question 16

In relation to any programs or initiatives that have been reprioritised, curtailed or reduced for 2026–27, please identify:

- the amount expected to be spent under the program or initiative during 2026–27 at the time of the 2025–26 Budget
- the amount currently to be spent under the program or initiative during 2026–27
- the use to which the funds realised by this reduction will be put. Please include the name(s) of any program or initiative that will be funded or partially funded.

Response

Program/initiative that has been reprioritised, curtailed or reduced	The amount expected to be spent under the program or initiative during 2026–27 (\$ million)		The use to which the funds will be put
	At the time of the 2025–26 Budget	At the time of the 2026–27 Budget	
N/A			

Service delivery

Question 17

- a) Please provide the total estimated cost to the department (if any) of the machinery of government changes made since July 2025.

Response

Nil

- b) Please complete the table below detailing the impacts on the department of any machinery of government changes since July 2025.

Response

Impact on the department	
Impact on departmental outputs	
Impact on departmental agencies	
Impact on portfolios	
Impact on statutory authorities	
Estimated cost and date changes are anticipated to be fully implemented	
New portfolio responsibilities and/or how responsibilities are shared, if relevant	
* Where the machinery of government change has no impact on the department, please type N/A where appropriate in the table above.	

Question 18

Department Performance Statement presents departmental performance statements that state the department's outputs by departmental objectives.

Please provide, by ministerial portfolio, the relevant objective(s), objective indicator(s), output(s) and performance measure(s) as provided in the 2026–27 Budget. Where responsibility for outputs, initiatives or performance measures is shared, please clearly outline what is shared and how responsibility is divided between Ministers or portfolios.

Please use a separate table for each portfolio.

Please use one line per output and ensure that outputs align with the relevant objective and indicator/s.

Response

Minister*	Hon. Lizzie Blandthorn		
Portfolio	Children		
Objective	Objective indicator/s	Output	Performance measures
Raise development outcomes of three and four-year-old children prior to attending school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and care services offering a funded kindergarten program assessed as exceeding the National Quality Standard Education and care services offering a funded kindergarten program assessed as meeting or exceeding the National Quality Standard Proportion of children developmentally on track on entry to school. 	Kindergarten Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal children funded to participate in kindergarten in the year before school Average number of hours per week of kindergarten delivery per child in the year two years before school Children funded to participate in Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning in the year two years before school Children funded to participate in kindergarten in the year before school Children funded to participate in kindergarten in the year two years before school Kindergarten participation rate for Aboriginal children in the year before school

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten participation rate for Aboriginal children in the year two years before school • Kindergarten participation rate for children in out-of-home care in the year before school • Kindergarten participation rate for children in out-of-home care in the year two years before school • Kindergarten participation rate in the year before school • Kindergarten participation rate in the year two years before school • Number of kindergarten services supported through the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program for children with a disability or complex medical needs • Parent satisfaction with kindergarten services • Total output cost - Kindergarten Delivery
		Early Childhood Sector Supports and Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of inspections of early childhood services • Percentage of allied health sessions offered through School Readiness Funding accessed by funded kindergarten services • Percentage of approved eligible services assessed and rated • Percentage of services receiving at least one unannounced visit per calendar year

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of early childhood teachers delivering a funded kindergarten program • Average days taken to report and issue a notice of a quality rating • Total output cost - Early Childhood Sector Supports and Regulation
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Minister*	Hon. Ben Carroll		
Portfolio	Education		
Objective	Objective indicator/s	Output	Performance measures
Raise learning, development, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for all Victorian students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are improving their literacy and numeracy skills • Students are connected to schooling • Students progress to employment, training or further education post-school. 	School Education – Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in non-government schools (primary) • Number of Year 1 Phonics Checks administered • Attendance rate, all schools, Years 1 to 6 • Percentage of Government primary school teachers in ongoing employment • Percentage of positive responses to school satisfaction by parents of government primary school students • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 3 Numeracy (NAPLAN) • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 3 Reading (NAPLAN) • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Numeracy (NAPLAN)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Reading (NAPLAN) • Total output cost - School Education Primary
		School Education – Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government schools with active School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeships (SBAT) • Investment in non-government schools (secondary) • Number of government schools providing access to at least 6 Vocational Education and Training Delivered to School Students (VDSS) certificates within the priority pathways • Number of government students enrolled in VDSS certificates within priority pathways • Number of students enrolled in a Victorian Senior Secondary Certificate • Apparent retention rate, full-time students, Year 7/8 to 12 • Attendance rate, all schools, Years 7 to 10 • Percentage of government school students in an SBAT that are retained in a training contract 12 months post commencement • Percentage of government secondary school teachers in ongoing employment • Percentage of Year 9 students in government schools that complete

			<p>an online assessment using a career diagnostic tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of positive responses to school satisfaction by parents of government secondary school students • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Numeracy (NAPLAN) • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Reading (NAPLAN) • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Numeracy (NAPLAN) • Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Reading (NAPLAN) • Victorian Senior Secondary Certificate completion rate • Total output cost - School Education Secondary
		Wellbeing Supports for Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in student welfare and support • Investment in travelling allowances and transport support (not including special needs students) • Number of Doctors in Secondary School consultations per annum • Percentage of prep aged students whose parent or caregiver completes a health assessment • Percentage of students in out-of-home care receiving targeted supports in school

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of eligible government school campuses and non-government schools supported by the Mental Health in Primary Schools initiative • Proportion of Mental Health Fund Menu items with a focus on prevention and early intervention • Proportion of secondary and secondary specialist school campuses that are supported by the Mental Health Practitioners in Secondary Schools initiative • School satisfaction with student support services • Total output cost - Wellbeing Supports for Students
		Supports for Schools and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of assistant principals participating in leadership development programs at the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (day-length or longer) • Number of cleaning audits per year (for metro cleaning contracts) • Number of participants in the Teaching Excellence Program • Number of principals participating in leadership development programs at the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (day-length or longer) • Number of Rolling Facilities Evaluation (RFE) audits completed per year

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of school reviews undertaken • Number of secondary teaching scholarships allocated • Number of students commencing an undergraduate employment-based Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program • Number of teacher targeted financial incentives allocated • Number of teaching service staff participating in short-form Academy professional learning • Number of teaching service staff who are not principals or assistant principals participating in leadership development programs at the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (day-length or longer) • Percentage of funded places in Innovative Initial Teacher Education (IITE) allocated to students who are enrolled in IITE courses and placed in a Victorian government school. • Proportion of Government schools which have internet speeds of at least 2Mbps per student • Proportion of participants (all programs) who are satisfied with the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership's professional learning and development training • Proportion of participants rating (all programs) the impact of the Victorian Academy of Teaching and
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			<p>Leadership's professional learning on their own development and practice at or above 'significant'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total output cost - Supports for School and Staff
<p>Provide equitable and inclusive schooling to all Victorian students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal students are improving their literacy and numeracy skills Regional and rural students are improving their literacy and numeracy skills Students receiving an adjustment due to disability are connected to their schooling Aboriginal students are connected to their schooling Regional and rural students are connected to their schooling. 	<p>Promoting Equal Access to Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of meals delivered through the School Breakfast Club Program Number of students for which government secondary schools are funded to 'catch up' Percentage of government primary school students receiving equity funding Percentage of government secondary school students receiving equity funding Proportion of students supported through Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund Aboriginal student attendance rate, all schools, Years 1 to 6 Aboriginal student attendance rate, all schools, Years 7 to 10 Inner regional attendance rate, all schools, Years 1 to 6 Inner regional attendance rate, all schools, Years 7 to 10 Outer regional attendance rate, all schools, Years 1 to 6 Outer regional attendance rate, all schools, Years 7 to 10 Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 3 Numeracy (NAPLAN)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 3 Reading (NAPLAN) • Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Numeracy (NAPLAN) • Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Reading (NAPLAN) • Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Numeracy (NAPLAN) • Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Reading (NAPLAN) • Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Numeracy (NAPLAN) • Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Reading (NAPLAN) • Total output cost - Promoting Equal Access to Education
		Additional Supports for Students with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government school students who receive adjustments to support their access and participation in learning because of disability as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), as a percentage of the total government school student population • Number of school staff who complete the Inclusive Classrooms professional learning program

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of special school students supported through high intensity Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) services • Number of teachers and regional staff supported to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) • Number of teachers and regional staff supported to undertake the Master of Inclusive Education Program • Percentage of positive responses to school satisfaction by parents of government special school students • Percentage of total government schools resourced through the Disability Inclusion funding and support model • Disability Inclusion Profile reports completed and issued within specified timeframes • Total output cost - Additional Supports for Students with Disabilities
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* Where Ministers share responsibility for outputs, initiatives or performance measures please detail where appropriate

Question 19

- a) Please provide, by ministerial portfolio, a list of the agencies/entities/bodies and the categories (for example statutory/administrative office/authority) to which the information contained in this questionnaire relates.

Ministerial Portfolio	Name of agency/entity/body	Category of agency/entity/body
Education; Children	Department of Education (including government schools and Early Learning Victoria centres which form part of the department)	Government department
Education	Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (the Academy)	Statutory authority
Children	Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA)	Statutory authority
Education	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)	Statutory authority
Education; Children	Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)	Statutory authority
Education	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)	Statutory authority

- b) Please identify functions that have been moved into the department in line with the Government's response to the Independent Review of the Public Service¹⁶ (or are planned to be moved in this budget year and over the estimates)?

Function	Entity previously responsible for function	What is/will be the impact on the department of taking on these functions? (including budgetary and service delivery impacts)	What is/will be the impact on the function of moving it into the department?
Nil			

¹⁶ Victorian Government, *Ensuring the public sector is focused on what matters most*, Melbourne, 2025, p. 9.

Departmental objectives

Question 20 – new objectives

For all new departmental objectives in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of the objective
- b) an explanation of why the objective was added
- c) related outputs
- d) related objective indicators
- e) how the departmental objective aligns with Government objectives and priorities.

Response

Objective	Nil
Description of the objective	
Explanation of why the objective was added	
Related outputs	
Related objective indicators	
How departmental objective aligns with Government objectives and priorities	

Question 21 – modified objectives

For all modified departmental objectives in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of changes made to the objective
- b) an explanation of why the objective was changed.

Response

Objective	Nil
Description of changes made to the objective	
Explanation of why the objective was changed	

Question 22 – discontinued objectives

For all discontinued departmental objectives in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of the objective
- b) an explanation of why the objective was discontinued
- c) any objectives that will replace the discontinued objective in part or in full.

Response

Objective	Nil
Description of the objective	
Explanation of why the objective was discontinued	
Any objectives that will replace the discontinued objective	

Objective indicators

Question 23 – new indicators

For all new objective indicators in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) the related objective
- b) a description of the indicator
- c) an explanation of why the indicator was added
- d) the assumptions and methodology underpinning the indicator
- e) the target (if applicable)
- f) how the target was set (if applicable)
- g) any shortcomings of the indicator, including data limitations, that limit the ability to assess performance against departmental objectives.

Response

Indicator	Nil
Related objective	
Description of the indicator	
Why the indicator was added	
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the indicator	
Target	
How the target was set	
Any shortcomings of the indicator, including data limitations	

Question 24 – modified objective indicators

For all modified objective indicators in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of changes made to the indicator
- b) an explanation of why the indicator was changed.

Response

Indicator	Nil
Description of changes made to the indicator	

Explanation of why the indicator was changed	
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Question 25 – discontinued indicators

For all discontinued objective indicators in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of the indicator
- b) an explanation of why the indicator was discontinued
- c) any impacts on the ability to measure achievement of departmental objectives
- d) any indicators that will replace the discontinued indicator in part or in full.

Response

Indicator	Nil
Description of the indicator	
Explanation of why the indicator was discontinued	
Any impacts on the ability to measure achievement of departmental objectives	
Any indicators that will replace the discontinued indicator	

Outputs

Question 26 – new outputs

For all new outputs in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of the output
- b) an explanation of why the output was added
- c) related performance measures
- d) how the output will contribute to outcomes in terms of departmental objectives.

Response

Output	Nil
Description of the output	
Explanation of why the output was added	
Related performance measures	
How the output will contribute to outcomes in terms of departmental objectives	

Question 27 – modified outputs

For all modified outputs in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of changes made to the output
- b) an explanation of why the output was changed.

Response

Output	Nil
Description of changes made to the output	
Explanation of why the output was changed	

Question 28 – discontinued outputs

For all discontinued outputs in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- a) a description of the output
- b) an explanation of why the output was discontinued
- c) any impacts on the achievement of departmental objectives
- d) any outputs that will replace the discontinued output in part or in full.

Response

Output	Nil
Description of the output	
Explanation of why the output was discontinued	
Any impacts on the achievement of departmental objectives	
Any outputs that will replace the discontinued output	

Performance measures

Question 29 – new performance measures

For all new performance measures in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- the output the measure relates to
- a description of the measure
- the assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure (including how the supporting data are calculated or derived, source and frequency of data collection, as well as any other business rules and assumptions)
- how the target was set
- the shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations.

Response

Performance measure	Number of Year 1 Phonics Checks administered
Output the measure relates to	School Education – Primary
Description of the measure	Count of Year 1 phonics checks administered to Year 1 government school students
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	Data source: Year 1 Phonics Check from Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) Insight Assessment Platform Assumption and methodology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 Phonics Check takes place in Weeks 4-6 of Term 3 each year. While this is the standard test window, some schools can seek extension from the Department to administer test later. Year 1 Phonics Checks are administered to Year 1 students only. Each student in Year 1 takes the test once, ie. the system records only one test result per student during the test window
How target was set	The target takes into account the volume of phonics checks administered to Year 1 students in in the reporting year.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ungraded students of similar age setting were excluded from the count. While we assume each student takes the test once, duplicate test results were detected from the source data. Rules are applied to select the highest score from the duplicate results of a student.

Performance measure	Number of meals delivered through the School Breakfast Club Program
Output the measure relates to	Promoting Equal Access to Education
Description of the measure	Count of meals delivered to students in Victorian government schools through the School Breakfast Club Program in the reporting year.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	Data source: Data collected through the delivery, Foodbank Victoria based on school orders.
How target was set	Target reflects current and expected demand for the School Breakfast Club Program.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	No immediately obvious shortcomings.

Performance measure	Proportion of Schools Mental Health Menu items with a focus on prevention and early intervention
Output the measure relates to	Wellbeing Support for Students
Description of the measure	Count of Tier 1 and Tier 2 activities available on the Menu divided by count of total available activities on the Menu.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	Data source: The online Menu
How target was set	Target reflects current allocation of activities on the Fund in the reporting year.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	No immediately obvious shortcomings.

Performance measure	Proportion of Government schools which have internet speeds of at least 2Mbps per student
Output the measure relates to	Supports for Schools and Staff
Description of the measure	Count of Government schools with internet speeds of at least 2Mbps per student divided by the total number of Government schools. New performance measure to reflect investment in internet provision within Government schools.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	Data source is the internet speed set within each school's local network router.
How target was set	Target reflects current and expected roll-out of higher internet speeds to Government schools in the reporting year.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	No immediately obvious shortcomings.

Performance measure	Number of secondary teaching scholarships allocated
Output the measure relates to	Supports for Schools and Staff

Description of the measure	Count of participants allocated a secondary teaching scholarship through the Teach the Future Fellowship initiative.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	Data source: Tracking of successful recipients through the Department of Government Services' Global Engagement Management System (GEMS).
How target was set	The target reflects the expected allocation of teaching scholarships through the Teach the Future Fellowship initiative in the reporting year.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	No immediately obvious shortcomings.

Performance measure	Percentage of services receiving at least one unannounced visit per calendar year
Output the measure relates to	Early Childhood Sector Supports and Regulation
Description of the measure	Count of approved early childhood education and care services receiving at least one unannounced (non-scheduled) visit, divided by the count of total early childhood education and care services approved at the commencement of the calendar year.
Assumptions and methodology underpinning the measure	Data source: Internal Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA) data, sourced from the ACECQA National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS)
How target was set	The target reflects the focus and increases in recruitment, onboarding and training of Authorised Officers in the 2026 calendar year. This supports the unannounced visits target being met and delivers outcomes that respond to the Rapid Child Safety Review.
Shortcomings of the measure, including data limitations	No immediately obvious shortcomings.

Question 30 – modified performance measures

For all existing performance measures with an associated target that has been modified in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- the output the measure relates to
- a description of the measure
- the previous target
- the new target and how it was set
- the justification for changing the target
- an explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable and the 2025–26 expected outcome
- the methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 Budget.

Response

Performance measure	Number of inspections of early childhood services
Output the measure relates to	Early Childhood Sector Supports and Regulation
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure counts the number of inspections of early childhood services providing an indication of the regulatory effort carried out by the Regulatory Authority (RA). This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 4,000
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 4,800 The target reflects expected provision in 2026.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects expected increased inspection activity following the Government’s response to the Rapid Child Safety Review.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 5,002
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of services inspected by Authorised Officers in 2025. This relates to the calendar year.

Performance measure	Number of government students enrolled in VDSS certificates within priority pathways
Output the measure relates to	School Education Secondary
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects the number of government students enrolled in VCE VET certificates.

The previous target	2025–26: 29,000
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 30,000 The target reflects the expected number of government school students who will enrol in VET certificates in 2026.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects expected delivery in 2026.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 33,220
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	A count of the number of government students enrolled in VET certificates within the priority industry areas in 2025.

Performance measure	Number of students enrolled in a Victorian Senior Secondary Certificate
Output the measure relates to	School Education Secondary
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects the cohort of senior secondary students in Victoria. This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 170,000
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 185,000 This revised target includes all students enrolled in the VCE including the VCE Vocational Major.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects an increase in enrolments in 2026.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 190,745
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of all students enrolled in the VCE and VCE Vocational Major in 2025.

Performance measure	Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Numeracy (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	School Education Primary
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 67.7
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 68.9
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.

An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 73.4
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Reading (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	School Education Secondary
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 68.4
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 69.0
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 74.0
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Reading (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	School Education Secondary
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 62.8
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 65.1
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 69.1
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Numeracy (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	School Education Secondary
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 67.2
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 68.5
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024-25 target was met. The 2025-26 expected outcome: 72.7
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Numeracy (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	School Education Secondary
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 63.9
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 65.6
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026-27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 68.9
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Reading (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	Promoting equal access to education
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 33.8

The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 36.1
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 44.7
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Reading (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	Promoting equal access to education
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 28.8
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 32.3
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 41.6
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 3 Numeracy (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	Promoting equal access to education
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 30.9
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 31.0
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 44.3

The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.
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Performance measure	Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Numeracy (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	Promoting equal access to education
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 32.2
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 34.4
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 45.0
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Numeracy (NAPLAN)
Output the measure relates to	Promoting equal access to education
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reports the percentage of students achieving in the strong or exceeding proficiency levels.
The previous target	2025–26: 26.7
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 30.0
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the increase in the Australian average in 2025 to which the target is aligned.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 36.2
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Nationally comparable result for 2025 accessible via the ACARA NAP reporting website.

Performance measure	Number of Rolling Facilities Evaluation (RFE) audits completed per year
Output the measure relates to	Supports for Schools and Staff
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects the delivery of the Rolling Facilities Evaluation program.
The previous target	2025–26: 323
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 300 The target is based on a 5 Year Service Delivery Plan and reflects the number of scheduled audits for 2026.
The justification for changing the target	The 2026–27 target is consistent with the scheduled delivery for 2026.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 323
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of RFE audits scheduled to be conducted in Victoria in 2025 based on the rolling 5 year plan for school audits. Please note targets are calendar year reflecting the school year.

Performance measure	Number of school reviews undertaken
Output the measure relates to	Supports for Schools and Staff
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects delivery of the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) school review program for independent schools; government, Catholic and independent schools that deliver to international students, and school boarding premises.
The previous target	2025–26: 42
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 52 Target based on activity scheduled for 2026-27. The target reflects the forward schedule of reviews in 2026-27.
The justification for changing the target	Schools and school boarding premises are reviewed on a 5-year cycle. Schools that deliver to international students can be registered for up to 5 years. The target reflects the number of schools that are due for cyclical school or school boarding premises review, and reapproval to deliver to international students in any given year. The target is higher because there are more schools that fall due for review or reapproval in 2026.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was not met because some schools chose not to seek reapproval to deliver to international students and some review activity was realigned to minimise regulatory burden for schools with multiple registrations e.g. school, school boarding,

	and international. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 54
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	The measure uses calendar year data to count the number of reviews of independent schools; boarding premises and government, Catholic and independent schools delivering to overseas students.

Performance measure	Number of participants in the Teaching Excellence Program
Output the measure relates to	Supports for School and Staff
Description/purpose of the measure	The measure counts the number of participants in the Teaching Excellence Program through the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership. This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 400
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 300 The target is based on expected delivery in 2026.
The justification for changing the target	The lower 2026–27 target reflects re-prioritisation across programs.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 499
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of commencing participants in the Teaching Excellence Program in 2025.

Performance measure	Number of students commencing an undergraduate employment-based Initial Teacher Education program
Output the measure relates to	Supports for School and Staff
Description/purpose of the measure	To measure participation in undergraduate level employment-based initial teacher education (ITE) programs (teaching degrees). This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26 (2025 calendar year): 40
The new target and how it was set	2026–27 (2026 calendar year): 80 2027–28 (2027 calendar year): 80 The target is based on funded program places and accounts for attrition of participants prior to ITE providers' census dates, as suggested by historical attrition rates for ITE programs.

The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026 and 2027 targets reflect expected high rates of participation in this program in 2026 and 2027.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The measure was not reported in 2024–25 (for the pilot of the program in 2024). The 2025–26 target (2025 calendar year) is expected to be exceeded. This target was based on the pilot numbers and did not accurately reflect demand. Forecasts for 2026 and 2027 have therefore been adjusted.
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of the number of participants enrolled in the programs at census date following the semester enrolment period. Only measuring those commencing a program (being first year students) in the calendar year. Noting programs may have a Semester 1 intake and a mid-year (Semester 2) intake, each of those intakes has its census date.

Performance measure	Number of students for which government secondary schools are funded to ‘catch up’
Output the measure relates to	Promoting Equal Access to Education
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure calculates the extent of financial support provided to secondary school students to help students to catchup.
The previous target	2025–26: 10,383
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 13,000 As the 2025-26 target was exceeded, the new target has been set in line with the 2025-26 performance.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the performance against the 2025-26 measure.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 13,236
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of students below the National Minimum Standard or Needing Additional Supports in NAPLAN Year 5 (reading).

Performance measure	Proportion of eligible government school campuses and non-government schools supported by the Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHIPS) initiative
Output the measure relates to	Wellbeing Supports for Students
Description/purpose of the measure	Activity measured: Proportion of eligible MHIPS government school campuses and non-government schools receiving MHIPS funding.
The previous target	2025–26: 65%

The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 95% The target reflects expected proportion of eligible MHiPS government school campuses and non-government schools at this stage of implementation. The target setting methodology considers some variance in eligible government school campuses and non-government schools to account for: - Government and non-government schools that may open, close or merge. - Non-government schools that may decline MHiPS support.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects the final year of the statewide expansion of the Mental Health in Primary Schools initiative.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The measure was not reported in 2024–25. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 70.3%
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	The number of eligible government school campuses and non-government schools supported by MHiPS in 2025 as a percentage of the total government school campuses and non-government schools that will be eligible to participate in MHiPS by 2026, when the statewide expansion is complete.

Performance measure	Aboriginal children funded to participate in kindergarten in the year before school
Output the measure relates to	Kindergarten Delivery
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure provides the number of funded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a Four-Year-Old kindergarten program. This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 1,800
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 2,000 The target is based on revised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population estimates.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects expected continued strong participation by this cohort in 2026.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 2,283
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program in 2025.

Performance measure	Average number of hours per week of kindergarten delivery per child in the year two years before school
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Output the measure relates to	Kindergarten Delivery
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects the progressive implementation of kindergarten delivery in the year two years before school. This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 13.8
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 14.4 The target is based on expected hours of provision for the given reporting year.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects continuation of higher levels of delivery in 2026.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 14.4
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Weekly average of per child hours for children enrolled in a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program in 2025. Accounts for different number of weeks of delivery across services.

Performance measure	Children funded to participate in Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning in the year two years before school
Output the measure relates to	Kindergarten Delivery
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects Government priorities relating to Early Start Kindergarten, with sustained focus on initiatives designed to improve early learning participation, such as the Early Years Compact, Koorie Kids Shine at Kindergarten, LOOKOUT and the Early Childhood Agreement for Children in Out-of-Home Care. This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 4,500
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 5,000 The target reflects sustained increase in ESK enrolments, particularly for children from a refugee and asylum seeker background.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects historical patterns and expected levels of delivery in 2026.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 5,713
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of children enrolled in a Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program that received Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning funding in 2025.

Performance measure	Children funded to participate in kindergarten in the year two years before school
Output the measure relates to	Kindergarten Delivery
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects the progressive implementation of kindergarten delivery in the year two years before school. This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 70,000
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 72,000 The target reflects historical trends in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten enrolments and forecast demand based on current three-year-old child population estimates.
The justification for changing the target	The 2026–27 target reflects the expectation that the year-to-year number of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten enrolments will stabilise as the reform matures following strong growth since 2022.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 73,300
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of children enrolled in a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program in 2025. This includes children that received Early Start Kindergarten and Access to Early Learning funding.

Performance measure	Total number of early childhood teachers delivering a funded kindergarten program
Output the measure relates to	Early Childhood Sector Supports and Regulation
Description/purpose of the measure	This performance measure reflects growth in the early childhood teaching workforce. This performance measure relates to the calendar year.
The previous target	2025–26: 8,400
The new target and how it was set	2026–27: 8,600 The target reflects expected workforce numbers in 2026.
The justification for changing the target	The higher 2026–27 target reflects expectations of sustained program delivery.
An explanation of why the target was not met in 2024–25, if applicable, and the 2025–26 expected outcome	The 2024–25 target was met. The 2025–26 expected outcome: 8,688
The methodology behind estimating the 2025–26 expected outcome in the 2026–27 State Budget	Count of teachers delivering a funded kindergarten program in 2025.

Question 31 – discontinued performance measures

For performance measures that are identified as to be discontinued in the 2026–27 *Department Performance Statement*, please provide:

- the output the measure related to
- a description/purpose of the measure and the year the measure was introduced
- the previous target
- when the target was last modified and reasons for modification
- the justification for discontinuing the measure, including any further information that is not available in *Department Performance Statement*
- any performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure in part or full.

Response

Performance measure	Proportion of Government schools which have internet speeds of at least 1Mbps per student
Output the measure related to	Supports for Schools and Staff
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure reflects the progressive implementation of the broadband program in Government schools. First introduced in 2023-24.
The previous target	2024–25: 99%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	2025–26: 100% to reflect complete implementation of the 1Mbps program within Government schools.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	The new measure for the Government schools broadband roll-out reflects ongoing implementation of the program with higher delivered internet speeds.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Proportion of Government schools which have internet speeds of at least 2Mbps per student

Performance measure	Growth in commencements in secondary and dual primary/secondary ITE courses
Output the measure related to	Supports for Schools and Staff
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure reflects growth in students undertaking secondary and dual primary/secondary Initial Teacher Education courses. The measure was first introduced in 2024–25.
The previous target	2024–25: 4%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	This measure relies on enrolment data from tertiary institutions. Due to a significant time lag in receiving this data, reporting is not possible to report for the relevant

	<p>financial year at the time of preparing the Annual Report. A more suitable measure has been provided in its place.</p> <p>Initial teacher education enrolment data will continue to be reported through the publicly available Teacher Workforce Snapshot.</p>
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Number of secondary teaching scholarships allocated

Performance measure	Regulated Independent schools that rate the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) effective or highly effective in performing its regulatory function
Output the measure related to	Supports for School and Staff
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure reflects perceptions of VRQA's regulatory effectiveness amongst independent schools. It was first measured in 2017.
The previous target	2024–25: 90%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable. The target was set at 90% when first introduced. 2025–26: 90%
The justification for discontinuing the measure	<p>The VRQA will not be undertaking a client satisfaction survey in 2026–27 due to substantial declines in participation rates in recent years.</p> <p>Independent school participation in surveys is voluntary. In 2025, the survey was shortened and reminders were issued via various avenues, however participation still declined.</p> <p>In 2025, independent schools under review were asked to participate in at least 4 surveys. Two from VRQA (the annual client and stakeholder research and the post-review survey) and 2 from Independent Schools Victoria (ISV).</p> <p>The Victorian government's report on the <i>Independent Review of administrative and compliance activities in Victorian government schools</i> was released in April 2025. This review and its findings impacted school staff willingness to participate in non-essential research. Recommendation 28 of that report is 'Consolidate surveys and evaluations into an opt-in model: Reduce the frequency of subject-specific survey or evaluation input requests by consolidating approaches to staff feedback in a single opt-in model, similar to the Engage Victoria platform'.</p>

Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Not applicable. In 2026–27 the VRQA will review and redevelop its client and stakeholder research and develop a new performance measure.
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Performance measure	Proportion of Schools Mental Health Fund and Menu activities planned with a focus on prevention and early intervention
Output the measure related to	Wellbeing Supports for Students
Description/purpose of the measure and year introduced	This performance measure reflects inclusion of Schools Mental Health Fund and Menu activities with a focus on prevention and early intervention. First introduced in 2025–26.
The previous target	2025–26: 80%
When the target was last modified and reason for modification	Not applicable.
The justification for discontinuing the measure	Following publication of the Independent Review of Administrative and Compliance Activities in Victorian government schools the department has reduced reporting imposts on schools. The measure has been replaced with an assessment of the availability of Menu items that support prevention and early intervention from 2026–27.
Performance measures that will replace the discontinued measure	Proportion of Menu items with a focus on prevention and early intervention

Employees

Question 32

The Victorian Government's response to the Independent Review of the Victorian Public Service stated that the Government will reduce executive-like roles by 332 and reduce the proportion of senior VPS5 and VPS6 positions. In terms of the Government's response, please indicate:

- the planned number roles reduced in 2025–26 by VPS/Executive classification (Please list each level and actual FTE)
- the number of roles planned for reduction in 2026–27 by VPS/Executive classification (Please list each level and actual FTE)
- anticipated total budgeted savings made as part of the Review for 2025–26 (\$ million)
- anticipated total budgeted savings made as part of the Review for 2026–27 (\$ million)
- the functions within the department expected to be impacted by the reduction of roles
- the impact of role reductions on service delivery.

Response

Number of roles planned for reduction in 2025–26 by VPS/Executive classification (Actual FTE)	Number of roles planned for reduction in 2026–27 by VPS/Executive classification (Actual FTE)	Anticipated total budgeted savings for 2025–26 (\$ million)	Anticipated total budgeted savings in 2026–27 (\$ million)	Functions expected to be impacted by the reduction of roles	Impact of the role reductions on service delivery
5 SES FTE	6 STS7 FTE	-	2.5	No anticipated material impacts on functions. Duties will be redistributed to other roles.	No anticipated material impacts on frontline service delivery. Duties will be redistributed to other roles.

Question 33

Please provide the department's (actual/expected/forecast) Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff numbers for the financial years ending 30 June 2025, 30 June 2026 and 30 June 2027:

- broken down into employee classification codes
- broken down into categories of on-going, fixed term or casual
- according to their gender identification
- employees identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or having a disability.

Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

Response

a)

Classification	As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026		As at 30-06-2027	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
Secretary	0.0	0.0%	1.0	0.0%	1.0	0.0%
SES-3	10.0	0.0%	9.0	0.0%	9.0	0.0%
SES-2	51.7	0.1%	51.9	0.1%	51.9	0.1%
SES-1	49.5	0.1%	44.0	0.1%	44.0	0.0%
VPS Grade 7.3	12.0	0.0%	11.0	0.0%	11.0	0.0%
VPS Grade 7.2	16.8	0.0%	23.7	0.0%	23.7	0.0%
VPS Grade 7.1	18.7	0.0%	20.1	0.0%	20.1	0.0%
VPS Grade 6.2	455.4	0.5%	422.6	0.5%	422.6	0.5%
VPS Grade 6.1	383.6	0.4%	384.4	0.4%	387.4	0.4%
VPS Grade 5.2	934.7	1.1%	901.6	1.0%	901.6	1.0%
VPS Grade 5.1	959.8	1.1%	1002.7	1.1%	1019.7	1.1%
VPS Grade 4	1048.2	1.2%	1031.0	1.2%	1032.0	1.1%
VPS Grade 3	503.0	0.6%	522.2	0.6%	523.2	0.6%

VPS Grade 2	100.7	0.1%	84.5	0.1%	84.5	0.1%
VPS Grade 1	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%
Allied health professionals	460.8	0.5%	513.5	0.6%	513.5	0.6%
Government Teaching Service	80311.4	94.1%	81851.0	93.9%	84390.0	93.8%
Early learning professionals	60.4	0.1%	329.9	0.4%	490.0	0.0
Total	85376.7	100.0%	87204.0	100.0%	89925.1	100.0%

*Please provide a breakdown for Youth Justice and Custodial officers by level (for example, YW1, YW2, YW3, YW4, YW5 and YW6).

b)

Category	As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026		As at 30-06-2027	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
Ongoing	74086.3	86.8%	76496.1	87.7%	78842.6	87.7%
Fixed-term	11286.4	13.2%	10702.1	12.3%	11076.6	12.3%
Casual	4.0	0.0%	5.8	0.0%	5.8	0.0%
Total	85376.7	100.0%	87204.0	100.0%	89925.1	100.0%

c)

Identification	As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026		As at 30-06-2027	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
Men	20818.0	24.4%	21174.0	24.3%	21712.6	24.1%
Women	62651.9	73.4%	63774.9	73.1%	65544.7	72.9%
Self-described	1906.9	2.2%	2255.1	2.6%	2667.7	3.0%
Total	85376.7	100.0%	87204.0	100.0%	89925.1	100.0%

d)

Identification	As at 30-06-2025		As at 30-06-2026		As at 30-06-2027	
	(Actual FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Expected FTE Number)	(% of total staff)	(Forecast FTE Number)	(% of total staff)
People who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	368.7	0.4%	447.8	0.5%	552.1	0.6%
People who identify as having a disability	622.9	0.7%	805.5	0.9%	914.2	1.0%
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Workforce capability and capacity

Question 34

What are the main gaps in the department's capability and capacity identified in the 2025–26 financial year, and expected in the 2026–27 and 2027–28 financial years?

Response – VPS Workforce

Financial year	Main gaps in capability and capacity
2025–26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department has planned initiatives to support delivery of the department's priorities. • Key initiatives being delivered across 2025–26 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build Leadership and Talent Pipelines: Lead executive career development planning to strengthen leadership capability and create clear talent pathways. ○ Enhance Workforce Capability: Deliver inclusive learning and development programs. The department will continue to invest in leadership capability, including the launch of a new bespoke program, Management Fundamentals, tailored to the department and aligned to its leadership capability framework. ○ Drive Performance and Career Conversations: Continuously improve the Performance Development Program to embed a forward-looking, career-focused culture with meaningful manager-staff dialogues. ○ Improve Engagement and Organisational Insights: Lead the People Matter Survey to gather actionable insights that inform strategies to boost engagement, culture, and retention. ○ Plan for Future Workforce Needs: Develop a Workforce Strategy to ensure the organisation has the right people, skills, and capabilities to deliver strategic objectives. This will provide a clear, evidence-based view of current and future capability requirements, enabling the department to proactively identify and address skills gaps. It will align workforce planning with strategic and operational priorities, ensuring the right capabilities are developed at the right time to support service delivery and reform agendas.
2026–27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department's VPS Workforce Strategy will be developed in 2026–27, with implementation expected to commence in 2027 calendar year. • The Strategy will provide an overview of the department's corporate workforce, including its strengths, capability gaps, and future workforce requirements. It will provide a clear roadmap to ensure the department has the capabilities and capacity required to deliver on its strategic priorities.
2027–28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2027–28, key initiatives aligned to the Workforce Strategy will continue to be designed, developed and implemented to support delivery of the department's strategic workforce priorities. • To assess the effectiveness and impact of initiatives, a structured cycle of evaluation and review will be embedded to ensure continuous improvement.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insights from monitoring and evaluation activities will inform iterative refinement of programs and approaches, strengthening alignment to emerging capability needs. |
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Contractors

Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

Question 35

For each of the 2024–25, 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years, please outline the actual, expected or anticipated:

- spend on contractors
- occupation categories for those contractors
- total number of contractor arrangements.

Response

	2024–25 (actual)	2025–26 (expected)	2026–27 (anticipated)
Spend	\$157.6m	\$89.7m to 31 March 2026	Unavailable. Budget is not yet confirmed.
Occupation categories	<p>Most commonly used categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Communication and Technology Marketing and Media Community Services Consulting and Strategy Evaluation Services Education and Training Services Health and Wellbeing Services Early Childhood Services Research Economic and Financial Services 	<p>Most commonly used categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Communication and Technology Marketing and Media Community Services Consulting and Strategy Evaluation Services Education and Training Services Health and Wellbeing Services Early Childhood Services Research Economic and Financial Services 	<p>Anticipated categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Communication and Technology Marketing and Media Community Services Consulting and Strategy Evaluation Services Education and Training Services Health and Wellbeing Services Early Childhood Services Research Economic and Financial Services

Total number of contractor arrangements	562 suppliers	411 suppliers as at 31 March 2026	Not applicable
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Consultants

Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

Question 36

- a) For the 2024–25 financial year, please outline the department's total spend on consultants and completed consultancy projects.

Response

\$6.6m

- b) For the 2024–25 financial year please outline: the **top five** department consultancy projects that were completed by spend, the actual outcomes achieved by the listed **top five**, the relevant occupation categories for those consultants, and the total number of consultant arrangements
- c) For the 2025–26 financial year please outline: the department's expected spend on consultants, the relevant occupation categories for those consultants, and the total number of consultant arrangements
- d) For the 2026–27 financial year please outline: the department's anticipated spend for consultants, and what the anticipated occupation categories are for consultant arrangements.

Response

	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27 (Anticipated)
Spend	Top 5 completed: \$1.3m	\$3.9m to 31 March 2026	Not available
Outcomes	<i>Professional advice for English as an Additional Language Unit</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu \$354,963 expended in 2024–25 	Not applicable	Not applicable

	<p>Outcome: Options to better target eligibility for the English as an Additional Language program</p> <p><i>Readiness Review for 50 Early Learning and Childcare Centres</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPMG • \$318,370 expended in 2024–25 <p>Outcome: Effective implementation of Early Learning Victoria and the first 4 early learning centres</p> <p><i>Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme IT system feasibility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPMG • \$223,727 expended in 2024–25 <p>Outcome: Informed strategies focused on improving kindergarten registration and enrolment processes for families and providers.</p> <p><i>Support for independent review of school administration and compliance burden</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dandolo International Pty Ltd • \$219,630 expended in 2024–25 <p>Outcome: Delivery of an Independent Review report with 7 key findings and 28 recommendations for government to reduce school workload. To date the department has implemented 7 recommendations in full or in part, reducing the administrative workload on school staff by approximately 175,000 hours a year and enabling teachers to spend more time on teaching, learning and wellbeing.</p> <p><i>Evaluation of DE's implementation of the Family Violence Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACIL Allen Pty Ltd • \$219,136 expended in 2024–25 <p>Outcome: Strengthened effective implementation of Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management alignment in schools and early childhood education and care services.</p>		
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Occupation categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and Analysis • Consulting and Strategy • Review and Evaluation Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and Analysis • Consulting and Strategy • Economics • Review and Evaluation Services • Financial and Commercial Services • Business Case Development 	Not applicable
Total number of consultant arrangements	44	36 engagements to 31 March 2026	Not applicable

Labour Hire arrangements

Guidance

In responding to this question please provide details about the department on the same basis of consolidation as is used in the comprehensive operating statement audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in the department's Annual Report.

Question 37

For the 2024–25, 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years, please outline the department's actual, expected or anticipated:

- spend on labour hire arrangements
- occupation categories for those labour hire arrangements
- total number of labour hire arrangements.

Response

	2024–25 (actual)	2025–26 (expected)	2026–27 (anticipated)
Spend	\$78.9m	\$31.2m to 31 March 2026	Not available
Occupation categories	Administration, Information Technology, Specialist	Administration, Information Technology, Specialist	Administration, Information Technology, Specialist
Total number of labour hire arrangements	238 active arrangements as at 30 June 2025	154 active arrangements as at 31 March 2026	Not available

Enterprise Bargaining Agreements

Question 38

- a) Please list all Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) that are expected to be completed during the 2026–27 year that affect the department, along with an estimate of the proportion of your department’s workforce (full-time equivalent) covered by the EBA.
- b) Please describe the effect the EBAs listed above have had on estimates of 2026–27 employee benefits.

Response

a)

EBA (Schools)

The Victorian Government Schools Agreement (the Agreement) 2022 reached its nominal expiry date on 31 December 2025. The Agreement covers principal class, teacher class and education support class employees, and as of June 2025 comprised over 90,000 employees or just under 95% of the Department of Education’s workforce.¹⁷

Negotiations for a new Agreement are ongoing with the Australian Education Union (AEU), the Australian Principals Federation (APF), Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) and other individuals that have been nominated as bargaining representatives.

EBA (Kindergarten Services and Early Learning Victoria)

The Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement 2020 and the Early Childhood Education Employees Agreement 2020 have a nominal expiry date of 30 September 2024 and bargaining is ongoing. The agreements cover teachers and educators in community-based and local government kindergarten services. As these are not public sector workforces, there are no departmental employees covered by the agreements. The agreements affect the department as the funder of kindergarten services covered by these agreements.

Negotiations on an enterprise agreement for the department’s Early Learning Victoria workforce are likely to commence in 2026–27.

b)

¹⁷ [Department of Education](#)

As negotiations for an enterprise agreement for the Early Learning Victoria workforce have not yet commenced, the agreement's effect on employee benefits for 2026–27 cannot be quantified.

As negotiations for an enterprise agreement for the Victorian Government teaching service are still underway, the effect on estimates of 2026–27 employee benefits for 2026–27 cannot be quantified.

Relationship between the Commonwealth and Victoria

Question 39

What impact, if any, have changes to federal/state capital funding agreements and Commonwealth Government policy initiatives had on the department's 2026–27 Budget?

Response

Note that figures in this response are cited from the 2025–26 Federal Budget forward estimates and are subject to change. Final figures will be confirmed in the 2026–27 Federal Budget, released on 12 May

Federal-state capital funding agreements

The Commonwealth does not currently contribute to government school capital. The Commonwealth does deliver capital funding for non-government schools as part of its Capital Grants Fund, in addition to its SRS contribution to non-government schools, however this is administered via the relevant block grant authority and sits outside the department's appropriation.

Victoria's 2026 Schooling Resource Standard target

The Commonwealth Government distributes funding to states and territories for government and non-government schools based on the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS). The SRS is an estimate of how much total public funding each school needs to meet the educational needs of its students, and includes a per student base funding amount and six additional loadings for disadvantage and school context.

The Victorian Government is the majority funder of government schools. Victoria's investment in government school education each year aligns with targets for SRS contribution set out in Victoria's short-term bilateral agreement under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025–2034. In 2026, Victoria's contribution target for government school education will be 70.43% of the SRS, and the Commonwealth's contribution target will be 20%.

The Commonwealth is the majority funder of non-government schools. The Victorian Government is required to fund 20% of the SRS for non-government schools and the Commonwealth funds 80% of the SRS

Victoria and the Commonwealth are continuing to negotiate a long-term bilateral agreement as part of the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement. As funding terms for the 2027 school year have not yet been finalised, the forecast Commonwealth investment in Victorian government schools remains at 20% of the SRS over the forward estimates.

In the 2026–27 financial year, the Commonwealth is expected to provide \$3.1 billion to Victorian government schools (20% of the SRS) and \$5.3 billion to Victorian non-government schools (80% of the SRS).

National Student Wellbeing Program

The Commonwealth is providing \$38.4 million from 2024–25 to 2026–27 to Victorian schools through the Student Wellbeing Program to support the wellbeing of students through the provision of pastoral care services in participating schools. In the 2026–27 financial year, Victoria is expected to be allocated \$12.8 million.

Disadvantaged independent school students

The Commonwealth is providing \$15.2 million from 2024–25 to 2026–2027 to Victorian independent schools to support disadvantaged independent students as they transition to new funding arrangements. In the 2026–27 financial year, Victoria is expected to be allocated \$2.5 million.

Consent and respectful relationships education

The Commonwealth is providing \$14.6 million from 2024–25 to 2027–28 to Victoria for the delivery of age-appropriate, evidence-based consent and respectful relationships education in government, Catholic and independent primary and secondary schools. In the 2026–27 financial year, Victoria is expected to be allocated \$2.0 million.

Preschool Reform Agreement

In December 2021, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments signed the Preschool Reform Agreement for 2022 to 2025, providing up to \$514.2 million of Commonwealth funding for Four-Year-Old Kindergarten in Victoria. In December 2025, governments agreed to extend the agreement until the end of 2027. In the 2026–27 financial year, Victoria is expected to be allocated \$131.7m in Commonwealth funding for early childhood education.

Climate Change

Question 40

- a) Please specify the initiatives in the department's 2026–27 Budget that will contribute to Victoria's Climate Change Strategy. Please also outline the budget allocation, the ways in which the initiatives will contribute to Victoria's Climate Change Strategy and the year the initiative will likely realise benefits.

Response

Initiatives in 2026–27 Budget that contribute to Climate Change Strategy	Budget allocation in 2026–27 Budget (\$m)	How will the initiative contribute to Victoria's Climate Change Strategy	Year likely to realise benefits
School upgrades	294.8	<p>The investment in the 2026–27 State Budget provides funding to upgrade 31 schools across Victoria.</p> <p>The school capital projects funded through this investment are required to comply with rigorous standards set out by the Victorian School Building Authority's (VSBA) Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH). The BQSH is reviewed and updated annually to ensure projects align with the Victorian Government's climate change priorities and targets.</p>	From 2027
Essential maintenance and compliance	522.8	<p>The investment in the 2026–27 State Budget provides funding for several school maintenance and compliance programs.</p> <p>The school maintenance projects funded through this investment are required to comply with rigorous standards set out by VSBA's BQSH. The BQSH is reviewed and updated annually to ensure projects align with the Victorian Government's climate change priorities and targets.</p>	From 2027

New schools construction	419.5	<p>The investment in the 2026–27 State Budget provides funding to build 3 new schools, one new campus and additional stages at 3 schools.</p> <p>The state delivered capital projects funded through this investment are required to comply with rigorous standards set out by the VSBA’s BQSH. The BQSH is reviewed and updated annually to ensure projects align with the Victorian Government’s climate change priorities and targets.</p>	From 2029
Best Start, Best Life – Infrastructure	<p>498.2</p> <p><i>*This funding allocation includes \$300.0 million reprioritised from the Best Start, Best Life: Infrastructure initiative funded in the 2023-24 Budget.</i></p>	<p>The investment in the 2026–27 State Budget provides funding to continue the Best Start, Best Life reforms for early childhood facilities opening in 2029 and 2030.</p> <p>The state delivered early childhood capital projects funded through this investment are required to comply with rigorous standards set out by the VSBA’s BQSH. The BQSH is reviewed and updated annually to ensure projects align with the Victorian Government’s climate change priorities and targets.</p> <p>Early childhood grant projects funded through this investment are required to demonstrate, as part of the application assessment process, how the proposed project promotes environmental sustainability and incorporates environmentally sustainable design features</p>	From 2031
Disaster Recovery Initiative Funding	2.0	The Disaster Recovery Initiative Funding contributes to the VCC strategy outcome ‘Protecting our kids and communities’. Through providing evidence based student mental health and wellbeing supports using the Schools Mental Health Menu to support 38 bushfire impacted school communities, the funding improves access to disaster and recovery programs and initiatives to support	2026

		trauma impacts of climate change on school students and their communities.	
Whole of Victorian Government Data Centre Exit	17.9	The transition from a traditional data centre to cloud based platforms will reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions by leveraging more efficient, and larger scale infrastructure powered increasingly by renewable energy. It also minimises the need to run physical (on-premise) hardware, resulting in less energy being wasted and fewer emissions generated to run ICT services across the department.	2028
Continuing VET and vocational and applied learning in schools	69.3	<p>This investment will continue to allow senior secondary students to access VET, which for many students is training in skills required for work in electrotechnology, clean energy or engineering. These VET certificates prepare students for careers that support the renewable energy transition.</p> <p>This aligns with the Clean Economy Workforce Development Strategy 2023 to 2033's priority for enhanced workforce planning and attraction. It will contribute to the Climate Change Strategy's priority of a Clean Energy Economy and the Victorian Government's target of net zero emissions by 2045.</p>	From 2027
In-Demand Careers for Secondary Student	75.4	<p>This investment will allow secondary students to explore careers and pathways relevant to the clean economy – through enhanced careers education, exploratory work-based learning including work experience, and School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships.</p> <p>This aligns with the Clean Economy Workforce Development Strategy 2023 to 2033's priority for enhanced workforce planning and attraction. It will contribute to the Climate Change Strategy's priority of a</p>	From 2027

		Clean Energy Economy and the Victorian Government's target of net zero emissions by 2045.	
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- b) *The Climate Action Act 2017*, Part 3, section 17, requires decision makers from some departments to have regard to climate change.
- i. What is the most significant challenge for the department in complying with section 17?
 - ii. What guidance does the department have in place to assist decision makers to comply with the *Climate Action Act 2017*?
 - iii. What work is planned and budget allocated in 2026–27 to facilitate compliance of the department with section 17?

Response

Most significant challenge to compliance	Resourcing constraints and competing priorities are the most significant challenges to the department's compliance with section 17.
Guidance in place to assist decision makers	<p>The department uses the Climate Budgeting Assessment template provided by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate-Action (DEECA) to help decision-makers consider climate change in budget decisions.</p> <p>The department's Risk Management Framework highlights the requirement of section 20 of the Climate Action Act 2017. Climate-related risks are assessed and managed at the strategic, operational and program or project levels, including through operational risk management activities and the delivery of climate-related programs.</p> <p>The department's Climate Change Committee oversees the department's response to climate change and provides assurance to the Executive Board that the department is meeting its environmental obligations. This Committee provides strategic direction in relation to the department's climate action priorities.</p> <p>The department's Environmental Sustainability team provides subject matter expertise to support corporate staff in the department to consider climate change in policies, plans and processes.</p>
Work planned/budget allocation to facilitate compliance in 2026–27	The department is on track to complete delivery of all relevant actions in the Education and Training Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2022–26 by December 2026. This includes actions to embed consideration of climate change in decisions, policies, programs and processes.

	The department is leading development of the Education and Training Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2027–31. This is on track to be developed by October 2026, in line with requirements of the Climate Action Act 2017.
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- c) Under *FRD 24 Reporting of environmental data by government entities*, Victorian Government organisations must report their greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts. Does the department have internal targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions? If yes, please provide details, quantifying where possible and outlining actions that will be taken in the 2026–27 year onwards to achieve these targets.

Response

Internal targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions	Actions to be taken in 2026–27 and onward to achieve these targets
No current internal targets	The department does not currently have internal targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Gender Responsive Budgeting

Question 41

- a) Please list the programs/initiatives (output and asset) from the 2026–27 Budget for which the department has undertaken a gender impact assessment and describe the main outcomes or results of the gender impact assessment process for each program/initiative. Please also advise what percentage of the department’s 2026–27 output and asset initiatives have been subject to a gender impact assessment.

Response

Initiative	Outcome/result of gender impact assessment
School Upgrades	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>The School Upgrades initiative provides funding to deliver upgrades including through the Capital Works Fund.</p> <p>During the development of this initiative, A Gender Impact Assessment found that the Asset Management Planning process helps schools undergoing upgrades ensure that capital works projects align with the school’s vision for the future and is tailored to the unique needs of the school and its community.</p> <p>The department is compliant with the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> and continues to consider gender equality in policies relating to school infrastructure. The Victorian School Building Authority’s (VSBA) Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH) supports gender equality and continues to evolve.</p>
Essential Maintenance and Compliance	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>The Essential Maintenance and Compliance initiative ensures that government school buildings provide a safe and secure learning environment for students, and that facilities are well maintained, meeting the current standards required by legislation. It also ensures that schools have sufficient funding to undertake essential maintenance and compliance activities – which supports the effective and sustainable management of school infrastructure.</p> <p>Investment in key maintenance and compliance programs enables the government to ensure compliance with statutory obligations, and efficient asset management. These programs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned Maintenance Program (PMP) to address priority defects in school assets • Student Resource Package (SRP) – Annual Contracts to support schools to undertake servicing, inspection and testing of key assets.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make-safe Program to assist schools that have sustained damage through an incident or extreme weather event. <p>The department is compliant with the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> and continues to consider gender equality in policies relating to school infrastructure. The VSBA's BQSH supports gender equality and continues to evolve.</p>
New schools construction	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>The Responding to Enrolment Growth initiative provides funding for new schools, school expansions, additional stages, expanding capacity, land acquisition and the Modular Classroom Program. A Gender Impact Assessment of this initiative found that it will provide capacity in areas with high demand. This means that all students will be able to enrol at their local school, which will provide benefits to students of all genders, students with disabilities and cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>The department is compliant with the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> and continues to consider gender equality in policies relating to school infrastructure. The VSBA's BQSH supports gender equality and continues to evolve.</p>
Best Start, Best Life (infrastructure)	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>Early childhood education is a key determinant of social inclusion and economic prosperity for people of all genders. The Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) reforms enable all Victorian children to access 30 hours of Pre-Prep and 15 hours of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten so children of all genders and backgrounds can succeed. The benefits of expanded kindergarten and childcare programs will also have a significant benefit for workforce participation for parents, particularly women.</p> <p>A Gender Impact Assessment found that Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) has a positive impact on gender equality, particularly for children, parents and carers, and the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce.</p> <p>Impact on children: BSBL is a universally accessible reform that will enhance the social, emotional, and cognitive development of Victorian children of all genders and have a positive impact on their long-term outcomes.</p> <p>Impact on parents: The benefits of the program will have a significant impact on workforce participation for parents or carers, particularly women, by lowering out-of-pocket ECEC costs and expanding the hours of kindergarten/Pre-Prep provision. Looking after young children is one of the main constraints that a parent</p>

	<p>or carer faces to access the labour market. This disproportionately affects women, widening the gender pay gap via disruptions in a mother's working life and life-long labour market outcomes.</p> <p>Impact on the ECEC workforce: BSBL will contribute to the future growth of the ECEC workforce, including educators and teachers who deliver Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten/Pre Prep. The BSBL Workforce Strategy aims to increase the profile and status of the ECEC profession and attract a broader diversity of educators and teachers. As women currently make up the majority of the ECEC workforce, they are most likely to benefit from improved opportunities within the profession.</p>
Upgrading Existing Early Years Infrastructure (Building Blocks)	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) The Upgrading Existing Early Years Infrastructure initiative aims to continue providing through upgrades and maintenance initiatives which will make early childhood services more accessible and user friendly for children, families and staff.</p> <p>A Gender Impact Assessment found that the impacts of expanded and accessible kindergarten and childcare programs are expected to have significant benefits for workforce participation for parents or carers, particularly women.</p> <p>The findings of the assessment have been incorporated into the design and guidelines of the Building Blocks Improvement and Inclusion Grants streams. These programs are designed to ensure inclusivity of people of all needs, abilities and genders and all projects delivered must comply with all the necessary standards outlined in the VSBA's BQSH.</p>
VRQA Strengthening Child Safety in Schools	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) VRQA has incorporated recommended solutions from a Gender Impact Assessment to two elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Schools to keep children safe: Child Safe Standard 5 requires that schools pay particular attention to the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people. This component will ensure schools are meeting this requirement ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and young people of all genders. Schools to understand their child safety obligations: Through increased guidance and support, the VRQA will ensure schools understand their obligations to students and young people of all genders. This will improve their safety, wellbeing and engagement in school.
Replacement of VRQA State Register	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) The system has no inherent gender bias as public information is not gendered and is equally accessible. All information is organisational other than primary contact and salutation is selected by the applicant with non-gendered salutations available.</p>

Students with Disabilities Transport Program	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) The Students with Disabilities Transport Program facilitates travel assistance for eligible students to and from their designated government specialist school regardless of their gender (gender neutral) or disabilities. By removing the need for parents and carers to transport their child to and from school, this will increase the likelihood that primary carers, who are typically mothers, can participate in the workforce or increase hours of work.</p>
Payroll tax reform	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) The changes to the payroll tax threshold applied to the annual recurrent income per student is applied to all non-government schools regardless of gender (gender neutral). The majority of non-government and government schools are co-educational institutions with a smaller number of single sex schools affected and enacting this change reduces cost-of-living pressures on families of schools that would have had their payroll tax exemption removed under the previous settings.</p>
WoVG Data Centre Exit	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) The migration of departmental ICT services from the East Burwood Data Centre to cloud environments has no direct gender-specific impacts. It is an infrastructure and technology initiative designed to ensure service continuity and compliance with government policy.</p>
Securing School IT	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) This initiative is considered gender neutral, as it focuses on strengthening system wide IT security controls, infrastructure and incident responses across schools. It is expected to benefit all users equally, by improving safety, security, and privacy of ICT environments and is not expected to have differential impact based on gender.</p>
Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) A Gender Impact Assessment found that the Academy delivers a positive gender impact through delivery of its legislated objectives, particularly objective B: to increase equity of access to professional learning to lift the quality of teaching across Victoria. The Academy reduces intersecting barriers to participation for women, gender-diverse individuals, people with disabilities, and those from various cultural, religious, and age groups.</p> <p>Approximately 76% of the Academy’s participants (January 2022–December 2025) were women. A range of delivery modalities are provided (onsite across metro and 7 regional locations, online, and blended) enabling accessible options for all participants.</p> <p>Evidence indicates the Academy’s regional presence helps woman overcome time, cost and caring responsibility barriers to participation, by providing professional learning closer to school and home.</p>

Continuing VET and vocational and applied learning in schools	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) Continued investment in VET is improving gender equity by expanding access to applied learning certificates and VET pathways for female and gender diverse students, including those facing intersecting barriers.</p> <p>Resourcing schools to connect students with a range of quality VET options helps reduce gendered barriers to pathway choice. Together, these reforms reduce the influence of gendered and cultural expectations and support students to choose pathways aligned to their interests, strengths and circumstances.</p>
In-Demand Careers for Secondary Students	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) Continued investment in in-demand career initiatives improves gender equity. It expands access to career education, exploratory work-based learning and school-based apprenticeship and traineeship pathways for students of all genders, including those who face extra barriers. These programs apply inclusive practices that challenge gender stereotypes and build awareness of gender segregated emerging and in-demand industries, including construction, renewable energy, STEM and health.</p> <p>Targeted career advice and early school leaver supports further strengthen equity. They reach students most at risk of disengaging from education, including males who are more likely to leave school early, while also supporting female and gender diverse students with targeted initiatives like the Trade & Tech Fit career expo to address gender segregation in key industries. These initiatives reduce gendered barriers and help students choose pathways based on their interests and strengths, rather than gender expectations.</p>
Start of school (Prep) bags and VCE calculators	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) The Start of School (Prep) bags provide a selection of high-quality books to government school Prep students statewide, which are representative of gender and diverse gender roles.</p>
Our Place Partnership and Delivering Place-Based Education Plans	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) These initiatives aim to address systemic gender inequality by improving students' education outcomes and supporting access to health, wellbeing and community services. The initiatives aim to provide equitable access to education as a key determinant of social inclusion and economic prosperity.</p>
Supporting Best Practice Teaching and Learning	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral to Positive) The overall gender impact was assessed to be neutral to positive recognising that early identification of support needs (through support for the implementation of Year 1 phonics check) and targeted literacy and numeracy early intervention seek to address intersectional disadvantage impacts in teaching and learning in the primary years.</p>

Supporting students at risk of suspension, expulsion and contact with youth justice	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>The overall gender impact was assessed as positive for the components for which gender was a primary driver. Approximately 73% of alleged criminal offences are engaged in by male-identifying children and young people. The recommended solutions provide programs and case management tools for all children and young people, including young males, who are overrepresented in the Youth Justice system.</p>
Supporting high ability students and student leadership	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>The suite of components has a strong focus on multi-tiered systems of supports. This includes universal supports for all students as well as differentiated supports towards priority cohorts of students where the data demonstrates an existing disparity in identification, assessment and learning outcomes. Priority cohorts of students include female students for maths and science, male students for literacy performance, First Nations students, students from diverse cultural backgrounds and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p>
Supporting students at-risk of offending through early intervention	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>Approximately 73% of alleged criminal offences are engaged in by male-identifying children and young people. For the cohort of children and young people referred into this program from July 2022 until June 2025, total absences decreased for both males and females from the term at first referral to the fourth term post referral, however a sharper improvement was observed for females (28% decrease) compared to males (18% decrease). Increased engagement for First Nations young people also saw a 27% decrease in absence days from the term at first referral to the fourth term post referral.</p>
Expanding access to high intensity OSHC for specialist schools	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>The high intensity OSHC services are shown to have a net benefit to women. Lack of access to OSHC has been found to disproportionately affect women's participation in the workforce. Women are more likely to be the primary carers for children, and this is particularly pronounced for families that include a child with disability, with 70% of primary carers being women. An expanded and extended high intensity OSHC initiative will deliver benefits to families who don't currently have children attending one of the existing services, and the benefits will accrue most strongly to women. The Gender Impact Assessment also considered the gender balance of the workforce delivering the service. The childcare sector and disability services sector have a majority female workforce.</p>
Delivering critical school workforce reforms	<p>Paid Placements and Placement Supports programs Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>Practicum placements are an essential component of completing a teaching qualification. The costs of undertaking a placement may be a barrier for pre-service teachers (PSTs) (teaching degree students) to consider a placement away from their primary residence. These initiatives support PSTs to undertake placements in target rural, regional and specialist schools. This may support greater diversity in the graduate teacher workforce for rural, regional and specialist schools. This initiative is likely to positively impact women, who are more likely to be primary caregivers. By reducing cost barriers to further</p>

	<p>education that would otherwise take a disproportionately larger toll on primary caregivers, the initiative encourages women to complete placements as a precursor to workforce participation and increased earning capacity.</p>
English as an Additional Language	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) <i>English as an Additional Language (EAL)</i> program funding is allocated to schools that meet a pre-determined threshold based on factors unrelated to gender.</p> <p>Victorian Government schools and funded early childhood services must offer interpreting and translating, consistent with the department's policies, to parents and carers who have limited English proficiency to communicate key information about their child's education. Interpreting includes Auslan interpreting services for parents and carers who are Deaf or hard of hearing.</p> <p>The Victorian Government guidelines for using interpreting services recommends that gender should be considered carefully and be the choice of the client, particularly when addressing family violence and women's health matters. The Language Services program allows parents or carers to discuss their personal circumstances with school staff and request a specific interpreter in circumstances where it is considered effective for communication.</p>
Courage to Care Upstander Program	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) Continuation of Courage to Care's Upstander Program will have a positive impact on gender equality, as it will support all students to identify and address different forms of discrimination, through providing modelled support. This includes students of all genders, age, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation and students with a disability and First Nations students. Students who experience multiple forms of discrimination will benefit greatly from increased awareness of their experiences, and more informed support from their peers.</p> <p>As more female and gender diverse young people experience more discrimination compared to their peers, they are more likely to benefit from the program.</p>
Early Childhood Intervention Services for non-permanent residents	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) Continuation of the Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) for non-permanent residents program will benefit all eligible children regardless of gender. However, the program will have a positive impact on assisting increased workforce participation, given many primary care providers are female. The program also considers issues of intersectionality, including disability and diverse cultural backgrounds in the delivery of these supports. Timely access to ECIS leads to developmental and social benefits and positive</p>

	life outcomes, increasing social and economic participation, and reduces demand on other health and community services.
Supporting families with the cost of education	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>Glasses for Kids The benefits of expanding the Glasses for Kids program outweigh the additional financial cost risks as it has the potential to change the trajectory of many additional students' education by picking up any undiagnosed vision issues. Broadening access to the Glasses for Kids program will improve outcomes for female-identifying students, who are more likely to experience vision and eye health issues, and are also less likely to have their vision screened.</p> <p>Expanding the Glasses for Kids program will also benefit students with disability, First Nations students, and culturally and linguistically diverse students by providing them access to vision screening and free glasses, where they may not have previously had access to the program. Delivery of the program to more students statewide will also enable the delivery of the program in more specialist schools that service P-3 or equivalent year levels, benefiting more students with disability.</p> <p>Gender Impact (Neutral)</p> <p>School Breakfast Clubs Program The School Breakfast Clubs program seeks to address the impact disadvantage can have on education outcomes by offering free and nutritious food for students in all Victorian government schools that opt in. The program is universal in design and is inclusive of all students, regardless of gender.</p>
Refugee supports	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral)</p> <p>Schools Support Program, Learning Beyond the Bell and Early Years Program The activities delivered through the Refugee Support programs are for educators in schools and early childhood settings, and volunteers and program coordinators in homework clubs. As such, the programs do not have a direct impact on the public. However, all activities are designed and implemented to ensure they are appropriate for all genders and do not discriminate against any student or family based on gender.</p>

Locally Driven Education Programs	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral)</p> <p>Northern Centre for Excellence in School Education & Project Real: the programs provide capability building on addressing a range of barriers to education, including those that are gender based. Students participating in Project REAL receive individually tailored wrap-around supports that allow for gender-based barriers to be addressed.</p> <p>Community Languages Victoria: CLV will be encouraged to employ gender-inclusive practices in the development and delivery of all their training sessions.</p> <p>Farm My School: the project has been designed to benefit all students by exposing them to agriculture/horticulture experience from Year 7. Given women are underrepresented in STEM careers, having access to a quality horticulture/agriculture program may specifically encourage those identifying as female to explore this career pathway.</p> <p>North Geelong School Lawyer program: removing the barriers to legal advice is designed to benefit any student who needs this service regardless of gender.</p> <p>Expansion of the Academy Movement: the program has a focus on engaging students from CALD backgrounds and girls.</p> <p>Footscray High School Rowing program: Gender is not a factor in the student participation of this program.</p>
Disability Inclusion in schools	<p>Gender Impact (Positive)</p> <p>Disability Inclusion aims to ensure that all students with disability and diverse learners can fully participate in their education on an equal basis with their peers. The design of Disability Inclusion has considered the needs of different cultural groups, genders, ages and sexual orientations. Disability Inclusion has been developed with the understanding that disability can be an intersectional factor in compounded disadvantage that contributes to social exclusion.</p> <p>The Disability Inclusion Profile is a student-centred process that aims to capture the strengths, goals and aspirations of each individual student. The profile also considers gender-based needs to ensure all aspects of the student's identity are recognised and supported. As of 2025, a higher proportion of male students versus female students have completed profiles, which reflects the higher population prevalence of disability in the paediatric male population</p>

Promoting positive student behaviours	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) Supporting schools and students with severe behaviour, benefits all students, staff and the wider school community. While these interventions are intended to serve the needs of people of all genders, there are well-recognised gender differences in the expression of behaviours exhibited by school-aged children and young people.</p> <p>By reducing incidents of severe behaviour, the initiative contributes to safer and more predictable school environments. This is particularly beneficial for girls and women who are statistically more likely to experience harm or intimidation related to aggressive behaviour. A reduction in physical or verbal aggression can foster a stronger sense of psychological safety and belonging across the school community, improve classroom engagement for boys, who are more likely to experience behavioural challenges, and will allow for less disruptive learning environments which will benefit all students, including girls.</p>
Disaster Recovery Initiative Funding	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) Schools Mental Health Fund and Menu The Schools Mental Health Fund and Menu provides all Victorian government schools the opportunity to purchase programs, resources and staffing to support student mental health and wellbeing from an evidence-based Menu. The initiative includes programs across three tiers of intervention with a range of options to ensure that all students can access support, regardless of their gender or background.</p>
Improving outcomes for First Nations learners	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) The initiative provides guidance and resources to schools to support the needs of First Nations students in order to strengthen their sense of identity, culture, belonging and connections between school, family and community.</p> <p>As the initiative is aimed at addressing systemic barriers and practices developed through self-determined approaches, First Nations people of different genders are anticipated to benefit equitably, which should also mitigate barriers for students and families based on gender.</p>
Rebuilding the VCAA	<p>Gender Impact (Neutral) This initiative will benefit staff and students that work and learn at Victorian schools by providing a modern and well-developed curriculum with consistent learning standards and assessments that reflect our community's values and expectations for skills and knowledge. This impact will benefit staff and students of all genders.</p> <p>The VCAA's policies and programs (including curriculum and assessment development and delivery) are equitable for all genders.</p>

Best Start, Best Life	<p>Gender Impact (Positive) A Gender Impact Assessment found Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) has a positive impact on gender equality, particularly for children, parents and carers, and the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce.</p> <p>Impact on children: BSBL is a universally accessible reform that will enhance the social, emotional, and cognitive development of Victorian children of all genders and have a positive impact on their long-term outcomes.</p> <p>Impact on parents/carers: BSBL reforms are expected to have a significant impact on the workforce participation of parents or carers, particularly women, by lowering out-of-pocket ECEC costs and expanding the hours of kindergarten/Pre-Prep provision. Daily care for young children is one of the main constraints a parent or carer faces to access the labour market. This disproportionately affects women, widening the gender pay gap via disruptions in a mother’s working life and life-long labour market outcomes.</p> <p>The BSBL reforms should positively impact on women wishing to rejoin the workforce (or train, study or volunteer) after having children, particularly for families who could not otherwise afford the out-of-pocket costs of childcare.</p> <p>Impact on the ECEC workforce: BSBL will contribute to the future growth of the ECEC workforce, including educators and teachers who deliver Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten/Pre Prep. The BSBL Workforce Strategy aims to increase the profile and status of the ECEC profession and attract a broader diversity of educators and teachers. As women currently make up the majority of the ECEC workforce, they are most likely to benefit from improved opportunities.</p>
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	Proportion of initiatives subject to Gender Impact Assessment (as percentage)
Output budget	100%
Asset budget	100%

- b) Please list any other programs/initiatives (output and asset) in the 2026–27 Budget where Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) processes or principles were applied/considered by the department. Please detail: the initiative, how GRB was applied/considered and the outcome of this consideration.

Response

Initiative	How GRB was considered	Outcome of GRB consideration
N/A	N/A	N/A

- c) Please list what evaluations of the department's programs/initiatives have been undertaken from a gender perspective and what the key findings of the evaluations were.

Response

Programs/initiatives that have been evaluated from a gender perspective	Key findings of the evaluation
Many of the department's program evaluations look at issues of gender when assessing effectiveness and impact. Evaluations will continue to explore gender as it relates to the assessment of programs and initiatives across the department.	

- d) What further work is being undertaken by the department in 2026–27 to embed GRB?

Response

Further work being undertaken by the department in 2026–27 to embed GRB
The department continues to implement its obligations under the Gender Equality Act (2020), including implementation of the department's Gender Equality Action Plan and undertaking regular (every 2 years) gender workforce audits. The department has also improved the information and resources available to staff to support them to conduct gender impact assessments, including providing a streamlined template that will assist with the development of assessments quickly and support quality improvements.

Implementation of PAEC recommendations

Question 42 – Update on status of implementation

Please provide an update on the status of the implementation of:

- a) Committee recommendations that were made in the *Report on the 2024–25 Budget Estimates* and supported by the Government
- b) Committee recommendations that were made in the *Report on the 2025–26 Budget Estimates* and supported by the Government

Please populate the below table according to each department’s supported recommendations.

Response

Update on the implementation of recommendations made in the *2024–25 Budget Estimates Report*

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
Education	Recommendation 10: The Victorian School Building Authority publish a report every five years on the results and findings of the Rolling Facilities Evaluation (RFE) program, beginning with a report on the first complete RFE cycle between 2018 and 2023. This should include both statewide school asset condition scores and a breakdown by local government area, as well as details of the maintenance and upgrades underway to amend priority defects.	<p>‘Not support’</p> <p>The department does not support this recommendation as the Rolling Facilities Evaluation is an ongoing review of the condition of Victorian government schools and delivers condition assessments to every Victorian government school on a rolling five-year basis.</p> <p>The condition score is only a limited snapshot of a school’s condition, providing one assessment factor within a comprehensive asset management system which works to identify defects and prioritise funding and maintenance cadence to ensure that schools remain safe and in good condition.</p> <p>Following the Evaluation, the Planned Maintenance Program addresses high</p>	Nil

		priority issues that have been identified in that process. That then improves the condition scores for the majority of schools, and the original condition score is then quickly out of date.	
Education	Recommendation 11: The Department of Education develop additional quality budget paper performance measures under the Supports for School and Staff output on the condition of school buildings and other infrastructure assessed through the Rolling Facilities Evaluation program.	<p>'Not support'</p> <p>The department does not support developing new output performance measures for school building and other infrastructure condition. While some maintenance funding is delivered as operating funding, material improvements in school condition often require capital funding. As such, linking output performance to a single output funding line risks inaccurate performance representation. In addition to this issue, this recommendation faces the same challenges as Recommendation 10 that publishing an RFE score based measure provides incomplete assessment information.</p>	Nil
Education	Recommendation 12: The Department of Education develop additional budget paper performance measures that report on the NAPLAN results of students experiencing disadvantage.	<p>'Support in principle'</p> <p>The department will examine national reporting of disadvantage to consider whether existing measures of NAPLAN in the departmental performance statement can be broadened to include students experiencing social disadvantage.</p>	The department will consider NAPLAN performance measures for students experiencing disadvantage in the context of a national agreement on reporting requirements under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement.
Education	Recommendation 13: The Department of Education explore ways to report on the measurable impacts and specific outcomes of the Tutor Learning	'Support in principle'	The department supported the Australian Education Research Organisation case study into

	Initiative, particularly in reducing the gap in learning outcomes between disadvantaged and First Nations students and other students.	<p>The department will explore ways to report on the impacts of the Tutor Learning Initiative, including for disadvantaged and First Nations students, noting that TLI is a Tier 2 intervention within an integrated multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). As such, differentiating or attributing learning and wellbeing gains between the program and mainstream classroom teaching is challenging.</p> <p>Further information on MTSS is available at the Australian Education Research Organisation website.</p>	<p>small group tutoring, the final report of which has been published to support schools with implementing Tier 2 small group learning interventions: Case study research into small group tutoring</p> <p>The department has published the 2024 TLI Lapsing program evaluation which found that reading gains through TLI were more pronounced in primary school and for First Nations students.</p>
Education	Recommendation 14: The Department of Education address the issue identified with its new performance measures under the Supports for School and Staff output with further measures in the next budget.	<p>‘Under review’</p> <p>The department will consider the development of further output performance measures related to school workforce initiatives for inclusion in future departmental performance statements.</p> <p>The department notes that other public reporting mechanisms, such as the Report on Government Services and the Victorian Teacher Workforce Snapshot, are robust mechanisms for monitoring the attraction and retention of teachers.</p>	<p>The Victorian Teacher Workforce Snapshot for 2024 has been published. The Victorian Government has continued to invest in workforce initiatives to attract and retain teachers through the 2025–26 and 2026–27 Budgets.</p> <p>A replacement performance measure related to secondary teaching scholarships has been included in 2026–27.</p>
Education	Recommendation 15: The Department of Education address the issues identified with the performance measure proposed to be discontinued relating to career action plans and career planning in Victorian secondary schools.	<p>‘Support in principle’</p> <p>The department is exploring options to better support schools with career action</p>	<p>The department will consider options for including a new measure in future performance statements. This will reflect current work to implement a</p>

		planning beyond year 9 and appropriate measures to monitor this.	whole-of-school approach to career education that supports students to plan, access and transition to pathways.
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Update on the implementation of recommendations made in the 2025–26 Budget Estimates Report

Department	Recommendation supported by Government	Actions taken at the time of this questionnaire	Update on status of implementation
Education	Recommendation 4: The Department of Education or the Victorian School Building Authority find an appropriate public mechanism to publish demand and condition information that demonstrates how asset investment priorities are determined for new and existing schools.	<p>‘Support in principle’</p> <p>The department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> will provide information to outline the department’s approach to planning for new schools/campuses and expansions of existing schools on a departmental website has provided information explaining asset condition information on a departmental website: Looking after school building and grounds Looking after school buildings and grounds schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au 	<p>By 30 June 2026, the department will provide information to outline its approach to planning for new schools/campuses and expansions of existing schools on a department website.</p> <p>The department has provided information explaining asset condition information on a department website: Looking after school buildings and grounds schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au (last updated 9 December 2025).</p>
Education	Recommendation 10: The Department of Education review the NAPLAN performance measure targets for primary and secondary schooling outcomes in the budget papers to reflect the improvement measure targets set out in the national Better and Fairer Schools agreement.	<p>‘Support in principle’</p> <p>The department will consider targets setting options for NAPLAN primary and secondary performance measures pending national agreement on reporting requirements under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement.</p>	Nil

Community consultation on budget initiatives

Question 43

With regard to the new initiatives in the 2026–27 Budget, which relevant and interested community groups and stakeholders did the department consult or engage with? Please detail the budget initiatives' consultation related to and the final outcomes of consultation.

Response

The department consults with a range of peak bodies, associations, First Nations groups, community groups, other government agencies and other stakeholders during its usual business and in the formulation of policy. Relevant stakeholder input was considered in the preparation of budget initiatives.

Victoria's Housing Statement

Question 44

- a) Please list the department's output and asset initiatives in the 2026–27 Budget that will deliver on outcomes outlined in *Victoria's Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034*.¹⁸

Response

Initiative	2025–26 funding (\$ million)	2026–27 funding (\$ million)	2027–28 funding (\$ million)	2028–29 funding (\$ million)	2029–30 funding (\$ million)
Nil					

- b) What will be the impact of the initiatives on
- i. housing affordability
 - ii. Victoria's planning system
 - iii. housing supply (expressed as a number)
 - iv. the regulation of rental properties
 - v. public housing supply (expressed as a number)
 - vi. community housing supply (expressed as a number)

Response

Initiative	Timeframe (e.g. 1-5 years, 5-10 years)	Housing affordability (if applicable)	Victoria's planning system (if applicable)	Housing supply (if applicable)	The regulation of rental properties (if applicable)	Public housing supply (if applicable)	Community housing supply (if applicable)
Nil							

¹⁸ Department of Premier and Cabinet, *Victoria's Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034*, Melbourne, 2023, <https://content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/DTP0424_Housing_Statement_v6_FA_WEB.pdf>

Cyber security

Question 45

- a) What actions has the department taken over 2025–26, and plans to take over 2026–27, to improve cyber security and mitigate the risk of a cyber-attack or data breach?

Response

	Cyber security and cyber-attack risk mitigation measures planned by department
2025–26	<p>The department has undertaken, and is in the process of delivering, numerous measures to reduce the likelihood of cyber incidents and to reduce damage caused by cyber-attacks. Through robust identity controls such as multi-factor authentication, secure cloud tenancy configurations, and endpoint protections, the risk of unauthorised access and device compromise is significantly reduced. Continuous monitoring via Security Information and Event Management, combined with asset discovery and vulnerability reporting, enables early identification and response to threats.</p> <p>Network protections like cloud-based security platforms and targeted training modules for phishing, further reduce exposure to external attacks and human-factor risks.</p> <p>The department manages the Victorian Protective Data Security Standards oversight and compliance. These regulatory requirements promote consistent and best-practice data protection.</p> <p>Together, these measures enhance resilience, support secure digital operations, and enable the organisation to confidently deliver services at scale.</p>
2026–27	<p>Through 2026–2027, the department will continue to expand the end point protections and security monitoring while uplifting our security posture and increasing our Victorian Protective Data Security Standards compliance to encompass more schools to reduce administrative burden.</p>

b) What resources in terms of funding levels and staffing has the department assigned to cyber security for 2025–26 and 2026–27?

Response

	Department cyber security funding (\$ million)	Staff (FTE)¹⁹
2025–26	\$31.4m	103
2026–27	\$25.6m	76

If the department (or any of the department's agencies) experienced a cyber attack or data breach in 2025–26:

c) What was the impact of this data breach on the department/agency's resources, staffing, services provided to the community and ongoing support to individuals impacted by the cybersecurity event?

Response

Cyber attack/data breach	Impact on department/agency resources	Impact on staffing	Impact on services provided by department/agency to community	Ongoing support to individuals impacted by cyber-attack or data breach
A cybercriminal acquired access into a school network and obtained limited account details for students across government schools.	The department provided communications and schools support advisory to address parent and school concerns. Routine procedures in schools were temporarily suspended and recommenced once systems were confirmed appropriate for use.	The department's Information Security Services and IT Services teams provided over 100 days of response with key staff working over the summer holiday period and weekends.	This resulted in limited operational disruption as the incident happened during a lean school period leading up to summer holidays. Passwords of all students and casual relief teachers underwent a password reset.	The department continued to support schools during the commencement of Term 1 in January 2026.
A school staff potentially disclosed student information to an AI agent to automate tasks on a third-party platform which could use this further for training the model.	No impact on department or agency resources.	No direct impact on staffing. The department's cybersecurity team led the incident response and assisted the school	No impact on services.	The department's cybersecurity team continued to provide support until closure.

¹⁹ This FTE calculation includes a small cyber security team and general resourcing to deliver the Securing Connected Learners/Securing School IT project.

		in removing traces of the uploaded documents along with cyber awareness on responsible use of AI.		
Software weaknesses on a school server were exploited to create unauthorised users on the server.	No impact on department or agency resources.	No direct impact on staffing. The department's cybersecurity team led the incident response and assisted the school in patching the critical vulnerability and providing assurance of no further malicious activity.	No impact on services.	The department's cybersecurity continued to provide support until closure.
A student maliciously registered an unauthorised domain representing a school.	Minimal impact on department or agency resources.	Minimal direct impact on staffing. The department's cybersecurity team led the incident response and assisted the school to take down the domain.	No impact on services.	The department's cybersecurity team continued to provide support until closure.
Instances of internal actors (students) involved in malicious activities when using student management platform.	Minimal impact on department or agency resources.	Minimal direct impact on staffing. The department's cybersecurity team led the incident responses and assisted the schools in working with the third-party platform provider to analyse the	Students accessing sensitive data on a student management system resulted in privacy breach and operational disruption to the school.	The department's cybersecurity and privacy team continued to provide support until closure.

		logs and revert modified data.		
Instances of student or school staff information accidentally exposed to unauthorised individuals due to misconfiguration in applications, websites or student management systems. This includes instances where there was insufficient oversight or peer review before the documents were uploaded or shared which resulted in excessive information being released.	Minimal impact on department or agency resources.	Minimal direct impact on staffing. The department's cybersecurity team led the incident responses and assisted the schools in removing the shared information and strengthening of security controls via strict access control mechanisms.	No impact on services.	Where appropriate, notification and support were provided to the affected individuals led by privacy team. The department's cybersecurity team continued to provide support until closure.
Instances of ransomware attacks on third-party providers.	Minimal impact on department or agency resources.	The department's cybersecurity team provided assistance to corporate schools, and early childhood staff and schools dealing with the third-party vendors and in assessing the information involved in the breach.	Varying impacts depending on the instance.	The department's cybersecurity and privacy team provide support until closure.

d) What measures were implemented after the event to improve cyber security?

Response

The department continues to strengthen cyber security across schools through the ongoing uplift of log monitoring systems and asset discovery tools to improve threat visibility, risk-based vulnerability reporting for the top 55 schools, and the delivery of threat advisories in response to emerging and imminent risks. This is supported by the rollout of multi-factor authentication, the progressive deployment of Microsoft Defender for Endpoint on school staff devices, stronger server antimalware policies to guard against malware and ransomware, and the continued rollout of edge proxy services to filter and monitor suspicious internet traffic and help protect students and staff from malicious or inappropriate websites

Health spending – DH only

Question 46

- a) When comparing one year to the next from 2022–23 to the forecast for 2027–28, please state the amount of funding provided to each of the below service types. Where the year-on-year variance is +/- 5 per cent, please provide an explanation for the increase/decrease in spending for the service type:

- Primary and community health
- Ambulance services
- Public hospitals
- Services for mental health

Guidance

The Committee notes that for the purposes of this question, the Committee uses the definitions of services in the sector as used in the Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services. See: <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2025/health> (accessed 12 March 2025).

Response

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	Reason for any year-on-year variances $\pm 5\%$
Primary and community health							
Ambulance services							
Public hospitals							
Services for mental health							

- b) Please explain how DH's 'Victorian public health and wellbeing outcomes framework' is used to inform funding allocations.

Response

- c) How much did the Victorian Government spend overall on health in 2022–23, 2023–24, 2024–25, 2025–26 and 2026–27. Where the year-on-year variance is +/- 5 per cent, please provide an explanation for the increase/decrease in spending.

Response

Year	Total health spending	Reason for any year-on-year variances $\pm 5\%$
2022–23		
2023–24		
2024–25		
2025–26		
2026–27		

Large scale infrastructure projects – DTF/DTP only

Question 47

For the North-East Link, Melbourne Airport Rail Stage 1, and the Level Crossing Removal Program please provide the information requested in the tables below regarding expenditure, scope and outcomes.

Expenditure – response

Project name	
Total estimated investment at announcement	
Total estimated investment in the 2026–27 Budget	
Explanation for change in TEI	
Actual cost of the program to date (i.e. cost since announcement)	
Amount allocated to the project/program in the 2026–27 Budget	
Amount forecast for the project/program in 2027–28	
Amount forecast for the project/program in 2028–29	
Amount forecast for the project/program in 2029–30	
How the department will report on expenditure in relation to the project/program as it progresses	
Cost/benefit ratio of the project/program	

Scope – response

Project name	
Scope of works (brief description of completed and future works to be delivered through this project, including any components of other projects or asset initiatives)	
Changes to scope in 2026–27	
Explanation for changes to scope	

Outcomes – response

Project name	
The outcomes achieved by the project/program to date	

The anticipated outcomes of the project/program in 2026–27 and across the forward estimates	
How the department will measure the outcomes achieved by the project/program as it progresses	
How the department will report on the outcomes achieved by the project/program as it progresses	

Economic forecast – DTF only

Question 48

Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook, Table 2.1, provides forecasts for the following indicators:

- real gross state product
- employment
- unemployment rate
- consumer price index
- wage price index
- population.

Variance analysis

- a) For each of the above indicators, please provide a detailed explanation for the variance when comparing the same year in the 2025–26 Budget, the 2025–26 Budget Update and the 2026–27 Budget, including the assumptions used to forecast the specific indicator.

Response

Economic indicator	
Year for which variance relates	
Forecast/projection in 2025–26 Budget	
Forecast/projection in 2025–26 Budget Update	
Assumptions used to forecast indicator	
Variance	
Reason for variance	

Economic indicator	
Year for which variance relates	
Forecast/projection in 2025–26 Budget	

Forecast/projection in 2026–27 Budget	
Assumptions used to forecast indicator	
Variance	
Reason for variance	

Economic indicator	
Year for which variance relates	
Forecast/projection in 2025–26 Budget Update	
Forecast/projection in 2026–27 Budget	
Assumptions used to forecast indicator	
Variance	
Reason for variance	

Trend analysis

- b) For each of the above indicators, when comparing one year to the next in the 2026–27 Budget, please explain the reason for the variance and provide details for any improvement or deterioration of the indicator.

	2024–25 Actual	2025–26 Forecast	2026–27 Forecast	2027–28 Forecast	2028–29 Projection	2029–30 Projection
Real gross state product						
Variance						
Explanation for any variance year over year						
Employment						
Variance						

Explanation for any variance year over year						
Unemployment rate						
Variance						
Explanation for any variance year over year						
Consumer price index						
Variance						
Explanation for any variance year over year						
Wage price index						
Variance						
Explanation for any variance year over year						
Population						
Variance						
Explanation for any variance year over year						

Grants – DTF only

Question 49

Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances, Table 4.3, details the expected total grant revenue to be received by Victoria in 2025–26 by grant type.

For the ‘General purpose grants – goods and services tax’ line item if there is a variance:

- a) between the 2025–26 budget figure in the 2025–26 Budget and the 2025–26 revised figure in the 2026–27 Budget, please explain the:
 - i. reason for the variance
 - ii. impact of the variance on Victoria
 - iii. action taken in response to expected changes in the value of general purpose grants.

Response

Line item	2025–26 budget	2025–26 revised	Variance	Impact on Victoria	Action taken
General purpose grants - goods and services tax					

- b) from year to year in the 2026–27 Budget please explain the:
 - i. reason for any variance
 - ii. impact of the variance on Victoria
 - iii. action taken in response to expected changes in the value of general purpose grants.

Response

	2025–26 revised	2026–27 budget	2027–28 estimate	2028–29 estimate	2029–30 estimate
General purpose grants – goods and services tax					
Variance					
Reason for any variance year over year					
Impact of the variance on Victoria					

Action taken in response to expected changes in the value of general purpose grants					
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Question 50

Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances, Table 4.5, lists Commonwealth grants for specific purposes, with detailed tables by expenditure category in Tables 4.6 to 4.12.

For each line item of the detailed tables by expenditure labelled 'Other' in the 2026–27 Budget, for both years listed (2025–26 revised Budget and 2026–27 Budget) that has a value exceeding \$10 million, please provide details of the grants to which they relate.

Response

Table number	Grant details	2025–26 revised Budget (\$ million)	2026–27 Budget (\$ million)

Equity funding – DTF only

Question 51

Does the Government expect to receive equity funding as an alternative to traditional grant payments made by the Commonwealth over 2026–27 and the forward estimates? If so, please detail which projects will receive this funding and the amount.

Response

Land transfer duty – DTF only

Question 52

Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances, Table 4.2, provides taxation revenue forecasts across the forward estimates broken down by source.

For the 'Land transfer duty' line item if there is a variance greater than 5 per cent (positive or negative) or greater than \$50 million (positive or negative) when comparing:

Variance analysis

- a) the same year in the 2025–26 Budget and the 2026–27 Budget, please explain the reason for the variance for each year.

Trend analysis

- b) one year to the next in the 2026–27 Budget please explain the reason for the variance.

Response

a)

Year for which variance relates	
Budget/estimate in 2025–26 Budget	
Budget/estimate in 2026–27 Budget	
Variance	
Reason for variance	

b)

	2025–26 revised	2026–27 budget	2027–28 estimate	2028–29 estimate	2029–30 estimate
Land transfer duty					
Variance					
Explanation for the variance year over year					

Public Private Partnerships – modifications and accountability – DTF only

Question 53

Please detail all Public Private Partnerships (PPP) currently under construction in the 2026–27 year as per the 2026–27 Budget, which in comparison to the 2025–26 Budget have changed their:

- name
- scope
- Total Estimated Investment (by greater than 5 per cent (positive or negative))
- timelines (including estimated completion date and key stages/milestones of the project)
- government entity and portfolio responsible for delivery of the project or components of the project.

Please provide an explanation for these changes.

Response

	2025–26 Budget	2026–27 Budget	Explanation for change
Name			
Scope			
Total Estimated Investment			
Timelines			
Government entity and portfolio responsible for delivery			

Net Debt – DTF only

Question 54

Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook, Table 1.1, provides general government fiscal aggregates for net debt and net debt to gross state product (GSP).

Variance analysis

- a) For the 'Net debt' and 'Net debt to GSP' line items, please explain the reason for the variance when comparing the same year in the 2025–26 Budget, the 2025–26 Budget Update and the 2026–27 Budget.

Trend analysis

- b) For the 'Net debt' and 'Net debt to GSP' line items, when comparing one year to the next in the 2026–27 Budget, please explain the reason for the variance, including the major projects or interest payment increases that may have contributed to any variance in net debt.

Risks underpinning assumptions in the 2026–27 Budget

- c) Noting the revisions to the forecasts/estimates for debt, inflation, wages and unemployment made in the 2026–27 Budget, please explain:
- i. how the Victorian Future Fund (VFF) is controlling State debt
 - ii. what impacts these revisions could have on Victoria's credit rating
 - iii. what impact inflation could have on the State's debt repayment forecasts.

Refinancing debt

- d) What proportion of net debt is existing loans that will be subject to refinancing?

Impact of debt on service delivery

- e) What impact do State debt and interest payments have on Government service and infrastructure delivery? Please list the five most significant impacts.

Response

a)

Year for which variance relates	
Forecast/estimate in 2025–26 Budget	

Forecast/estimates in the 2025–26 Budget Update	
Forecast/estimate in 2026–27 Budget	
Reason for variance	

b)

	2025–26 budget	2026–27 estimate	2027–28 estimate	2028–29 estimate	2029–30 estimate
Net debt					
Variance					
Explanation for any variance year over year					
List of major projects that contributed					
Interest expense repayments that contributed					
Net debt to GSP					
Variance					
Explanation for any variance year over year					

c)

Noting the revisions to forecasts/estimates for debt, inflation, wages and unemployment made in the 2025–26 Budget	
Explain how the VFF is controlling State debt	
Explain what impacts these revisions could have on Victoria’s credit rating	
Explain what impact inflation could have on the State’s debt repayment forecasts	

d)

Net debt	Proportion that is subject to refinancing
June 2027	
June 2028	
June 2029	
June 2030	
June 2031	

e)

	Impact
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Long term financial management objectives – DTF only

The 2024–25 Budget Paper No. 2: *Strategy and Outlook* outlined five longer term financial management objectives:

1. Sound financial management – Victoria’s finances will be managed in a responsible manner to provide capacity to fund services and infrastructure and support households and businesses at levels consistent with sound financial management.
2. Improved services – Public services will improve over time.
3. Building infrastructure – Public infrastructure will grow steadily over time to meet the needs of a growing population.
4. Efficient use of public resources – Public sector resources will be invested in services and infrastructure to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits.
5. A resilient economy – Increase economic resilience by supporting an innovative and diversified economy that will unlock employment growth, long-term economic growth and productivity in Victoria.

To support the long-term financial management objectives, four financial measures and targets have been set:

1. Net debt to GSP – General government net debt as a percentage of GSP to stabilise and reduce in the medium term.
2. Interest expense to revenue – General government interest expense as a percentage of revenue to stabilise in the medium term.
3. Superannuation liabilities – Fully fund the unfunded superannuation liability by 2035.
4. Operating cash surplus – A net operating cash surplus consistent with maintaining general government net debt at a sustainable level.

Question 55

How will the following risks to the Government’s long term financial management objectives be managed:

- a) The growing indebtedness of the State

- b) The rising interest costs of any new and refinanced debt

c) Rising general government sector employee expenses

d) Increasing operating expenses driven by rising demand for services and inflationary pressures

Question 56

For the 'interest expense to revenue' target:

a) What is the percentage of interest expense to revenue target DTF is aiming for, and what timeframe (calculated in months or years) is meant by 'medium term'?

Response

b) Are general government interest expenses expected to increase or decrease over the 2026–27 Budget and forward estimates and what are the reasons for this?

Response

01 Executive Summary



DE engaged Grosvenor to conduct an independent evaluation for Learning Beyond the Bell, the School Support Program and the Early Years Program

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">CONTEXT</p>	<p>In 2024, around 18,121 students of likely refugee background, accounting for approximately 3.5% of total student enrolments (514,975), were enrolled in Victorian Government schools. These students often face significant educational challenges due to disrupted schooling and experiences of trauma, displacement and complex resettlement.</p> <p>To address these needs, the Victorian Department of Education (DE) delivers a suite of four programs under Refugee Education Support Initiatives (RESI). RESI aims to build the capacity of schools and early childhood services to improve engagement, achievement and wellbeing for children and young people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">METHODOLOGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 1 → Establish and manage project Step 2 → Co-design evaluation Step 3 → Collect and analyse data Step 4 → Draft and finalise report
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">SITUATION</p>	<p>In August 2025, DE engaged Grosvenor to conduct a robust, independent evaluation of the three lapsing programs to understand the future of the programs i.e. whether they should be continued, amended or discontinued. These include the Learning Beyond the Bell, the School Support Program and the Early Years Program.</p> <p>The focus was on program delivery from January 2024 onwards. The evaluation applied a mixed-methods approach, using document and data review and stakeholder consultations with DE, provider and a small number of program stakeholders.</p>	<p>This evaluation responded to the following Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) for lapsing programs in accordance with the <i>Resource Management Framework 2025</i> by Victoria Treasury and Finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Justification/Problem: What is the evidence to support the continued need for the program, and what is the role for Government in delivering this program? › Effectiveness: What is the evidence of the program’s progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes, including alignment between the program, its output (as outlined in BP3), departmental objectives and Government priorities? › Funding/Delivery: Has the program been delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe, and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices? What were the challenges in delivery of the program? How were these challenges addressed? › Efficiency: Has the department demonstrated efficiency in the delivery of the program? › Risk: What would be the impact of ceasing funding for the program (e.g. service impact, jobs, community) and what strategies have been identified to minimise negative impacts? › If funding is continued: Reassess funding required to deliver the program using data collected through service delivery. Does the initial funding allocated reflect the true cost required to deliver the program? › If funding is continued: What level of efficiencies could be realised? <p>These questions are answered overleaf, followed by the recommendations from the evaluation. The full findings from the evaluation are provided in the body of the report.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">LIMITATIONS</p>	<p>As with any evaluation, a range of limitations were present when conducting this evaluation and are listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Selection bias and potential bias towards institutional perspectives: The evaluation may reinforce existing assumptions and blind spots in the program design as it reflects the views of only the DE staff and program providers, potentially overlooking grassroots or culturally specific issues. Views of a few program beneficiaries and support members were captured through consultations with two learning support programs for LBB and one DE Best Start Facilitator for EYP. › Partial assessment of stated outcomes: The evaluation may provide only a limited picture of the achievement of intended outcomes as per the program logic. › Limited longitudinal data: The evaluation may not capture long-term impacts or sustainability of outcomes due to the short timeframe or lack of follow-up mechanisms. › Lack of end-user perspectives: Without consulting with the end-users of these programs such as the schools and early childhood services, the evaluation may lack insights into lived experiences, barriers to access and effectiveness of program delivery. <p>Despite these limitations Grosvenor considers the evaluation to be reliable and valid.</p>	

Learning Beyond the Bell

LBB

KEQ	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>1. What is the evidence to support the continued need for the program, and what is the role for Government in delivering this program?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › There is a clear and growing need for LSPs in Victoria › Students from likely refugee background and LSPs face several challenges › Similar programs exist and are being delivered in Victoria, but LBB is unique in offering sector support › LBB has been identified as a hallmark › The role of government is vital to support LBB 	<p>Given the increase in number of LRB students over the past decade and persistent barriers to inclusion, language and academic engagement faced by them, Grosvenor assessed that there is an ongoing need for LBB to support LSPs. The program provides essential resources, training and sector coordination, helping LSPs manage volunteer recruitment and engage meaningfully with the target cohort. Despite LBB's impact, sector sustainability remains a challenge due to short-term funding and reliance on volunteers. Furthermore, government support is essential to lend legitimacy and amplify impact.</p>	<p>Recommendation 1: Consider program improvement for better awareness and impact of LBB to allow it to become a critical piece of education support architecture</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Identify and apply relevant learnings from VACAP</p>
<p>2. What is the evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes, including alignment between the program, its output (as outlined in BP3), departmental objectives and Government priorities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › LBB is achieving the educators' outcomes and most of the service system outcomes › As for education providers, there was limited data available for Grosvenor to make a holistic assessment across all of the outcomes › The LBB program's flexible design, rich resource base and strong sector relationships has enabled CMY to deliver responsive, tailored support to LSPs › Key barriers faced by LBB include scope creep, limited reach and lack of centralised data system 	<p>LBB made strong progress toward its stated objectives, particularly in delivering educator-focused outcomes and contributing to the service system. Its flexible design, sector relationships and tailored resources have enabled meaningful engagement and capacity-building across LSPs. However, limited data on education providers constrained a comprehensive assessment of impact across all intended outcomes. Nonetheless, challenges such as scope creep and data limitations risk diluting strategic focus and overstressing resources.</p>	<p>See Recommendations 3, 13, 14 and 15.</p>
<p>3. Has the program been delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe, and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices? What were the challenges in delivery of the program? How were these challenges addressed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › CMY continues to deliver its core LBB work, but its focus has shifted to additional program components, putting strain on resourcing › There is overcontribution of networking events in comparison to professional learning workshops in KPI reporting › Despite flagging resourcing challenges, CMY continues to meet its KPIs › CMY has identified an urgent need to address the sustainability of LSPs › There is a need to confirm the program purpose moving forward › The program continues to record an underspend and there is insufficient detail in current budget reporting › The program demonstrates good governance practices through contract management processes and strong stakeholder relationships › While a plethora of data is collected through the LBB program, program risks remain › Good monitoring practices are observed, however the RESI program logic is ill-fitting for the LBB program outcomes › The Data and Reporting Framework should be supported by a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 	<p>CMY has consistently delivered the LBB program within budget and timeframe, meeting the vast majority of KPIs. Early achievement of several 2025 targets signals strong performance and potential for future scaling. Grosvenor assessed that governance structures such as contract management meetings and biannual reporting are in place and function effectively.</p> <p>However, delivery challenges persist. Scope changes with a stronger focus on advocacy, unclear budget reporting and limited visibility over DE-funded grants pose risks to transparency and strategic oversight. The program also stands to benefit from having defined evaluation activities as part of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Addressing these issues, particularly around program's focus, financial clarity and grant governance, is critical to safeguarding program integrity and ensuring alignment with child safety obligations and broader departmental responsibilities.</p>	<p>Recommendation 3: Clarify the LBB program's focus and administer resources accordingly</p> <p>Recommendation 4: Improve budget reporting for greater transparency</p> <p>Recommendation 5: Clarify, align and report on DE's grant contributions</p> <p>See Recommendation 16.</p>

Learning Beyond the Bell

LBB

KEQ	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
4. Has the department demonstrated efficiency in the delivery of the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMY actively adapts the LBB program for effectiveness and efficiency DE and CMY have addressed nine of the 13 recommendations within the 2022 Lirata Evaluation, but there is work to be done 	Overall, DE and CMY have demonstrated a strong commitment to improving program efficiency, with nine of 13 recommendations actioned since 2024. While progress is evident, key areas such as program reach, intersectional and place-based approaches, and deeper collaboration with refugee families remain under-addressed. To ensure continued efficiency and relevance, DE must determine whether the outstanding five recommendations should be adopted and integrated into future program planning.	See Recommendation 17 .
5. What would be the impact of ceasing funding for the program (e.g. service impact, jobs, community) and what strategies have been identified to minimise negative impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discontinuing LBB would weaken grassroots learning support, reduce community inclusion and strain the sector's workforce Without LBB, long-term impacts include weakened sector collaboration, reduced support for refugee students and growing educational gaps, with limited alternatives to fully replace its inclusive community role 	<p>Grosvenor assessed that ceasing funding for LBB would have significant consequences across service delivery, community wellbeing and sector sustainability. LSP closures would result in the loss of grassroots educational infrastructure, free resources and early intervention capabilities. Refugee and newly arrived families would face reduced social connection and increased isolation. The sector would lose vital collaboration platforms, training pathways and strategic guidance.</p> <p>While philanthropic support and VACAP may offer partial continuity, they would lack the support for refugee communities and community connection that LBB offers.</p>	See Recommendation 18 .
6. If funding is continued, assess funding required to deliver the program using data collected through service delivery. Does the initial funding allocated reflect the true cost required to deliver the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While stakeholders had differing views on the true cost of delivering LBB, Grosvenor found that the program has been delivered within the budget, with potential for improved efficiency Without having detailed information about how LBB's budget is used, it is difficult for Grosvenor to assess if the current funding reflects the true cost of delivering the program 	CMY operated within budget and recorded underspends in the delivery of LBB across 2023–24 and 2024–25. CMY highlighted ongoing challenges in securing resources, noting that additional funding would enable full-time staff and regional presence. In contrast, DE expressed concerns about the lack of transparency in budget allocation. Overall, without having detailed information about how LBB's budget is used, Grosvenor could not assess if the current funding reflects the true cost of delivering the program.	See Recommendations 4 and 5 .
7. If funding is continued, what level of efficiencies could be realised?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grosvenor observed a significant evolution in the scope and focus of the LBB program Several KPIs were achieved early suggesting that CMY may have the capacity to increase some targets in future funding cycles Areas of efficiency going forward include reviewing LBB's strategic focus and detailed budget reporting 	Continued funding presents a clear opportunity to enhance LBB's efficiency through strategic realignment. The program has evolved beyond its original scope, incorporating successful initiatives like university partnerships, CoP, and SAG. However, this shift raises questions about its future focus. Early KPI achievements suggest capacity for increased targets. Furthermore, contractual enhancements, including detailed budget reporting and grant acquittals, would be essential to support planning, accountability and future funding decisions.	See Recommendations 3, 4, 5 and 15 .

School Support Program

KEQ	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
1. What is the evidence to support the continued need for the program, and what is the role for Government in delivering this program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The need for SSP is critical, given the demographic shifts and systemic issues faced by the newly arrived families › LRB students face systemic education challenges and lack tailored support, while post-COVID disruptions and emerging needs indicate certain opportunities to support LRB students better under the current program › While complementary programs exist, SSP is unique in its offering › SSP provides flexible and on-demand support to schools across Victoria › The government plays an important role in delivering inclusive education 	Grosvenor assessed that there is a strong need for SSP, as it addresses a critical gap in the Victorian education system by providing flexible, real-time, and targeted support to schools working with students from refugee backgrounds. The need for this program is underscored by the need to tackle other growing issues related to racism, disability and cultural competency, which intersect with the needs of the LRB students and their families. Lastly, the government support to the program is vital to ensure safe and inclusive learning environments.	Recommendation 6: Given the emerging needs, broaden the focus of the program
2. What is the evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes, including alignment between the program, its output (as outlined in BP3), departmental objectives and Government priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › SSP has showcased continuous improvement and has been broadly achieving the outcomes related to educators › Based on the information available, Grosvenor could assess only the achievement of two outcomes related to education providers › FH has been proactive in achieving the service system outcomes › SSP is enabled by its flexible statewide delivery model, expert staff, useful online resources and capacity for innovation › Some of the key challenges that SSP faces includes limited cultural responsiveness, regional access gaps and communication 	SSP has demonstrated steady progress toward its stated objectives, particularly in supporting educators and achieving most service system outcomes. Its flexible statewide delivery, expert staff and accessible resources have enabled meaningful engagement while it continues to face certain challenges with respect to cultural responsiveness, regional reach and communication. In addition, there was limited data to make a holistic assessment against the outcomes for education providers.	<p>Recommendation 7: Expand regional and rural reach of SSP</p> <p>Recommendation 8: Establish clear branding of SSP on-demand support and professional learning workshops on the SIFR website</p> <p>Recommendation 9: Engage early-career teachers in training</p>
3. Has the program been delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe, and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices? What were the challenges in delivery of the program? How were these challenges addressed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › FH continue to deliver the SSP in scope, with additional achievements noted for 2024 and 2025 › All SSP KPIs were met in 2024, with two met to date in 2025 and the remaining 'on track' to being met › SSP budget reporting has improved in 2024-25, with an underspend recorded › Stakeholder relationships between DE and FH are strong › Good governance practices and strong data capture support risk management for the SSP › In future funding rounds, the true impact of SSP would be better understood through a review of program outcomes 	Grosvenor assessed that SSP has been delivered within scope, budget and timeframe, with all KPIs met or on track. FH exceeded expectations, achieving additional outcomes beyond the original scope. Overall, governance is strong, supported by regular contract management and reporting. However, the absence of clearly defined program outcomes against the current Data and Reporting Framework limits impact assessment. SSP could benefit from clearer outcome definitions and aligned data collection to support strategic planning and accountability.	See Recommendations 13, 14, 15 and 16.

School Support Program

KEQ	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
4. Has the department demonstrated efficiency in the delivery of the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › SSP demonstrated a dedication to program improvement › DE and SSP have addressed 13 out of 14 recommendations within the 2022 Lirata Evaluation with dedicated efforts to improve the program and its reach 	DE has demonstrated strong efficiency in SSP's delivery, driven by FH's commitment to continuous improvement. Since 2024, 13 of 14 relevant recommendations from the 2022 Lirata Evaluation have been actioned. These efficiencies are a credit to FH's work.	See Recommendation 17 .
5. What would be the impact of ceasing funding for the program (e.g. service impact, jobs, community) and what strategies have been identified to minimise negative impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Discontinuing SSP would remove vital school-level support for refugee students and weaken community inclusion, while also limiting the sector's ability to innovate and respond to emerging needs › Without SSP, long-term impacts include deepening educational disparities for refugee students, with limited alternatives unable to fully replace its effectiveness such as the SIFR website or adopting a fee-for-service training model 	<p>Grosvenor assessed that ceasing funding for SSP would result in the immediate loss of specialised support for schools, diminishing their capacity to respond to refugee students' unique needs. Without SSP, trauma-informed practices may weaken and refugee students' risk being overlooked within broader EAL frameworks. In addition, community cohesion would decline, while sector adaptability and collaboration would suffer. Long-term, this could entrench educational inequities, especially in regional areas.</p> <p>While resources like the SIFR website and limited RESP activities may continue without SSP, they would lack SSP's reach and responsiveness. Fee-for-service models could offer partial solutions but with potentially low uptake.</p>	See Recommendation 18 .
6. If funding is required, reassess funding required to deliver the program using data collected through service delivery. Does the initial funding allocated reflect the true cost required to deliver the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › SSP has had strong budget management with an underspend for 2024-25 and could benefit from future planning and budget review › Overall, based on the information available, Grosvenor assessed that the current funding reflects the true cost of delivering SSP 	Based on available data, Grosvenor assessed that the current funding envelope for SSP reflects the true cost of program delivery. FH has met all deliverables within budget, with a reported underspend in 2024–25 due to staffing gaps.	
7. If funding is continued, what level of efficiencies could be realised?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › SSP can be strengthened further to ensure continued relevance and impact 	SSP has potential to realise further efficiencies and expand its impact. FH's ongoing efforts to streamline delivery could be enhanced through clearer, measurable outcomes and robust data mapping. Strategic collaboration with other DE teams and consistent messaging across initiatives would strengthen coherence. Expanding culturally responsive approaches, improving regional reach and supporting development of interactive resources would further elevate support for schools and in turn the refugee students and families.	See Recommendations 6, 7, 19 and 20 .

Early Years Program

KEQ	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
1. What is the evidence to support the continued need for the program, and what is the role for Government in delivering this program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › EYP is vital to help children from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds overcome various barriers › The BSBL reforms and a focus on capacity building as part of the Cultural Diversity Plan will increase the need for EYP into the future › There are complementary programs both within and outside DE, and FH makes referrals to them as needed › EYP is uniquely defined by its free, place-based professional learning, peer collaboration, ongoing alumni engagement, flexibility and community-driven input › The government plays a crucial role in offering credibility and influence, among other benefits 	Overall, EYP plays an important role in addressing the unique challenges faced by children and families from refugee/asylum seeker backgrounds. Its place-based model, free professional learning and flexibility to work across service types make it uniquely positioned to build the capabilities of ECE services. As Victoria prepares for major reforms under BSBL reforms, the need for EYP is stronger than ever to ensure inclusive education in the early years.	Recommendation 10: Expand and refresh CoPs
2. What is the evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes, including alignment between the program, its output (as outlined in BP3), departmental objectives and Government priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › EYP has achieved the outcomes related to educators › EYP has broadly achieved the outcomes related to education providers › Based on the information available, Grosvenor could assess only the achievement of two outcomes related to service system › EYP is enabled by its flexibility and facilitation quality and faces challenges in meeting program demand 	EYP has delivered strongly against its stated outcomes related to educations and education providers. Based on the information available, it has also achieved two outcomes pertaining to service system. Its flexible, place-based model and high-quality facilitation have enabled meaningful progress, despite persistent sector challenges such as workforce capacity and time constraints.	
3. Has the program been delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe, and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices? What were the challenges in delivery of the program? How were these challenges addressed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The EYP has been delivered within scope and surpassed expectations for program reach through activities and participation numbers › FH achieved all KPIs for 2024 and is on track, or has already met, all KPIs for 2025 › In 2024-25, EYP was delivered under budget presenting an opportunity for funds to be reallocated for greater program impact in 2025-26 › Stakeholder relationships between DE and FH are generally strong, with regular and open communication › Strong governance and reporting practices are observed for EYP, with no significant risks noted › The program logic is well suited to EYP, though outcomes related to the CAP are currently not measured and would add depth to understanding the program's impact 	EYP has been delivered within scope, budget and timeframe, exceeding the KPIs for 2024 and remaining on track for 2025. The program's strong governance, supported by robust reporting and a well-established partnership between FH and DE, underpins its success. While staff shortages led to an underspend in 2024-25, funds have been earmarked for future delivery in 2025-26. The program's reach has significantly exceeded expectations, suggesting a need to recalibrate KPIs in future cycles. Despite the absence of a formal risk register, risks have been effectively managed through existing reporting mechanisms, with no major issues identified in this evaluation.	See Recommendations 13, 14, 15 and 16.

Early Years Program

KEQ	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
4. Has the department demonstrated efficiency in the delivery of the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program efficiencies have been identified in the evaluation period DE and FH have addressed 17 out of the 23 recommendations from the 2022 Lirata Evaluation with some key program expansions 	DE demonstrated strong efficiency in delivering EYP. Of the 23 relevant recommendations from the 2022 Lirata Evaluation, 17 have been actioned, five are in progress, and one is yet to commence. This reflects a proactive and responsive approach. Some areas need more support such as stronger collaboration with other RESI programs and DE teams, better strategies to address intersectionality and more consistent engagement with all staff during and after CoP delivery. However, the overall delivery reflects a well-managed and adaptive program.	See Recommendation 17, 19 and 20 .
5. What would be the impact of ceasing funding for the program (e.g. service impact, jobs, community) and what strategies have been identified to minimise negative impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discontinuing EYP would reduce tailored support for early childhood professionals, weaken inclusive practices and risk lower engagement from refugee families, while also impacting workforce readiness and sector-wide professional development In the long-term, discontinuing EYP could lead to vulnerable children falling further behind in school and sector innovation may stall, with alternatives unable to match the program's reach and impact 	Overall, ceasing funding for EYP would significantly reduce tailored support for educators, weaken inclusive practices, and risk disengagement from refugee families. The new childhood services that will be established in response to the BSBL reforms may struggle to support diverse cohorts. The broader community would have reduced trust and participation and the sector would risk fragmented professional development and stalled innovation. While resources like the SIFR website may remain, without ongoing updates and CoP support, their impact would be limited. Fee-for-service models could offer partial mitigation but would lack the reach and uptake.	See Recommendation 18 .
6. Reassess funding required to deliver the program using data collected through service delivery. Does the initial funding allocated reflect the true cost required to deliver the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EYP has strong budget management and there exist opportunities to enhance the program's reach Overall, Grosvenor assessed that the current funding reflects the true cost of delivering EYP 	Based on available data, Grosvenor assessed that the current funding for EYP reflects the true cost of delivery, with FH meeting all financial requirements and providing a clear breakdown of expenses. The 2024–25 underspend, primarily due to staffing shortages, has been earmarked for use in 2025–26. Overall, the program is financially well-managed.	
7. If funding is continued, what level of efficiencies could be realised?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there is constant effort to realise program efficiencies by FH, further suggestions were provided by stakeholders 	Several efficiencies can be realised to strengthen delivery and scale impact if program funding is continued. This includes formalising collaboration with Best Start Facilitators and local councils, streamlining workshop formats and exploring the train-the-trainer model. These efficiencies position EYP to deliver greater value while maintaining its high-quality and place-based approach.	<p>Recommendation 11: Formalise and strengthen relationships with Best Start Facilitators and local councils</p> <p>Recommendation 12: Consider innovative approaches to support strong demand for the program</p>

Refugee Education Support Initiative Programs

KEQ	Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>1. What is the evidence to support the continued need for the program, and what is the role for Government in delivering this program?</p>	<p>The RESI programs play a critical role in supporting children and students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds across early childhood, school, and LSP settings. The evaluation highlighted a sustained and growing need for these initiatives due to persistent barriers to inclusion, language, and academic engagement. Each program addresses distinct but complementary gaps in the education system, offering targeted support, sector coordination, and capability building. Continued and coordinated government support is essential to legitimise the programs, amplify their reach, and ensure inclusive education outcomes across all stages of learning.</p>	
<p>2. What is the evidence of the program's progress toward its stated objectives and expected outcomes, including alignment between the program, its output (as outlined in BP3), departmental objectives and Government priorities?</p>	<p>Each of the three RESI programs have demonstrated strong progress against program outcomes with the program design of each considered an overall strength of the program with an emphasis on their state-wide, flexible and tailored supports. KPIs for each of the programs were overwhelmingly achieved, many by some margin.</p> <p>Unlike EYP, limited data was available for SSP and LBB against many of the outcomes outlined in the program logic due to the logic only expressly stating a small number of relevant outcomes for each program. In reality, these programs deliver on many of the outcomes outlined in the program logic.</p>	<p>Recommendation 13: Review and update the program logic for the programs as needed</p> <p>Recommendation 14: Develop a formal Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework</p> <p>Recommendation 15: Align KPIs with program maturity</p>
<p>3. Has the program been delivered within its scope, budget, expected timeframe, and in line with appropriate governance and risk management practices? What were the challenges in delivery of the program? How were these challenges addressed?</p>	<p>Each of the three programs were delivered within scope, budget and expected timeframe with all three recording an underspend.</p> <p>Budget reporting was variable with much room for improvement identified for the LBB program, and some room for improvement across SSP and EYP regarding expenditure breakdown and forward planning.</p> <p>The LBB program, though delivered in scope, demonstrated a change in focus towards advocacy leading to the need to confirm the program focus and purpose into the future.</p> <p>Governance, contract and risk management practices were deemed appropriate, with a significant risk existing for the LBB program regarding reporting requirements against grant funding and current lack of visibility experienced by DE.</p>	<p>Recommendation 16: Strengthen budget reporting across all three programs</p>

Refugee Education Support Initiative Programs

KEQ	Conclusions	Recommendations
4. Has the department demonstrated efficiency in the delivery of the program?	All programs demonstrated a commitment to ongoing and continuous improvement through program adjustments throughout the program lifecycle and in response to the 2022 Lirata Evaluation Recommendations.	Recommendation 17: Confirm acceptance of Lirata Evaluation recommendations
5. What would be the impact of ceasing funding for the program (e.g. service impact, jobs, community) and what strategies have been identified to minimise negative impacts?	Ceasing funding for the three RESI programs would have a widespread and compounding impact from undermining service delivery, to weakened inclusive practices, and increasing isolation and disengagement among refugee children, students and families. While some minor aspects of each program may be able to continue without renewed funding, the progress and outcomes achieved were identified as largely reliant on ongoing support.	See Recommendation 18 .
6. Reassess funding required to deliver the program using data collected through service delivery. Does the initial funding allocated reflect the true cost required to deliver the program?	Overall, the initial funding allocated for SSP and EYP was considered to reflect the true costs required to deliver the current programs. A lack of clarity in budget reporting limited the ability to state with certainty whether the LBB funding allocation reflected the true cost of the program. CMY felt that the program required further funding, but this was not supported by the program underspend.	Recommendation 18: Sustain funding for the three programs
7. If funding is continued, what level of efficiencies could be realised?	If funding is continued, efficiencies for each of the three programs were identified, from the strategic realignment of LBB, to streamlining SSP's delivery and expanding on the program's culturally responsive approaches, regional reach and interactivity of resources, to strengthening the delivery of EYP and scaling the program's impact through greater collaboration and innovative models of service delivery.	Recommendation 19: Continue to identify opportunities for intersectional approaches in the three programs Recommendation 20: Strengthen collaboration across DE programs

ACIL ALLEN

Student Excellence Program – Lapsing Program Evaluation

Final report

4 September 2024



About ACIL Allen

ACIL Allen is a leading independent economics, policy and strategy advisory firm, dedicated to helping clients solve complex issues.

Our purpose is to help clients make informed decisions about complex economic and public policy issues.

Our vision is to be Australia's most trusted economics, policy and strategy advisory firm. We are committed and passionate about providing rigorous independent advice that contributes to a better world.

Report to:

Department of Education

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ACIL Allen acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and its waters. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, and to the youth, for the future. We extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples reading this report.



Goomup, by Jarni McGuire

Executive Summary

This evaluation

High-ability students display aptitude, performance and potential, requiring opportunities for differentiation, challenge and enrichment to support engagement in education.¹

In recognition of this, in 2019 the Victorian Government funded the Student Excellence Program (SEP) comprising the following individual initiatives:

- **High-Ability Practice Leaders (HAPLs) in every government school** – designated HAPL roles in every primary and secondary school that advise on high-ability students and coordinate student participation in the SEP.
- **Student Resource Package (SRP) funding** – yearly funding provided to schools via the SRP to support programs for high-ability students.
- **The Victorian High-Ability Program (VHAP)** – online 10-week enrichment programs in English and Mathematics for high-ability government school students in Years 5-8, followed by face-to-face masterclasses with other high-ability students.
- **The Victorian Challenge and Enrichment Series (VCES)** – a series of incursions, excursions, workshops, and competitions delivered by external providers to facilitate extension and enrichment opportunities across the curriculum for high-ability students in Prep to Year 12.
- **A High-Ability Toolkit and professional learning (PL) for teachers** – online interactive workshops and face-to-face seminars for HAPLs and school leaders, and the High-Ability Toolkit resource that provides information on identifying and supporting the learning and wellbeing needs of high-ability students.
- **Awards for ‘Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students’ in the Victorian Education Excellence Awards (VEEA)** – 2 awards that recognise outstanding provision for high-ability students in the primary and secondary school sectors.

Initial implementation was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but following early success the SEP was extended until the end of the 2025 school year.

The department engaged ACIL Allen to undertake a lapsing program evaluation of the SEP covering January 2023 through to June 2024 at the program and initiative level. The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, drawing primarily from existing qualitative and quantitative data held by the department. The evaluation complies with requirements outlined in the Department of Treasury and Finance’s [Resource Management Framework | Department of Treasury and Finance Victoria \(dtf.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/ResourceManagementFramework) and examines the continued need for the SEP, implementation and impact. It explores any challenges and alternatives to effective and efficient delivery.

¹ Department of Education. 2021. *Defining high-ability*. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/high-ability-toolkit/Pages/defining-high-ability.aspx>

Key findings

Clear need for dedicated and differentiated supports for high-ability students in Victorian government schools

High-ability students vary in their abilities, achievement outcomes, sociocultural backgrounds and learning behaviours. They cannot be easily identified through standardised assessment or supported by mainstream teaching that matches their nominal age or year level. High-ability students require differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, tailored to their distinct needs.

Effective identification and assessment processes need to be in place at the school and classroom level to detect, understand and meet the needs of high-ability students. Identification should occur as early as possible in the student's educational journey to help prevent gaps in excellence from arising.²

Several challenges exist in the education system that limit the quantity and quality of differentiation that high-ability students receive at school – particularly teacher capability and capacity, pre-conceived ideas, competing student needs and resource barriers.

There is a clear rationale for Victorian Government intervention in overcoming the above challenges and ensuring that every high-ability student can access support at their local government school. The SEP fulfils a unique role in assisting all government schools to support high-ability students. The SEP is enabling a foundational level of support for high-ability students in all schools as it provides initiatives on a universal (HAPLs, SRP funding) and opt-in (VCES, VHAP, PL, High-Ability Toolkit, VEEA) basis.

Design of the SEP aligns with evidence-based practice

The design of the SEP is appropriate to address the needs of high-ability students in government schools. At a program level, the logic, theory of change and overall objectives are aligned with the evidence base on effective practice – particularly through the provision of school-wide supports (SRP funding and HAPLs), diversified identification processes, PL and access to resources (the High-Ability Toolkit), and opportunities for student enrichment (the VCES and VHAP).

SEP coverage is strongest for the middle years, and lower in the early years

Students in the middle years, particularly those Years 5 to 8, have the greatest coverage in the SEP with access to both the VHAP and VCES. Students in Years 9-12 also have access to VCES, and beyond this they are able to access Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) subjects, and the Higher Education Studies offered through the Centre for Higher Education Studies.

There are fewer offerings for younger years (Prep to Year 4) and students with disabilities. These gaps in coverage indicates there are opportunities to improve the age appropriateness and extent of inclusion offered in VCES activities.

² Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation. 2019. Revisiting Gifted Education. NSW Department of Education. <https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/about-us/educational-data/cese/revisiting-gifted-education-literature-review.pdf>

SEP has reached intended cohorts and delivered planned outputs

The SEP has strong reach across the Victorian school system, which supports equity of access for high-ability students. The inclusion of universal funding has contributed to activity for all eligible Victorian Government schools, while opt-in student initiatives (the VCES and VHAP) have collectively reached 81% of all government schools.

Several of the initiative components have exceeded output targets (VCES and VHAP), the universal support of the SEP SRP funding has reached all eligible schools, HAPLs have been nominated in close to 100% of schools and the High-Ability toolkit has been updated and available online as intended. Two VEEAs have been awarded as planned.

The PL did not reach delivery targets, with a high rate of non-attendance indicating that the uptake is low, reflecting potential awareness gaps and the significant pressures teachers are facing in schools in staffing, workload and the impacts of the new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA).

Disadvantage has impacted participation in the SEP

The implementation of the SEP has made good progress in identifying students equitably, but participation in initiatives (the VCES and VHAP) has not been equitable in reflecting the demographics of government schools. Schools of higher SFOE, regionality and with smaller enrolments are less likely to participate and are not proportionally represented in those engaging in initiatives.

The implementation of the VHAP via the centralised selection process have made good progress in identifying students equitably, with students selected in most schools in line with the proportional demographics within the school system. However, not all selections convert to participation, particularly in higher SFOE, regional and remote areas, and smaller schools. This indicates that barriers tied to disadvantage and resourcing are impacting student engagement.

The VCES requires schools to proactively engage in the initiative. Participation in the VCES activities has, similarly to the VHAP, not reflected an equitable distribution across government schools. Secondary schools are proportionately more likely to participate in VCES activities, while schools of higher SFOE, regionality and with smaller enrolments were under-represented among the schools accessing VCES activities. The reach of VCES by SFOE area is marginally less equitable than that of the VHAP, with a distribution of participating schools less aligned to the whole school population. The lack of centralised selection for VCES and need for school and parent nominations may be impacting reach with a lesser number of schools involved overall.

The PL, High-Ability Toolkit and VEEA have had low take-up, demonstrating that existing priorities and pressures in schools are preventing teacher engagement and flow on practice change.

Positive impact on student achievement and wellbeing

The SEP has positively impacted the achievement and wellbeing outcomes of high-ability students, with the VCES and VHAP contributing through direct identification and support to students.

Perceptions of the impact on student engagement were lower, which is likely a result of the opt in student initiatives impacting shorter rather than longer term engagement due to their length and intensity. Student feedback on the impacts of VCES and VHAP were positive reflecting that they were challenged, enriched, benefited from differential learning experiences and enjoyed the interaction with like-minded peers. However, there is no data available to measure whether this translated to engagement in education beyond the initiatives themselves to attest to the impacts of the SEP more broadly back in schools.

Overall perceptions of impact were lower for schools experiencing disadvantage. Principals in high SFOE areas, small schools and regional locations consistently rated the SEP lower than principals in primary and low-SFOE schools.

This indicates that the complexity of the school environment affects the capacity to support high-ability students in a context of competing needs. The current SRP funding structure is not shaped around regionality or SFOE and for smaller schools funding is lowest – limiting its ability to benefit capacity further in this regard.

Impact on teacher and school capability is a work in progress

The SEP has had strong impact on schools' celebration and identification of high-ability students. However, there has been a lesser impact on changing school and teacher practice in monitoring, extending and supporting students. Effects were reduced in high SFOE contexts, which reinforces that disadvantage impacts the perceived value of the SEP – likely because of the complexity of the school environment. Impacts were also limited in smaller schools, with culture and capability change challenging within the resourcing structures of these schools.

The PL, High-Ability Toolkit and VEEA have had relatively low take-up, possibly due to existing priorities and pressures in schools are preventing teacher engagement and flow on to practice change.

Value for money varies across initiatives

The SEP has achieved varying value for money across the initiatives. Student oriented initiatives, the VCES and VHAP, provide good value for money, reaching a large number of students and schools with positive impacts on student learning. These initiatives are provided at a per student cost below equivalent programs offered by private suppliers.

Professional development initiatives for staff have provided poorer value for money to the department due to low reach. Low reach is driven by the workforce shortages reducing availability to attend PL, conflicting priorities within schools, new EBA arrangements, awareness gaps and repeat attendance. Low participation for the PL has resulted in costs per attendee exceeding prices offered by private providers.

The schools awarded with a VEEA were from advantaged areas and, as indicated by their qualification for the award, already had high performing teams supporting their high-achieving students. While the VEEAs provide intangible value in demonstrating the importance of supporting high-ability students, the current approach does not provide the best value for money given the limited reach and impact.

Ceasing funding poses risks to students and the education system

Ceasing funding for the SEP would present risks to the Victorian education system if similar elements were not resourced in its place. Without access to the SEP, dedicated supports and learning opportunities, the

gap in capability to cater for high-ability students would widen and high-ability students without many like ability peers at their school would face further vulnerability.

The absence of these universal supports would be particularly impactful for high-ability students from disadvantaged backgrounds who may be enrolled in schools where established high-ability programs were not in place independent of the SEP. This could potentially lead to parents/carers of high-ability students 'shopping around' for appropriate schools, rather than enrolling in their local government school, limiting the equity within the system. Outside of the SEP no other program delivers interventions that can cater to all high-ability students within and outside their school environment, across the whole curriculum. With current capability gaps across schools, there is ongoing need for dedicated attention to supporting high-ability students on a state-wide basis.

Opportunities

The opportunities outlined below are focussed on extending reach and impact of the SEP – particularly to schools and students facing barriers of disadvantage. These cohorts have most to gain from dedicated supports and are less likely to have access to high-ability programs independent of the SEP.

1. Integrate targeted equity supports

Participation in the VHAP and VCES is lower for schools in areas of disadvantage and regional contexts. Perceptions of impact from staff were also lower from schools in these contexts. This indicates that disadvantage and location are impacting both access to, and benefit of, SEP initiatives.

The department should review the SRP funding model to introduce a loading for SFOE and rurality to facilitate participation from these schools. This would improve equity of access for high-ability students in areas of disadvantage.

2. Ensure initiatives are appropriate for all students

While the design of the SEP provides access to opt-in student initiatives for all government school students, school participation data across the VCES and VHAP shows there is varied access.

At a school level, for VCES, primary and some special schools' access at a lower relative rate. The VHAP engages similar proportions of primary and secondary schools. However, across both initiatives, schools in high SFOE areas, regional Victoria, and schools with small enrolments access to a lesser extent. It is noted that these variables are interrelated, with schools in regional areas likely to have smaller enrolments and be in higher SFOE areas. This indicates that there are issues with the design of activities for these cohorts or that teacher shortages and limited resources to support initiatives are heightened in these contexts.

The department should review the VCES and VHAP design and offerings to ensure an appropriate focus on all stages of schooling, in particular the earlier years, and inclusive of all students including those from rural areas, high SFOE and with disability. This will improve accessibility and support enrichment across the learning continuum.

3. Enhance high ability in existing system supports

The SEP has made significant progress in putting high-ability students on the agenda at all government schools, particularly through the HAPLs, the delivery of dedicated SRP funding and the inclusion of a high-ability focus within the VEEA. Continuing to build capability and capacity in schools should remain a key focus. Competing student needs may limit the ability for schools to engage in activities related to high ability. This highlights the need to integrate high ability into existing structures, building the culture change required.

The department should identify existing mechanisms to encourage a whole-school approach to supporting high-ability students and that all teachers need knowledge, skills and ability to differentiate and adjust for this cohort. This could include working with regional staff to support a focus on high-ability students through Principal network meetings, Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs) – with a focus on the importance of knowledge and capability uplift through the High-Ability Toolkit, Senior Education Improvement Leaders (SEILs), programs from the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Learning, Lesson Plans FISO 2.0 and the updated Victorian Teaching and Learning Model. This will embed consideration of high ability within the education sector infrastructure, preventing the likelihood for it to be seen as an additionality or an optional approach.

4. Targeted capability uplift for high-ability students

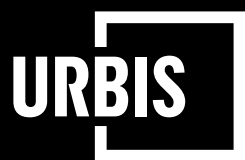
Over 2023, the uptake of PL and the High-Ability Toolkit has been low, which indicates there are issues with awareness and interest. There are also difficulties getting teachers to engage in PL, given the level of workforce shortages and competing priorities for development.

The department should explore opportunities to embed high-ability-related knowledge and skills in new and existing professional learning activities. This could include through the new lesson plans, Professional Learning Communities, professional learning delivered by the Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES), and English Online testing guidance.

5. Increase awareness of individual initiatives and showcase success

Reach of the SEP has been broad; however, there are remaining awareness gaps. This impacts on both uptake of individual initiatives (particularly regarding PL and the High-Ability Toolkit) and the impact on school capability and capacity.

The department should continue efforts to raise awareness of the individual initiatives within the SEP. Awareness should be particularly targeted in medium-high SFOE, regional and rural schools. The opportunity for embedding high ability will contribute to this, but effort could also be dedicated to identifying case studies of school transformation. These case studies would complement the suite of best practice case studies included in the High-Ability Toolkit and will help to inspire schools, demonstrating that supporting high ability is achievable for all school contexts.



EDUCATION EARLY INTERVENTION OFFICER INITIATIVE LAPSING PROGRAM EVALUATION

Final Report

Prepared for Victorian Department of
Education
November 2025

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Definition
CISS	Child Information Sharing Scheme
DE	Department of Education Victoria
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
EEIO Initiative	Education Early Intervention Officer Initiative
EEIOs	Education Early Intervention Officers
GIA	Gender Impact Assessment
EJI	Education Justice Initiative
KEQs	Key Evaluation Questions
PPU	Victoria Police Proactive Policing Unit
PED	Performance and Evaluation Division
YPU	Youth Participation Unit
RMF	Department of Treasury and Finance's Resource Management Framework

TERMINOLOGY

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria have different preferences for the way their communities are collectively or individually referred to (including Koori, Koorie, Indigenous, First Nations, First Peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples). This document adopts 'Aboriginal' except when referencing a specific quote or document.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Engagement in education reduces the risk of young people coming into contact with the justice system. However, those at risk or already in contact with the system often face barriers to educational engagement like poor mental health, trauma, and socio-economic disadvantage. For young people who have been charged, delays between police processing and court appearances can lead to further disengagement from education. In response, the Victorian Government has prioritised early intervention for at-risk youth, with a focus on service responses that address the underlying drivers of offending, including education needs.

The Education Early Intervention Officer Initiative

Commencing in 2022, the Education Early Intervention Officer (EEIO) Initiative supports young people in Dandenong, Melton, Latrobe, and Geelong who have come into contact with police and are disengaged from education. The EEIO Initiative funds four EEIO positions with two priorities: improving educational outcomes for 10-13-year-olds in contact with police by re-engaging them with education; and providing early referrals to education supports for 14-17-year-olds in contact with police and 10-17-year-olds charged before their court appearance. Referrals are primarily made by Victoria Police under the Child Information Sharing Scheme.

The evaluation

With funding due to lapse in 2026, the Victorian Department of Education (DE) engaged Urbis to undertake a lapsing program evaluation of the EEIO Initiative. The evaluation will inform evidence-based decisions on future program and funding models. The methodology included review of program documentation, Victorian Government policies, strategies and similar programs, interviews with stakeholders involved in the design and delivery of the EEIO Initiative, and analysis of program participant data.

KEY FINDINGS

Program justification

Educational engagement reduces justice system contact for at-risk children and young people. The EEIO Initiative aligns with Victorian Government and DE priorities to provide early intervention, support, and a safety net for this cohort.

Funding/delivery

Early implementation challenges in defining the EEIO role and target cohorts have largely been resolved through collaboration. The role's value is now well recognised, and a shift to a regional management model is expected to further strengthen delivery and outcomes. Although the 14-17 years (not charged) cohort were not an original target group, high referral numbers for this cohort indicate a strong case for their inclusion.

Effectiveness

While outcome data is limited at this stage of implementation, the EEIO Initiative appears to contribute to increased school engagement for the children and young people supported. Stakeholders also report improved school capacity and stronger service system collaboration, although enhanced data collection will be important to fully assess impact.

Efficiency and program costs

The EEIO Initiative is a relatively modest investment with potential long-term economic benefits. Strengthening referral processes will support a more consistent flow of referrals across the four locations.

Risk of program cessation

Ending the EEIO Initiative risks losing emerging benefits for children and young people, the service system, and the broader community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Continue to fund the EEIO Initiative in existing locations.** Secure ongoing funding to build on collaborative progress and learnings, further embedding the EEIO Initiative in Dandenong, Melton, Latrobe, and Geelong.
- 2. Assess opportunities to expand the EEIO Initiative** to new locations, building on established successes to support more children and young people. Expansion should also consider formally including the 14-17 years (not charged) cohort, given high referral numbers and positive attendance outcomes for this group. Any increase in scope or geography will require consideration of the capacity of EEIOs, Area teams, and other supports to manage demand.
- 3. Clarify target cohorts and referral processes.** Clearly communicate intended target cohorts to all stakeholders. Define referral pathways to support consistent referrals from Victoria Police into the EEIO Initiative, and from the EEIO Initiative to other supports. Consider how the EEIO Initiative interacts with other education justice supports, including the Education Justice Initiative.
- 4. Enhance data collection and monitoring.** Strengthen systems to track EEIO activities, outputs, and impacts, including capture of capacity-building efforts with schools, cross-agency collaboration, and incremental outcomes for children and young people.
- 5. Refine the EEIO role through on-ground input.** This could include establishing an advisory/working group with representation from Area/Regional teams, EEIOs, Victoria Police, and DE, ensuring feedback informs ongoing improvements to meet local and school needs.
- 6. Continue proactive engagement to build awareness of the EEIO Initiative.** Consider formal and informal opportunities such as information sharing sessions and workshops to build a shared understanding and support for the EEIO role with Area/Regional teams, Victoria Police and schools. This will be particularly important if the EEIO Initiative expands to new locations.
- 7. Define and communicate refreshed operational and management arrangements.** Clearly outline purpose, reporting lines, roles, and responsibilities to strengthen regional integration.

Question 10 - Capital asset expenditure

2026-27 State Budget Paper No. 5/Relevant state financial reports

Line item	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2024-25 revised (\$ million)	2024-25 actual (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)	2026-27 budget (\$ million)
Payment for non financial assets	2,391.013	2,728.813	2,405.855	2,315.468	2,738.554	2,431.573
Total	2,391.013	2,728.813	2,405.855	2,315.468	2,738.554	2,431.573

2026-27 State Budget Paper No. 4

Capital projects	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2024-25 revised (\$ million)	2024-25 actual (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)	2026-27 budget (\$ million)
New						
Accessible Buildings Program 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	11.550
Best Start, Best Life: Infrastructure 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	13.554
Capital Works Fund 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	12.702
Early Childhood Worker Register 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.400
Land acquisition 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	61.212
Locally driven education programs 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.180
Modular Classrooms Program 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	173.699
New Schools Construction 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	178.085
Planning for future new schools 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	8.140
Rebuilding the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.870
Replacement of VRQA State Register 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.700
School Upgrades Planning Fund 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
School upgrades 2026-27	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	53.065
Existing						
Accessible Buildings Program 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	9.250	9.250
Best Start, Best Life: Infrastructure	14.999	0.000	171.543	146.835	300.984	356.896
Capital Works Fund 2024-25	0.000	25.000	0.000	0.000	25.000	2.453
Capital Works Fund 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	11.500	25.000
Contingency fund for school upgrades 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.662	7.698
Contingency Fund for school upgrades 23-24 May-23	0.000	4.346	2.806	0.000	7.341	3.881
Essential maintenance and compliance 2024-25	0.000	1.920	1.920	1.462	2.964	0.818
Feasibility study for a maths and science school 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000
Fighting for students with disability and their families	0.000	1.891	1.821	0.532	18.028	21.562
Land Acquisition 2021-22	67.272	86.164	0.000	0.001	50.000	47.000
Land acquisition 2022-23	44.079	122.187	119.326	92.587	12.770	0.000
Land acquisition 2024-25	0.000	68.924	25.198	12.484	58.689	21.472
Land acquisition 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	37.121	156.452
New Schools Construction 2023-24	156.056	269.980	233.074	223.949	227.495	114.714
New Schools Construction 2024-25	0.000	473.310	399.191	416.793	498.088	130.757
New Schools Construction 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	166.119	205.525
New Schools Construction 23-24 Funding Dec-23	0.000	98.584	68.182	73.827	20.407	9.612
Place-based education and wellbeing programs 2024-25	0.000	0.100	0.300	0.060	0.120	0.120
Planning for growth 2024-25	0.000	1.000	0.927	0.275	0.979	0.582
Ready for school: Kinder for every three-year-old 2019-20	86.304	46.403	11.011	37.017	49.833	32.359
Ready for school: kinder for every three-year-old 2023-24	0.000	43.901	11.003	10.867	105.240	133.798
Relocatable Buildings Program 2024-25	0.000	152.400	153.719	140.002	6.106	0.835
School upgrades – expansions 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.930	21.870
School upgrades 2020-21	282.462	56.382	49.423	65.540	12.364	1.482
School Upgrades 2020-21 Building Works	28.274	0.536	5.053	5.990	0.437	0.996
School upgrades 2021-22	211.195	38.665	45.087	61.189	10.567	14.502
School upgrades 2022-23	61.070	147.195	125.488	128.278	18.822	16.366
School Upgrades 2023-24	8.246	108.930	75.318	42.608	172.532	47.990
School upgrades 2024-25	0.000	24.638	26.714	15.441	153.533	85.677
School upgrades 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	13.937	95.783	222.137
School Upgrades Planning Fund 2025-26	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	10.000	0.000
School upgrades: established area growth for 2027 2023-24	1.720	24.155	17.701	9.935	49.781	34.734
School upgrades: expansions 2024-25	0.000	32.281	1.485	1.564	8.056	28.006
School upgrades: Growth for 2025 2022-23	9.499	29.637	17.813	14.209	15.161	13.905
Special school upgrades 2020-21	105.214	11.433	11.215	24.403	9.044	7.577
Special school upgrades 2022-23	84.440	195.663	178.455	169.789	47.477	12.237
Completed						
Completed School Projects in 2025-26 (2026-27 BP4)	53.602	199.739	122.840	97.461	210.109	25.388
Prior Years Completed Schools Projects	830.499	232.075	363.035	219.006	7.331	0.000
Internally funded capital programs						
Internal funding	93.217	20.079	70.384	97.366	65.981	15.747
Sub total	2,138.149	2,517.519	2,310.031	2,123.411	2,500.602	2,349.555

Line item	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2024-25 revised (\$ million)	2024-25 actual (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)	2026-27 budget (\$ million)
Own sourced revenue funded capital projects						
Government Schools	50.792	32.807	36.396	79.674	43.448	47.211
Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership	0.587	0.000	0.000	1.354	0.000	0.000
Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority	2.673	0.000	0.000	0.163	0.000	0.000
Victorian Registration Qualifications Authority	0.042	0.000	0.000	0.017	0.000	0.000
Minor capital works funding and third-party contributions estimates not yet received in actuals	21.345	57.697	29.762	30.855	38.644	6.799
Other - Includes non-specific school capital contributions, asset write-downs, other non-BP4 and leases realignments	155.437	97.890	4.095	58.481	131.250	1.503
Sub total	230.876	188.394	70.253	170.545	213.342	55.513

PPPs	2023-24 actual (\$ million)	2024-25 budget (\$ million)	2024-25 revised (\$ million)	2024-25 actual (\$ million)	2025-26 budget (\$ million)	2026-27 budget (\$ million)
Partnerships Victoria in Schools	14.868	15.728	16.785	14.294	16.915	18.251
PPP New Schools	7.120	7.173	8.786	7.219	7.695	8.253
Sub total	21.988	22.900	25.571	21.513	24.610	26.504

Total Payment for non financial assets	2,391.013	2,728.813	2,405.855	2,315.468	2,738.554	2,431.573
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Please note the total of capital projects for each year is expected to reconcile to the total payments for non financial assets
Please insert rows as required