



# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2019–2023 STRATEGIC PLAN



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Authorised by the Department of Education and Training  
2 Treasury Place, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3002

# SECRETARY'S MESSAGE



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**I am pleased to introduce the Department of Education and Training's Strategic Plan for 2019–2023, which will guide our work as we continue to deliver the Victorian Government's vision for the Education State.**

Over the past four years, the Department has shown sustained effort in building a world class education system, creating a pathway for lifelong learning from early childhood to higher education and skills.

Supported by the Government's continued significant and targeted investment, we have major reforms underway to build an education system that meets the challenges and opportunities of the future. We have seen encouraging shifts in outcomes across all sectors and our plan builds upon this progress to achieve excellence and equity.

We know that we cannot achieve this on our own. Together with all Victorian departments and agencies, we are committed to working in an integrated and efficient manner to deliver the services Victorians need. To do this we must be agile and responsive, working closely in partnership with our colleagues across Government, the Commonwealth and the wider education sector.

As a Department, we have the unique opportunity to build a future where Victoria is recognised nationally and internationally for the skills, knowledge and expertise of its people. The work we do as a Department ensures Victorians have the skills, knowledge, flexibility and creativity they need to actively participate in and contribute to society.

I am proud to present our strategic plan and I look forward to continuing to deliver our priorities that lift outcomes for learners across the State.

**Jenny Atta**

Secretary



# OUR VISION

*“Together we give every Victorian the best learning and development experience, making our state a smarter, fairer and more prosperous place.”*

The Department is responsible for delivering and regulating statewide learning and development services to at least one-third of all Victorians every year, across the early childhood education, school education and training and skills sectors.

We support Victorians to reach their potential, regardless of their background, postcode or circumstance, and to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to participate and thrive in a complex economy and society.

As the Department delivers on our vision we need to manage risks and challenges such as a growing population, technology changes and a focus on information security. We also need to provide access to quality services, lift workforce capability and maintain system integrity.

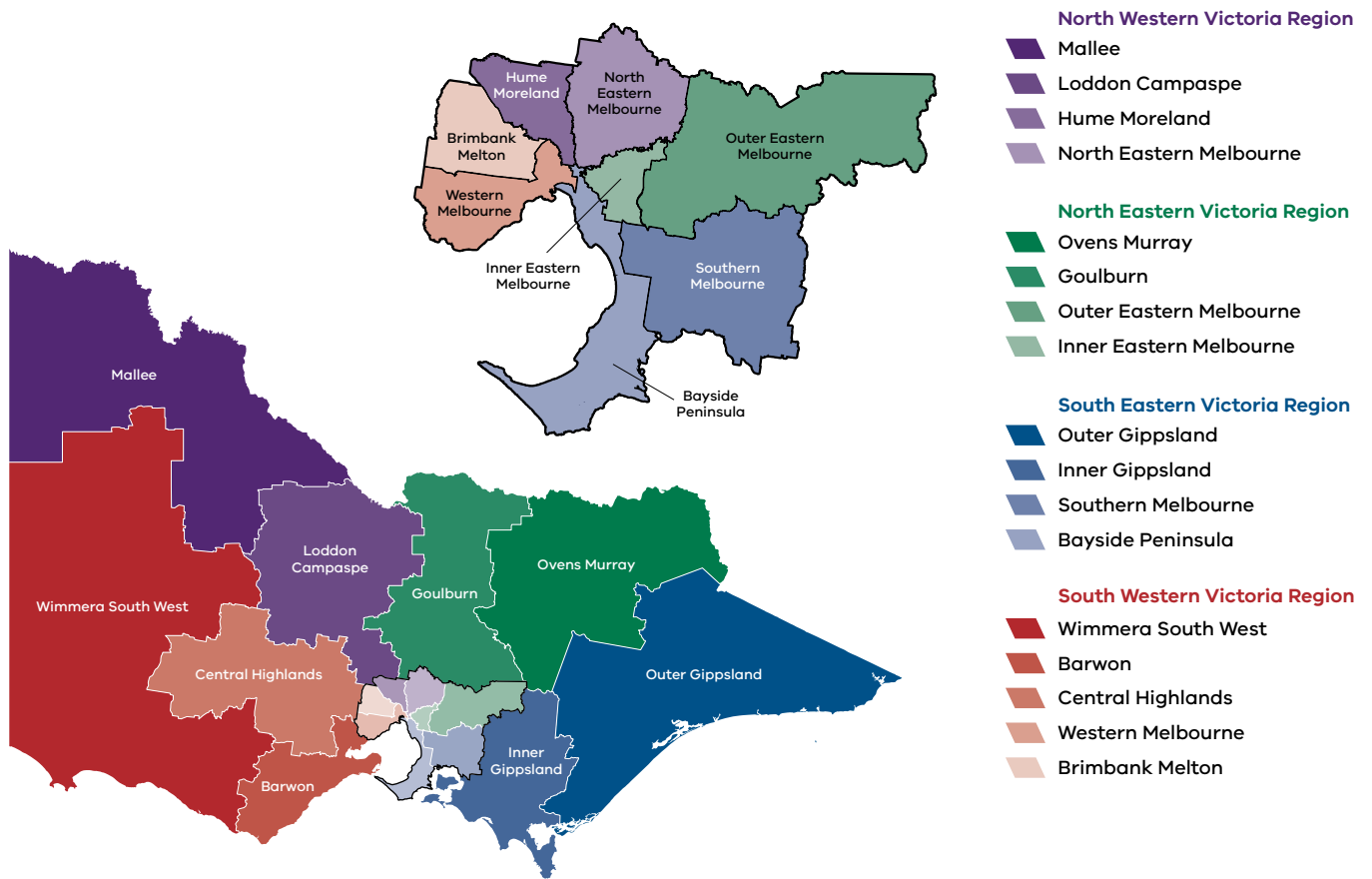
The goals we set, the changes we implement, the systems we support and the services we offer are all focused on improving outcomes and opportunities for Victorians and supporting them to build, happy, healthy and rewarding lives.



# OUR DEPARTMENT

We have a regional operating model—known as Learning Places—to deliver education services across the State. Under this model the State is divided into four regions and 17 areas. Schools, early childhood services and training organisations work with the Department via their local regional office. Regional offices connect the Department’s central office and our service providers, so that policy intent and outcomes are delivered in local communities.

The model is focused on people and place-based service delivery to allow localised, tailored and integrated decision making, service and support. This arrangement also facilitates cross government initiatives and integration of services.



## THE DEPARTMENT'S SERVICES

### EARLY CHILDHOOD

Birth to 8



More than 400,000 children and families



- Early years learning and development including early childhood education and care services
- Early childhood intervention services

### SCHOOL EDUCATION

5 to 18



More than 971,000 students



- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Special education
- Health and wellbeing

### TRAINING AND SKILLS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

15 to 65+



More than 317,000 government subsidised enrolments in vocational education and training



- Technical and Further Education (TAFEs)
- Universities
- Private registered training providers
- Learn Locals

We have a diverse range of public, private and not-for-profit providers serving Victorians of all ages:

- More than 4,200 approved education and care services that provide long day care, kindergarten, outside school hours care, and family day care and approximately 380 licensed children's services that provide limited hour services such as occasional care

- 1,539 government schools
- 713 non-government schools (497 Catholic schools and 220 independent schools)

- 12 TAFE institutes
- 8 public universities (four of which are dual-sector universities that also provide vocational education and training), one specialised university and campuses of the multi-state Australian Catholic University
- 266 community owned not-for-profit organisations registered as Learn Local organisations and two Adult Education Institutions contracted by the Adult, Community and Further Education Board (ACFE) board to deliver pre-accredited training
- 321 government contracted private registered training organisations



## SERVICES AND FUTURE DEMAND

Victoria is growing faster than any other state or territory in Australia. Melbourne's population alone is projected to increase from 5 million in 2018 to 9.3 million in 2056. Over the next four years, 72,000 additional students are anticipated to enter the Victorian school system, increasing the total enrolled students from more than 971,000 to more than 1 million students. Two thirds of these will attend a government school.

The spread of population and jobs growth is and will continue to be different across the state. Growth, demographic changes and associated impacts such as workforce shortages and increased demand for student support services will continue to be a challenge for the Department.

The significant population growth across Victoria is also increasing demand for early childhood services across the State. The growth in the 0–4 year old population is increasing, most noticeably in Melbourne's growth area suburbs. Over the 20 year period from 2011–2031 the population of the 0–4 year old cohort is forecast to grow by 78 per cent in growth areas and 21 per cent in all other council areas<sup>1</sup>.

More facilities will be required to meet demand. The implementation of almost \$5 billion in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten commitments, including \$1.68 billion in infrastructure investment over 10 years, will see the building and expansion of almost 1,000 new and existing facilities.

The long term economic trend towards a more complex, competitive and highly skilled job market means Victoria's Vocational Education and Training (VET) system will need to adapt. To achieve this, the VET system must ensure it is of high quality, accessible to all working age Victorians in an equitable and efficient manner and responsive to the needs of students, employers and industries.

The Department is reforming its funding models and asset management to ensure all Victorians have equitable access to quality education and training. This requires targeting funding and resources for students in need and providing better information about school funding, performance and student outcomes to encourage collaboration, drive improvement and strengthen accountability.

The Department's Asset Strategy outlines a vision to 'develop and maintain a high performing asset base that supports improved and world leading education and development outcomes'. It brings together commitments about how to deliver better educational services and outcomes by improving asset planning, acquisition, operation and disposal across the Department's three portfolios.

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<sup>1</sup> VAGO report <https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2017-08/20170823-Effectively-Planning-for-Population-Growth.pdf> and ViF 2016.



## WORKFORCE

Victoria's growing population is also placing additional demands on our services and workforce, with planning and support required for staff across early childhood, schools and higher education.

For early childhood education, it is important to strike a balance between quickly increasing workforce numbers while maintaining quality. The Department will achieve this by attracting new early childhood teachers and educators, encouraging exiting staff to undertake training, as well as providing pre-service and in-service supports to teachers.

A high-quality school workforce is essential for improving education outcomes for all students, and the Department plays a central role in building teacher capability and developing school leaders to manage and lead their schools and workforce effectively. Through the Excellence in Teacher Education Reforms the Department aims to attract high-calibre teachers into the system by raising the course quality, status and selection criteria of teaching and ensuring high quality pathways into the teaching profession are in place. Early career teachers will be developed through induction and mentoring programs, and pre-service teachers prepared through the Teach for Australia (TFA) program that targets recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers in government schools with higher numbers of disadvantaged students.

Teachers in more than 800 government schools will also be supported through the Victorian Professional Learning Communities (PLC) initiative. This initiative is building a culture of continuous evidence-based improvement in teaching and learning. It provides expert advice from teams of experienced educators to coach and train school and instructional leaders in all aspects of professional learning communities. In addition, a communities of practice approach helps school leaders collaborate to share knowledge, expertise and resources across networks.

## OUR STORIES: PRINCIPAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

The Department is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our school leaders in a systemic and sustainable way. Thriving school principals can create a positive environment for teaching and learning where students, teachers and school communities flourish. The strategy was developed following a review of leading practice research to address the health and wellbeing challenges faced by principals. Initiatives within the strategy are principal health checks, a complex matters support team, early intervention support and a mentoring program. Following a positive response to the 2018 pilot, principal health and wellbeing initiatives will continue as part of our ongoing services.

The Department continues to develop current and future principals and school leaders. The Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership is supporting broader Education State work through school leadership initiatives that build the capacity of current leaders and identify and prepare the Department's next generation of school leaders. The programs include Inspire (Emerging Leaders), Talent Management Frameworks, Victorian Aspirant Principal Assessment and Unlocking Potential: Principal Preparation Program. In addition, the Department supports school principals through the Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy, area principal forums, and a range of professional advice in areas including finance, data and analytics, family violence, cultural awareness and education support.

The VET sector workforce will continue to be supported and developed through the VET Development Centre, the fellowship program through the International Specialised Skills Institute, the Victorian TAFE Association and the ACFE Board for the development of the Learn Local workforce.



# OUR OUTCOMES

Realising our vision requires committed and rigorous focus on the impact we are having on outcomes for Victorians. We have identified three outcome areas in which we seek to achieve excellence:

## ACHIEVEMENT

Raise standards of learning and development achieved by Victorians using education and training

## ENGAGEMENT

Increase the number of Victorians actively participating in education and training

## WELLBEING

Increase the contribution education and training make to quality of life for all Victorians, particularly children and young people

We use a set of indicators and associated measures to evaluate achievement, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for learners. The use of outcomes and associated measures is consistent with how high-performing systems deliver and measure performance, and is aligned to the Department's strategic priorities and the latest national and international evidence.



# HOW WE ACHIEVE OUR OUTCOMES

Our structure, processes and leadership will support us to achieve the best possible outcomes for Victorians. To achieve our outcomes in early childhood, schools, higher education and skills we are maintaining our focus on a high-performance culture, strong accountability and leadership.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

There is overwhelming evidence that the period from birth to five years of age is vital for children's development, and has a profound impact on their future outcomes. Access to high-quality early childhood services is central to giving every Victorian child the best start in life.

The Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan – ready for kinder, ready for school, ready for life drives our work to create a higher quality, more equitable and inclusive early childhood system.

### OUR STORIES: EARLY CHILDHOOD LANGUAGE PROGRAM

The Early Childhood Language Program actively encourages children in kindergarten to learn in another language. Services delivering the program are located throughout Victoria, with more than one third located in rural or regional areas. The program is delivered in 15 languages, including Arabic, Punjabi, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Greek, French, Italian, Auslan and some Aboriginal languages.

Kindergartens deliver the program in a way that reflects the context of their local community and incorporates children's interests.



**\$92.4 million** was provided in the 2019–20 State Budget to support early childhood teachers and educators through increased professional development, mentoring and scholarships so that as three-year-old kindergarten is implemented across Victoria, our children continue to have access to highly trained professionals.

Over 2019–2023 the Department will deliver several key early childhood initiatives.

In an Australian first, an investment of \$5 billion over 10 years will fund kindergarten for all three-year-olds, ensuring Victorian children have access to two years of play-based early learning before school. From 2022, every three-year-old will have access to at least five hours per week in a funded kindergarten program, increasing to 15 hours by 2029.

To ensure Victoria is ready for this expansion, the Department is initially offering more than 700 scholarships to aspiring kindergarten teachers, and funding to assist early childhood teachers relocate to areas where three-year-old kindergarten is initially being delivered.

Figure 2: Three-year-old kindergarten



**90,000**

Children will benefit each year



**123**

**6,000**

New jobs created over 11 years



**1,000**

New and expanded kindergartens created by our reforms over 11 years

The Department is investing in kindergarten to ensure all children access a quality program and start school ready to learn. A \$58.1 million investment over four years in school readiness funding, allocated based on need, aims to reduce the impact of educational disadvantage on children's learning and development. Quality improvement grants to services will enable intensive coaching, training and advice. The Department is also employing additional dedicated early childhood staff and providing extra support to services.

The Child Information Sharing (CIS) Scheme, a Whole of Victorian Government initiative led by the Department, enables authorised organisations to appropriately share information with each other to promote children's wellbeing and safety. A \$43.4 million investment over four years will support Victorian workforces to implement the scheme with early childhood providers and schools to join from September 2020. The CIS scheme is supported by Child Link, a new digital register that displays key information, drawn from existing government and children's service systems to authorised professionals. It will be progressively implemented from 2022.

## SCHOOLS

The Department's focus in schools is all about improving outcomes and creating opportunities for every student, in every classroom, in every community. It is about giving every child and young person the opportunity to succeed in life, regardless of background, place or circumstance.

This means building an education system that strives for excellence, whether it is through improving the quality of educational services or building the education facilities that meet the demands of Victoria's growth and creates pride and confidence in our schools.

Over 2019–2023 the Department will deliver a number of school education initiatives.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE PLANNING

The Department is delivering a \$1.8 billion school infrastructure program. This involves acquiring land, planning and constructing new schools, and expanding, upgrading and modernising existing schools to accommodate an additional 18,000 students each year. In 2018, the Victorian Government committed \$850 million to open 100 new schools over eight years. This included opening 45 new schools by 2022, nine of which are now open. The Department is also removing asbestos in schools and upgrading relocatable classrooms through this program.



**\$515 million** is being provided over the next two years to ensure every government school has safe, modern and properly maintained buildings.





Place-Based Education Plans bring together a range of government investments in a community for maximum impact and benefit for children and young people, enabling the integration of service planning across early childhood, school and tertiary education. Seven plans are being developed across the state to accelerate and coordinate the impact of community-level improvement initiatives.

### **OUR STORIES: [findmyschool.vic.gov.au](http://findmyschool.vic.gov.au)**

For the first time parents can search for their local government school online by entering their home address. Launched in April 2019, findmyschool sets out the official and most up to date local school zones.

More broadly, the project helps schools to manage growth in enrolments. When a new school is built, the zones for the neighbouring schools are adjusted to ensure all parents know which is their closest school.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy aims to lift key capabilities for every student across Victoria. As part of the strategy, the Department is implementing the Excellence & Equity in Literacy & Numeracy program and the Middle Years Literacy and Numeracy Support initiative—the biggest single investment in individualised student support in Victorian history. It will provide students in Years 8 to 10 with additional teaching support.



The Department is implementing the Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026 to support improved outcomes for Koorie learners across early childhood, schools and higher education and skills sectors. Marrung’s vision is for all Victorians to celebrate the rich and thriving culture, knowledge and experience of our First Nations people and for every Koorie person to feel strong in their cultural identity.

Full implementation of the English as an Additional Language curriculum F-10 is expected to commence from Term 1, 2020, accompanied by a program of support to guide its effective implementation.

## **STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

The Department is improving collaborative and multidisciplinary practice to improve student health and wellbeing through supporting workforces, specifically student support services, visiting teachers and nurses. The initiative includes the delivery of a practice model, improved professional learning, and attraction and retention strategies.

The Mental Health Practitioners initiative also provides \$51.2 million over four years to enable every government secondary school campus to recruit a suitably qualified, school-based mental health practitioner by 2022.



**\$58 million** has been provided in the 2019–20 State Budget to expand the School Breakfast Clubs Program to an additional 500 schools, providing healthy breakfasts as well as lunches and school holiday supplies to children from disadvantaged backgrounds

## **EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS**

HeadStart apprenticeships and traineeships provide a new pathway for secondary school students to complete their Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) or Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). From 2019, \$49.8 million is being invested over four years to roll out HeadStart in 107 schools in 10 sites across Victoria, supporting 1,700 students to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship alongside VCE or VCAL.



The Department is also transforming careers education in Victorian government schools through a \$109 million investment over four years to help students make more informed career and pathway decisions, meeting the demands of a rapidly changing globalised job market.

## **SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOLS**

The Department is supporting teachers and front line staff with contemporary and fit for purpose ICT systems and software. A \$67.9 million investment is providing a new state-of-the-art virtual conferencing solution for all schools. In addition, \$16.4 million has been invested to provide staff in rural and regional schools with the same level of access. ICT investments are providing reliable digital services that connect teachers and front line staff to a range of resources, regardless of their location.

The Differentiated Support for School Improvement initiative provides funding of \$50.7 million over four years (2017–2021) to target schools with complex challenges. The initiative tailors support for schools, recognising that schools at different stages of their improvement journey require different supports. Specific supports may include building teacher and leadership capacity, establishing school improvement partnerships and providing new executive principals where principal vacancies arise.

The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes supports the achievement of the Education State targets by helping schools focus on the areas known to have the greatest impact on school improvement.

The Department is continuing to deliver an inclusive education agenda to transform the culture and practice of all schools to be fully inclusive of students with disabilities and additional needs. This includes development of a new strengths-based funding and support model to meet the needs of all students with disabilities and the delivery of the Program for Students with Disabilities.

The Insight Assessment Platform helps teachers assess the progress of all learners and support more targeted teaching practices. Managed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, the platform provides a collection of quality online assessment instruments, including the Digital Assessment Library (currently under development).

The Department is working closely with the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice and Community Safety and Premier and Cabinet, and Family Safety Victoria and Victoria Police to respond to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV). The Department also leads the delivery of Respectful Relationships (RCFV recommendation 189) with all Victorian government schools to participate by March 2021.

The Education Justice Initiative is a cross-sector collaboration connecting young people appearing before the Children’s Courts, including Koori Children’s Courts, to an appropriate, supported education or training pathway, through referral, advocacy, collaboration and relationship building between staff and schools or training providers.



## HIGHER EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The Victorian post-secondary education system provides people with access to education and training that leads to jobs and supports lifelong learning. The system caters to learners including school graduates, workers looking to upskill or reskill, those seeking to re-engage with the workforce, and people facing disadvantage.

The *Skills First* reforms introduced in 2017 aim to strengthen Victoria's government-subsidised training system by improving quality, meeting Victoria's skills needs and building TAFE sustainability.

Over 2019–2023 the Department will deliver several key initiatives in higher education and training and skills.

The Department is continuing to monitor and support delivery of Free TAFE for Priority Courses which provides tuition fee free training for TAFE students in priority skill areas and key apprenticeship pathway course. From 2020, two additional free TAFE courses in early childhood education and care will be added. Free TAFE for priority courses builds on recent VET reforms aimed at lifting quality and aligning training to the jobs of the Victorian economy.

### OUR STORIES: FREE TAFE FOR A GROWING VICTORIA

Free TAFE for Priority Courses reduces the financial barrier for eligible students to train for the jobs that are most in demand. Students can save up to \$2,500 for some pre-apprenticeship courses, up to more than \$10,000 for courses such as the Diploma of Nursing or Building and Construction.

20 year old Michaela says that being able to study her TAFE nursing course for free has 'made my life so much easier'.

*'I'm not going to have to worry about a debt, especially with a young child'*. Michaela says.

This initiative supports students to train in courses that will provide occupations in high-demand industries and important areas like preventing family violence and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The Department is analysing student characteristics and how Free TAFE is changing enrolment and teaching practices. At the same time, the Department is strengthening student outcomes by improving TAFE teaching quality and learning and assessment materials.



Working with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions and the Office of Projects Victoria, the Victorian Skills Commissioner and the Local Jobs Commissioner, the Department is undertaking a new approach to strengthen the links between Victoria's training system and industry demand to create a pipeline of skilled workers, and align training to support delivery of major infrastructure projects.

The Department is working in partnership with industry and tertiary education providers to give Victorians new opportunities to earn while undertaking higher qualifications, such as vocational advanced diplomas and higher education associate degrees.

Higher education plays a vital role in the Victorian economy by producing graduates that meet the skills and knowledge needs of business and industry, collaborating with industry to research emerging technologies to support Victoria's changing economy, and contributing to local and regional economies.

The Department meets with Vice-Chancellors of Victorian universities regularly throughout the year to address shared strategic priorities including strengthening pathways between vocational training and higher education, and the delivery of high-quality initial teacher education.



**\$46.3 million** has been provided in the 2019–20 State Budget as part of the Building Better TAFEs Fund to deliver upgrades to regional TAFEs campuses in Geelong, Seymour and Warrnambool.

The Department is continuing to implement the Government's TAFE asset modernisation program, which provides a prioritised pipeline of refurbishment and development projects. This includes the rollout of the \$220 million Building Better TAFEs Fund.

To strengthen apprenticeships, the 2019–20 State Budget provided \$5.6 million for Victoria's Big Build and Social Services higher apprenticeships.





# ORGANISATIONAL REFORMS

To deliver our significant reform agenda, the Department will continue to build our capability as a workforce, develop best practice policy, improve our systems and provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for our people.

Over 2019–2023 the Department will deliver:

- **Investing in Our People** – This strategy aligns with the Department’s strategic vision, focusing on areas that will have the most impact on our organisation’s delivery and performance. The strategy has five objectives that work to give a holistic approach, ensuring our people are capable, able to perform at their best, and feel empowered, valued and supported.
- **Wirnalung Ganai 2019–2021** – The Department’s Aboriginal inclusion plan is aligned to Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026. The plan’s purpose is for the Department to be a culturally safe place for employees, partners, learners and families; and be an organisation that values and respects Aboriginal voice and expertise and ensures an active commitment to Aboriginal self-determination.
- **Raising the bar: Valuing Integrity Strategy 2018–21** – This strategy will progress the Integrity Reform agenda. Leveraging the gains made through the Integrity Reform Program, the strategy will continue to embed improvements in business as usual processes and practices, and provide a platform for all integrity-related work across our education services.

- **Departmental Leadership Capabilities Framework** – This framework contains the 10 priority skills and attributes our leaders need to realise Department’s strategic priorities and deliver the Education State reform agenda. The framework underpins the Department’s Leadership Charter.

## OUR STORIES: PATHWAYS AT DET PROGRAM

The Pathways at DET program aims to strengthen professional practice and connection between corporate areas and school leadership, leading to improved outcomes for students, building stronger relationships and knowledge sharing opportunities and improving career pathways for senior school educators into public policy and administration roles. The program invites principals and leading teachers to swap their senior educator roles in Victorian government schools for a term in a corporate role. The program has been highly successful in leveraging opportunities for designing, implementing and operating a world class public education system.

**LIVING OUR  
VALUES  
EVERY DAY**





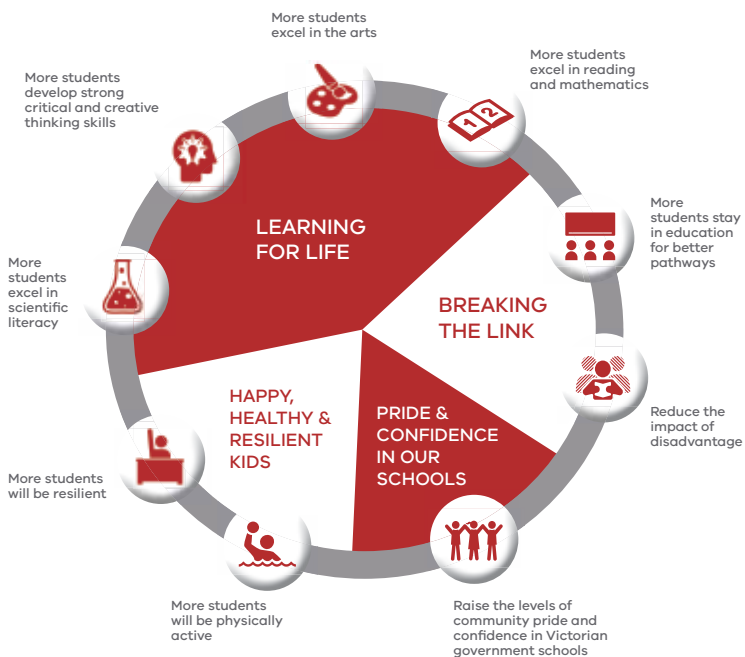
# HOW WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

## REPORTING PROGRESS

The Department reports progress across its portfolios through a set of outcome indicators and performance measures published in the [State Budget Papers](#)<sup>2</sup>. The Department also reports progress against these outcome indicators and performance measures in its [Annual Report](#)<sup>3</sup>, available on the Department's website.

In 2015, the Government set ambitious targets for significant school improvement over 10 years. These targets focus on excellence and equity, and our goal to equip all school students with the personal and practical skills for success in life and work. The targets relate to the success of all school sectors and for all students (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Education State Schools Targets



## REGIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The Department's Regional Performance Framework supports the understanding, measuring and monitoring of regional delivery on student outcomes. The Framework is the basis of bi-annual Regional Performance Reviews where Department senior leaders have deep and structured conversations about performance to support delivery of Education State reforms.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation is fundamental to continuous improvement and to building a solid evidence base that will enable policy and programs to meet the needs of all Victorians. The Department continues to strengthen its evaluation culture by undertaking high-quality periodic reviews that inform policy, program and service decision making and improvements.

### OUR STORIES: USING EVIDENCE TO MEASURE PERFORMANCE AND MAKE BETTER DECISIONS

The Department is committed to using accurate data and evidence to improve the learning outcomes for schools.

The Panorama School Reports give schools a comprehensive view of their performance and enable them to make comparisons with similar schools, their immediate networks and schools across the state.

Principals and the Department's Senior Education Improvement Leaders use the reports to help guide discussions and make program, project and funding decisions that best improve outcomes for their students.



<sup>2</sup> <http://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/State-Budget>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/annualreports.aspx>



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