

Easier. Safer. More Affordable.

Victorian Budget 2026/27

The Hon Ben Carroll
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education

Hon Lizzie Blandthorn
Minister for Children

Hon Colin Brooks
Minister for Skills and TAFE

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LABOR DELIVERS FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

Every child deserves a great education that will set them up for life.

That's why the *Victorian Budget 2026/27* delivers an investment of over \$5.5 billion in our children's future.

Labor is delivering better schools, more kinders and Free TAFE for more Victorians – no matter where they live.

Giving children the best start in life

Our nation-leading investment is supporting access to quality early childhood education, and saving families time and money.

We're transforming early childhood education to deliver more hours of quality learning and Free Kinder for three and four-year-old children.

Labor is committed to building 50 government-owned and operated Early Learning Victoria centres in the communities that need them most.

An investment of nearly \$500 million will continue this work.

Families need time back in their day – this funding will also deliver more kindergartens on or near school sites.

Another \$9.8 million will deliver Building Blocks Improvement and Inclusion Grants to improve early learning facilities across the state.

School buildings and infrastructure

This Labor Government has opened 121 new schools since 2017 – including 19 this year.

We're building schools in the areas that need them most – making sure growing communities across Victoria have access to world-class schools close to home.

The Liberal Nationals scrapped the Victorian Schools Plan and cut school infrastructure funding.

\$104 million will go to buying land for new schools in rapidly growing areas including Greater Geelong, Melbourne, Mitchell, Wyndham, Hume and Cardinia.

Another \$419.6 million will continue Victoria's pipeline of new schools, including Rockbank Toolern Road Prep to 6, Thompsons East Prep to 6 and Wollahra 7 to 12 opening in 2028.

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This funding will support planning, design and early works at three more schools and campuses opening by 2029 and 2030 – ensuring we are building for Victoria’s future.

We’re investing \$522.8 million for essential maintenance at our schools. Another \$511.5 million will deliver upgrades to 31 government schools and expand capacity with more high-quality modular classrooms and buildings.

\$25.4 million will deliver small-scale capital works at 24 government schools, plus \$28.8 million to upgrade our school facilities by improving access for students with disability and additional needs.

Promoting equal access to education

Every student deserves to feel safe and engaged in their learning.

Importantly, \$800,000 will continue the delivery of Courage to Care’s Upstander program, which educates students on the Holocaust and gives them practical tools to stand up against racism and discrimination.

\$1.3 million will continue to deliver the support provided by the Place-Based Education Plans at Shepparton and John Fawcner Colleges – connecting students and their families with the community-focused support they need to thrive.

This Budget also provides \$61.9 million to support eligible students with English as an additional language.

Excellence in and outside the classroom

Vocational learning makes sure that no matter what a student wants to be when they leave school, Victoria has a pathway for them to achieve it.

This Budget invests \$144.7 million to support students to access vocational, applied or work-based learning opportunities – so students leave school ready to start their career in a trade as an apprentice or trainee.

This includes initiatives which encourage students to explore in-demand careers, provide career advice and support for early school leavers, and highlight more opportunities for rural and regional students.

Our teachers work hard and we want to take the pressure off their workload.

The Budget invests \$23.6 million to support best practice teaching and learning, including \$1.8 million for the delivery of the time saving Year 1 Phonics Check.

And to restore confidence in exams and deliver the best curriculum for Victorian students, families and schools, we’re rebuilding the VCAA by investing \$222.2 million to implement recommendations of the Blacher Review.

Education workforce

\$49.2 million goes to the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership — continuing the nation’s best professional development for teachers and school leaders.

A further \$21.5 million will fund paid placements and support for pre-service teachers in regional, rural or specialist government schools.

Child safety

Nothing is more important than the safety and wellbeing of our children and staff.

We're bolstering child safety with a \$12.1 million investment in the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority.

We will also provide an additional \$26.2 million to establish the independent Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority that will more than double compliance checks at early childhood education and care services.

Additional supports for students with disability

Labor is making sure no child misses out on the services they need.

More than \$2.1 billion continues Victoria's nation-leading Disability Inclusion reforms – helping students with disability get the support they need in government schools. Because inclusion is non-negotiable.

High Intensity Outside School Hours Care continues at 31 specialist schools with \$23 million in funding, and \$39 million extends transport assistance for specialist school students.

Investing in skills so every Victorian can prosper

More than \$459.4 million will help Victorians get the skills they need for the jobs they want.

At least 70 per cent of vocational education and training funding will go to TAFE, including Free TAFE which has already saved more than 245,000 students an average of more than \$3,300 each.

Labor will always back Free TAFE. That's why we've passed the Free TAFE Guarantee – protecting it for the future.

The Liberals sacked more than 2,000 TAFE teachers, shut 22 campuses and ripped \$1 billion from the sector.

We've now invested over \$16 billion to rebuild the TAFE sector and make it even better with Free TAFE.

Over the next four years, in partnership with the Federal Government, we are investing in three TAFE Centres of Excellence to ensure we have access to the best facilities and training:

- \$50 million Victorian Renewable Energy TAFE Centre of Excellence – led by TAFE Gippsland in partnership with Holmesglen, South West TAFE and Federation University
- \$20.7 million Home and Community Care TAFE Centre of Excellence – led by Holmesglen
- \$30 million Digital, AI and Technology TAFE Centre of Excellence – led by Chisholm.

We are investing \$87.2 million for the 2027 training year to provide wrap-around support services for TAFE students, access to training in thin markets and updating TAFE facilities, equipment and ICT.

\$5 million will support upgrades to campuses, including making them more accessible for people with disability.

\$5 million will provide Wodonga TAFE with new equipment for hydrogen and battery electric vehicle training.

Teachers and educators are at the heart of our vocational education sector. In partnership with the Federal Government, we are investing \$5.4 million into the VET Educators Academy for professional development.

To help meet the demand for more apprentices and trainees, \$5.8 million will support the establishment of a stronger apprenticeship regulatory framework and deliver support services to improve safety.

We know that foundation skills like literacy, numeracy, and digital proficiency are essential for helping people find a job or start their study journey.

In partnership with the Federal Government, we are renewing our focus on helping Victorians learn these essential skills through Learn Locals and TAFEs across Victoria.

Quotes attributable to Deputy Premier and Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"Only Labor is making sure families have access to a great public school near them by delivering new schools, upgrading schools, supporting our educators and prioritising the learning inside the classroom."

"Every Victorian child deserves a great education – and this Budget delivers it."

Quote attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

"More families will get access to Free Kinder – saving them money and giving their kids the best start."

Quote attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Colin Brooks

"Free TAFE has already saved Victorians millions, we're protecting it – and building on it."