CONTENTS

SECRETARY’S MESSAGE ........................................................................................................1

STRATEGIC INTENT .............................................................................................................. 2

Our Vision ............................................................................................................................ 2
Our Objectives ...................................................................................................................... 2
Our Values ............................................................................................................................ 2
Education State Targets .................................................................................................... 4
Our Outcomes ...................................................................................................................... 5
DET Outcomes Framework ................................................................................................. 5
Regional Performance Framework ..................................................................................... 5
Evaluation ............................................................................................................................ 5
DET Outcome Indicators ..................................................................................................... 6

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION ........................................................................... 9

Our Approaches .................................................................................................................. 9
Approach 1: Service and Funding Reform ........................................................................ 9
Approach 2: Workforce Strategies and Practices ............................................................... 14
Approach 3: Partnership and Innovation ........................................................................... 18
Approach 4: Organisational Reform .................................................................................. 22

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT .............................................................................................. 26

Context ................................................................................................................................ 26
Risks And Challenges ......................................................................................................... 26
The Department’s Services ................................................................................................. 27
Workforce Outlook .............................................................................................................. 28
Financial Outlook ............................................................................................................... 29
Asset Outlook ..................................................................................................................... 32
I am pleased to present the Department of Education and Training’s Strategic Plan for 2018–2022. The Plan is to deliver our vision to build a world class education system that creates opportunities for every Victorian, regardless of background or circumstance and gives every learner the best possible chance at achieving excellence.

This Plan highlights the work the Department is leading to drive implementation of the Education State reforms by providing early years settings, schools and higher education and training providers the tools they need to drive improvement.

The Plan provides coherence across our three portfolios to strengthen our ability to deliver better outcomes for Victorian learners. No sector operates in isolation, just as a person’s education and development progresses along a continuum that is not bounded by sectors or institutions.

We are focusing our efforts on those areas and key projects that will have the greatest impact and there are already promising signs and improvements in student performance. The Department has laid the foundations through detailed planning and application of these reforms. This significant undertaking has positioned us well for the years ahead to intensify our implementation efforts, deepen stakeholder engagement and maximise our work to lift outcomes.

Across all of our key sectors – the kindergartens, the TAFEs, the schools, the flexible learning programs and pathways to work, $3.6 billion in the 2018-19 State Budget has been invested in the work we do and the futures of Victorian learners.

Our capacity as a Department underpins our ability to deliver on our objectives and targets. As a result, we are focused on being a learning organisation, where staff development is supported, where we share ideas and knowledge, and where we make best use of evidence in decision-making and build on our experience. We also continue to promote and live our seven values and embed programs that strive to strengthen our leadership capability and build a high performing workforce to deliver the best results for educators and learners alike.

This Plan communicates the strategic direction of the Department by bringing together service delivery and organisational reform agendas, setting out what we want to achieve and how we will do it. It focuses our efforts and informs the preparation of Group, Division and Region business plans. It also provides our partners, stakeholders and the community with key information on our strategic priorities and how we are going to achieve our vision. I look forward to working with all of you to deliver the strategies set out in this plan, and achieve the best possible outcomes for all Victorian learners.

Gill Callister
Secretary
We have a clear vision and strategy for what we want to achieve. Building a strategy based on clear objectives and a strong evidence base, and cognisant of our context, challenges and risks helps us plan, allocate resources and achieve our outcomes.

OUR VISION

Education is more important than ever: skills, knowledge, creativity and adaptability will be central in our future economy and community. The Education State is founded on excellence in learning and development from the crucial first years of life, through school education to training and higher education, and the promotion of lifelong learning for adults.

The Department captures this vision in its Statement of Strategic Intent (refer Figure 2):

This aspiration is for a future where:

- children and young people are confident, optimistic, healthy and resilient
- students reach their potential, regardless of background, place, circumstance or abilities
- Victorians develop knowledge, skills and attributes needed now and for the jobs of the future
- the Department’s workforce is high-performing, empowered, valued and supported.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Our objectives in achieving this vision are to:

- ensure Victorians have equitable access to quality education and training
- work with providers and partners to build an integrated birth to adulthood education and development system
- support children, young people and adults with well-coordinated universal and targeted services close to where they live
- activate excellence, innovation and economic growth.

OUR VALUES

In pursuing these objectives, the Department is committed to the Victorian public sector values of:

Figure 1: DET Values

RESPONSIVENESS
We respond in a timely way with our best work

INTEGRITY
We are honest, ethical and transparent

IMPARTIALITY
We behave in the best interests of the public by making fair and objective decisions

ACCOUNTABILITY
We hold ourselves and others to account for the work that we do

RESPECT
We value others and accept their differences

LEADERSHIP
We are genuine, supportive and do the right thing

HUMAN RIGHTS
We uphold and respect the rights of others

The public sector values underpin the behaviours that the government and community rightly expect of all public sector employees. Acting consistently with the public sector values strengthens the capacity of our organisation to operate effectively and achieve its objectives.

The values are a key part of executive and staff performance and development plans because how we behave and how we treat one another shapes the work we do.
Together we give every Victorian the best learning and development experience, making our state a smarter, fairer, more prosperous place.

**Vision**

Our future

1. Together we give every Victorian the best learning and development experience, making our state a smarter, fairer, more prosperous place.
2. **Principles**
   - Our workforce is high performing, empowered, valued and supported.
   - All Victorians develop knowledge, skills and attributes needed now and for the jobs of the future.

**Objectives**

Our aims

1. Children and young people are confident, optimistic, healthy and resilient.
2. Students reach their potential, regardless of background, place, circumstance or abilities.
3. Students have equitable access to quality education and training.
4. Students develop knowledge, skills and attributes needed now and for the jobs of the future.

**Approaches**

How we will achieve this

1. SERVICE AND FUNDING REFORM
   - Give additional targeted support to Victorians who need it.
   - Connect settings and sectors to improve transitions and ensure continuity of learning and development.
   - Focus on mental and physical health and wellbeing as an integral part of learning and development.
   - Monitor and improve systems, including by setting standards.
   - Map demand for services and effectively target resources to community needs.

2. PARTNERSHIP AND INNOVATION
   - Work with providers, employers, not for profits, families, children and young people to develop new approaches and share best practice.
   - Strengthen learning, health and wellbeing through stronger place-based partnerships.
   - Strengthen career pathways for learners while meeting the needs of business and industry.
   - Prepare learners to be global citizens and provide them with the skills to succeed in a fast-changing world.
   - Partner with other agencies, Departments and levels of government to deliver outcomes.

3. ORGANISATIONAL REFORM
   - Promote strong public sector leadership and the highest standards of governance, integrity and conduct.
   - Build inclusive workplaces based on public sector values (integrity, accountability, respect, responsiveness, leadership, and human rights).
   - Ensure use of resources provides value for money and meets community expectations.
   - Establish shared responsibility and clear accountability for decisions.
   - Provide stronger, more direct and place-based support to schools, services and providers.

4. WORKFORCE STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES
   - Develop excellence in educational practice, targeted to individual learning and development needs.
   - Support students to learn independently and contribute to each other’s learning.
   - Strengthen learning, health and wellbeing through stronger place-based partnerships.
   - Build creative and critical thinking through a world-class curriculum.
   - Build performance, develop capabilities and share expertise across all workplaces.
   - Unify the education system through new pathways between schools and central and regional offices.
   - Build workforce capacity to support all children, young people and families, regardless of circumstances.

5. OUTCOMES
   - We are accountable:
     - We work with integrity, transparency and impartiality.
     - We deliver high quality advice and services.
     - We have the capabilities and skills to achieve our priorities.
   - We are responsive to the needs of Victorians.
   - We deliver evidence to make decisions.
   - We use evidence to make decisions.
   - We deliver evidence to make decisions.
   - We deliver evidence to make decisions.
   - We deliver evidence to make decisions.
   - We deliver evidence to make decisions.
   - We deliver evidence to make decisions.
EDUCATION STATE TARGETS

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

**Figure 3: Education State Schools Targets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Ambition</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning for Life</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![More students excel in reading and mathematics]</td>
<td>More students excel in reading and mathematics</td>
<td>By 2020 for year 5, and 2025 for year 9, 25 per cent more students will be reaching the highest levels of achievement in reading and mathematics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![More students excel in scientific literacy]</td>
<td>More students excel in scientific literacy</td>
<td>By 2025, there will be a 33 per cent increase in the proportion of 15 year olds reaching the highest levels of achievement in scientific literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![More students excel in the arts]</td>
<td>More students excel in the arts</td>
<td>More Victorian students will reach the highest levels of achievement in the arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![More students develop strong critical and creative thinking skills]</td>
<td>More students develop strong critical and creative thinking skills</td>
<td>By 2025, 25 per cent more Year 10 students will have developed excellent critical and creative thinking skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Happy, healthy and resilient kids</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![More students will be resilient]</td>
<td>More students will be resilient</td>
<td>By 2025, Victorian students reporting high resilience will grow by 20 per cent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![More students will be physically active]</td>
<td>More students will be physically active</td>
<td>By 2025, the proportion of students doing physical activity five times a week will increase by 20 per cent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breaking the link</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Breaking the link]</td>
<td>Breaking the link</td>
<td>By 2025, there will be a 15 per cent reduction in the gap in average achievement between disadvantage and other students in Year 5 and Year 9 reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![More students stay in education for better pathways]</td>
<td>More students stay in education for better pathways</td>
<td>By 2025, the proportion of students leaving education during Years 9 to 12 will halve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pride and confidence in our schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Raise the levels of community pride and confidence in Victorian government schools]</td>
<td>Raise the levels of community pride and confidence in Victorian government schools</td>
<td>By 2025, 20 per cent more parents will have high levels of pride and confidence in the Victorian government school system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OUR OUTCOMES
Realising our vision and objectives, and ensuring we consistently embody our values, will require 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, training, development and child health services

ENGAGEMENT
Increase the number of Victorians actively participating in education, training, development and child health services

WELLBEING
Increase the contribution education, training, development and child health services make to good health and quality of life for all Victorians, particularly children and young people

DET OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK
The Department’s Outcomes Framework provides a set of outcome indicators and associated measures that support achievement, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for learners across the life course. The Outcomes Framework is consistent with how high-performing systems deliver and measure outcomes, aligned with the Departmental strategic priorities and the latest national and international evidence.

Reporting against the Outcomes Framework, through annual Outcomes Assessment Reports, informs strategic business planning, policy and program development, integrated performance monitoring and reporting, and future evaluation activity. The Outcomes Assessment Reports are a key resource to strengthen understanding and use of performance results and insights, leading to robust and consistent use of relevant performance data to inform strategic advice.

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
The Department’s Regional Performance Framework (RPF) supports understanding, measuring and monitoring of regional impact on outcomes for children and young people in Victoria. It provides a consistent approach to understanding and monitoring whether new investment in regional resources and regional operations are delivering improved outcomes for children and young people.

Guided by the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) improvement cycle, the RPF helps the Department apply a rigorous method to identify and prioritise actions to improve outcomes for Victorians. The Framework is the basis of bi-annual Regional Performance Reviews and Implementation Assessment Meetings.

Regional Performance Reviews are where Department senior leaders have deep and structured conversations about performance based on the Regional Performance Measures 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. Evaluation builds an understanding of what works and what doesn’t.

The Department continues to strengthen its evaluation culture as part of our continuous improvement in the delivery of services. By strengthening the evaluation culture, we reinforce the importance of evaluation and build knowledge and capacity that assist all areas of the Department to undertake high-quality periodic reviews that inform policy, program and service decision making and improvements.
### DET OUTCOME INDICATORS

The Department reports progress through a set of indicators published in the State Budget Papers (refer Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Outcome Indicators in State Budget Papers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departmental Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Output Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievement</strong> Raise standards of learning and development achieved by Victorians using education, training, development and child health services</td>
<td><strong>Early Childhood Development</strong>&lt;br&gt;Children developmentally ‘on track’ on the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) in the language and cognitive skills domains&lt;sup&gt;(a)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;Proportion of early childhood services meeting or exceeding National Quality Standard Area 1 (NQSA1 - Educational program and practice)</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Education – Primary</strong>&lt;br&gt;Primary Students meeting the expected standard in national and international literacy and numeracy assessment&lt;sup&gt;(b)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;Percentage of positive primary school teacher responses to teacher collaboration within school&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School Education – Primary&lt;br&gt;Support Services Delivery&lt;br&gt;Support for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Education – Secondary</strong>&lt;br&gt;Secondary Students meeting the expected standard in national and international literacy and numeracy assessment&lt;sup&gt;(b)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;Percentage of positive secondary school teacher responses to teacher collaboration within school&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;Average score in Science (PISA 15 year-olds) in Victoria compared to global top performers&lt;sup&gt;(b)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt;Year 12 or equivalent completion rates of young people&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School Education – Secondary&lt;br&gt;Support Services Delivery&lt;br&gt;Support for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocational Education and Training</strong>&lt;br&gt;VET course completions&lt;br&gt;Certificate III or above completions&lt;br&gt;Proportion of graduates with improved employment status after training</td>
<td>Training, Higher Education, Workforce Development and Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Objectives</td>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>Output Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Early Childhood Development</strong>&lt;br&gt; Participation in a kindergarten service in the year before school&lt;br&gt; Participation in Maternal and Child Health Services&lt;br&gt; Proportion of ECEC services meeting or exceeding National Quality Standard Area 6 (NQSA6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities)</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>School Education – Primary</strong>&lt;br&gt; Mean number of primary student absent days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per year&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt; Mean number of unapproved primary student absence days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per year in secondary schools&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt; Primary students with a positive opinion about their school providing a stimulating learning environment&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School Education – Primary Support Services Delivery Support for Students with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>School Education – Secondary</strong>&lt;br&gt; Mean number of secondary student absent days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per year&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt; Mean number of unapproved secondary student absence days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per year in secondary schools&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;&lt;br&gt; Secondary students with a positive opinion about their school providing a stimulating learning environment&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School Education – Secondary Support Services Delivery Support for Students with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Vocational Education and Training</strong>&lt;br&gt; VET enrolments by age and gender&lt;br&gt; VET enrolments by administrative regions&lt;br&gt; VET enrolments by skills shortage category courses&lt;br&gt; VET enrolments by specialised category courses&lt;br&gt; VET participation by learners facing barriers&lt;br&gt; VET participation by unemployed learners&lt;br&gt; Proportion of VET students satisfied with the teaching in their course</td>
<td>Training, Higher Education, Workforce Development and Skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Departmental Objectives

### Wellbeing
Increase the contribution education, training, development and child health services make to good health and quality of life for all Victorians, particularly children and young people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Output Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Childhood Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of infants fully or partially breastfed at three and six months</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of children who have no behavioural issues on entry into Prep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of children who have no general development issues on entry into Prep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children developmentally ‘on track’ on the AEDC social competence and emotional maturity domains&lt;sup&gt;(a)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Education - Primary</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary students feeling connected to their school&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School Education – Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary students with a positive opinion about their school providing a safe and orderly environment for learning&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Support Services Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Education – Secondary</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary students feeling connected to their school&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary students with a positive opinion about their school providing a safe and orderly environment for learning&lt;sup&gt;(c)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Support Services Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocational Education and Training</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of student satisfaction with VET</td>
<td>Training, Higher Education, Workforce Development and Skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>(a)</sup> These indicators refer to government and non-government schools.

<sup>(b)</sup> This indicator refers to government schools for the national assessments and both government and non-government schools for the international assessments.

<sup>(c)</sup> These indicators refer to government schools.

Each year the Department reports progress against these outcome indicators in its Annual Report<sup>1</sup>, available on the Department’s website.

In addition to these outcome indicators, the State Budget Papers<sup>2</sup> provide detail on the Department’s output performance measures. Further detail is available at the Department of Treasury and Finance website.

1 http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/annualreports.aspx
Strategy is nothing without a strong plan for how we will get there. We have arranged our structure, processes and leadership to ensure we always have an eye to delivering the best possible early childhood, school education and training outcomes for Victorians. To get there we need to be an organisation with a high-performance culture and strong accountability. We need a deeply embedded learning culture at every level, including a focus on effective leadership.

OUR APPROACHES

The Department is taking four overarching approaches to achieving our vision:

1. Service and Funding Reform
2. Workforce Strategies and Practices
3. Partnership and Innovation
4. Organisational Reform.

A significant amount of work has already been done across these areas. We are now implementing and consolidating on our priorities over 2018 and 2019 to lift system and learner outcomes. The following pages describe the intensive and accelerated effort in delivering our priority work.

APPROACH 1: SERVICE AND FUNDING REFORM

Service and funding reform is about designing systems that respond to the diverse and changing needs of Victorian learners. Delivering effective services and lifting outcomes will require a coherent approach across the early childhood, schools, and training sectors.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early childhood education is at the heart of the Victorian Government’s vision for the Education State as the first years of life are crucial to lifelong learning, wellbeing and success.

Although Victoria is a leader in Australia in delivering high-quality early childhood services, more can be done to drive continuous improvement so Victorian services are of high-quality by international standards.

In May 2017, the Government released the Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan: Ready for kinder, ready for school, ready for life. The Plan included a record $202.1 million investment in early education, parenting services, improving access and system building. Through the Plan, the Government is progressively building a universal system that supports all families and all children, and delivers more support for those who need it. There are four key reform directions:

1. Supporting higher quality services and reducing disadvantage in early education – This includes introducing school readiness funding for kindergarten services from 2019 and significantly increasing the amount of support we provide to kindergartens to continue to improve their quality.

2. Providing more support for parenting – This includes expanding the Enhanced Maternal and Child Health service and supported playgroups and, in an Australian first, providing an additional family violence visit for women and children at risk of, or experiencing, family violence.

3. Making early childhood services more accessible and inclusive – This includes initiatives to improve kindergarten participation among children experiencing disadvantage or vulnerability, and providing more support for children with disability.
3. Making early childhood services more
2. Providing more support for parenting
1. Supporting higher quality services and
who need it. There are four key reform directions:
all children, and delivers more support for those
a universal system that supports all families and
the Plan, the Government is progressively building
improving access and system building. Through
investment in early education, parenting services,
Ready for kinder, ready for school, ready for life.

• use evidence to design and
• monitor and improve systems, including
• focus on mental and physical health and
• connect settings and sectors to improve

This approach will:

SERVICE AND FUNDING REFORM

more support for children with disability.

disadvantage or vulnerability, and providing
participation among children experiencing
initiatives to improve kindergarten
accessible and inclusive
family violence.

women and children at risk of, or experiencing,
providing an additional family violence visit for
continuing to improve their quality.
of support we provide to kindergartens to
and significantly increasing the amount
funding for kindergarten services from 2019
This includes introducing school readiness
reducing disadvantage in early education
–

4. Building a better system – This includes a
commitment to take on a greater system
leadership role, strengthen our relationship
with local government and work with the
Commonwealth to secure longer term early
childhood funding arrangements.
The Plan’s reforms are already creating a
higher quality, more equitable and more
inclusive early childhood system. Throughout
the implementation of these reforms, we are
committed to working with our local government,
sector and community partners.
The Department is also focused on increasing
access to early childhood facilities and will assist
all Victorian children to learn, play and grow
through the delivery of the Children’s Facilities
Capital Program. This is supported by investments
to improve and construct new buildings,
playgrounds and equipment, and provide for more
kindergarten places as our population grows.

SCHOOL EDUCATION

The Government’s vision for the Education State
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
aims for excellence and reduces the impact of
disadvantage.

This agenda is backed by a set of system-wide
targets that includes a focus on learning for life;
happy, healthy and resilient kids; breaking the link
and; building pride and confidence in our schools
(refer Figure 3 for further information).

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes

The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes
(FISO) was introduced in 2016 to guide schools
in using their additional school funding to get
the best results for their schools and lift student
achievement across the State. FISO is structured
around four statewide priorities that are proven
to have a strong bearing on the effectiveness
of a school: excellence in teaching and learning,
professional leadership, positive climate for
learning, and community engagement in learning.

FISO uses the latest research on student learning,
case studies and best practice, to help schools
to focus their efforts on key areas known to have
the greatest impact on school improvement.
Drawing on the best available evidence, schools
select improvement strategies from a suite of
six initiatives to best match the needs of their
students, families and communities, supported by
access to expert guidance and coaching. Small
schools are forming alliances and clusters to pool
their resources for the benefit of their students.

In 2018–19, the Department will continue
refining resources and support tools, including
sharing examples of evidenced and promising
practice, informed by an evaluation of FISO. The
Department will also enhance improvement
cycle supports. This will allow teachers, school
leadership teams and school improvement teams
to focus on better outcomes for students.

OUR STORIES: IMPROVED FUNDING
FOR RURAL KINDERGARTEN
SERVICES

2017 was the first year of full implementation
of a new funding model for small rural
kindergarten services. Under this
model, which responded to long running
sustainability, access and quality issues in
many parts of rural Victoria, all rural classified
kindergarten services receive guaranteed
funding equivalent to 18 enrolments at the
rural per capita rate. This minimum funding
of approximately $77,000 per annum
provided a significant increase for many
rural kindergartens and, just as importantly,
removed the financial uncertainty caused
by year-on-year enrolment fluctuations. This
has directly supported over 1,000 children
at approximately 100 rural kindergartens,
helping to ensure they remain a part of
all rural communities. With the pressure
taken off parent fees and local fundraising,
kindergarten providers are now better placed
to invest in quality education programs.
Literacy and Numeracy strategy

The Department introduced the first version of the Education State: Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in June 2017. The Strategy sets out how we will achieve system-wide success in literacy and numeracy, building on FISO and our existing Education State foundations. This means having a strong focus on literacy and numeracy at all levels of the system, delivering a range of evidence-based tools, guides and supports for schools and teachers to help them assess and teach effectively, and providing additional support tailored to school need.

This Strategy is for all schools, teachers, principals, networks, regions and the central office. It recognises that literacy and numeracy are foundational to engagement in education and lifelong achievement, and that strong literacy and numeracy help us to learn, experiment, reason and create, to be active and informed citizens, and to contribute socially, culturally and economically.

The development of this Strategy is deliberately iterative and implementation progresses with schools and other stakeholders.

Funding Reform

Over the next four years, we will continue to improve our school system by building on our equity funding reforms. The reforms include targeting funding and resources to students in need and providing better information about school funding, performance and student outcomes to encourage collaboration, drive school improvement and strengthen accountability.

Infrastructure projects

Victoria is experiencing a population boom leading to increased demand for education services. In response, the Victorian School Building Authority was established in 2016 to and construction of new schools and the modernisation and upgrades of existing ones. In 2018-19 the Government continued its investment in schools infrastructure by funding $1.25 billion to acquire land, plan and construct 28 new schools accommodating more than 15,000 students, and expand, upgrade and modernise a further 134 existing schools. Funding was also provided to further improve our schools through removing asbestos, relocatable classrooms and the school pride and sport fund.

This investment has been supported by improvements to the Department’s State-wide planning processes to respond to growth in student demand. Through improved forecasting, the Department has identified opportunities to deliver specialist inclusion hubs and co-locate early childhood facilities within school sites. We are also working to better understand and respond to growth across the State, with an emphasis on the established areas of Melbourne, to ensure we are proactively planning for future student demand.

We are also providing integrated early years services through the Shared Facilities Fund to deliver joint-use community infrastructure on school sites. The Victorian Government has announced a $15 million partnership with the Colman Foundation to support the ‘Our Place’ initiative, which helps to integrate early childhood, school and adult education services at a single location. The successful implementation of the initiative at Doveton College has helped to boost kinder participation, student outcomes and attendance, and improve local adult engagement in education.

Stronger place-based governance and planning for early years infrastructure will be provided through the Early Years Compact, a joint agreement between DET, Department of Health and Human Services and the Municipal Association of Victoria. This work includes developing a greater understanding of demand and capacity for kindergarten at both a local and statewide level.
OUR STORIES: NEW RICHMOND SCHOOL DELIVERS WORLD CLASS FACILITIES

Richmond High School welcomed its first students in January, one of 11 new schools opening for the start of the 2018 school year. Beginning with 76 young people in Year 7, it will eventually accommodate up to 650 students across Years 7–12.

Built over two adjacent campuses (the second to open in 2019), the school is regarded as a milestone project of the Education State reforms. As well as addressing increasing demand for student places caused by recent rapid population growth in inner Melbourne, it will share sport and other facilities to enhance community life in the Richmond area.

This is Victoria’s first vertical government secondary school. The innovative design gives students access to an impressive range of modern indoor and outdoor facilities on an inner-city site. These include floodlit competition-grade sports courts, an outdoor horticulture deck, and a spacious amphitheatre as well as state-of-the-art learning environments geared to 21st century teaching methods.

Principal Colin Simpson said older school buildings can restrict schools to older styles of learning, and he was excited by the potential of his contemporary campuses.

“This school has the opportunity to be a clean palette for the opportunities we can create”.

The Department has implemented the Government’s Special Needs Plan, including a review of the Program for Students with Disabilities. Current work focuses on implementing the Inclusive Education Agenda articulated in the Government’s response to the review in order to maximise the learning of all students with disabilities.

In July 2016, the Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026 was released to support improved outcomes for Koorie learners. The aspirational vision of Marrung is for a state where all Victorians celebrate the rich and thriving culture, knowledge and experience of our First Nations people and that every Koorie person feels strong in their cultural identity. The plan also underpins our strong commitment to deliver the ambitious Education State targets and close the gap in educational outcomes between Koorie and non-Koorie Victorians across early childhood, schools and further education. Key achievements since the launch of Marrung include continued increased participation in three and four year old kindergarten and improved participation in maternal and child health.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The training and TAFE sector responds to the changing needs of the economy and supports the Victorian Government’s Education State and jobs agendas. The Skills First reforms commenced in January 2017 and represent a new start for Victoria’s TAFE and training system. The Reforms build on the preliminary work undertaken in 2015 and 2016 to restore the TAFE system, which had become financially vulnerable.

The key features of the reformed model are:

- stronger links between training and jobs. The subsidised courses list is better targeted towards industry needs and government priorities
- maintaining an entitlement-based training and TAFE system for eligible Victorians
- establishing programmatic funding for innovation, regional and specialist training, and high needs learners
- additional investment for TAFEs to support the costs TAFEs face as public providers and for providing vital community service obligations that support students.

Other education reforms

Other reforms focus on student engagement. We are rolling out the Navigator program statewide from the existing eight pilot areas, with funding provided in the 2018-19 Budget. This builds on strong evidence of the pilot’s success in re-engaging young people in education. The LOOKOUT Education Support Centre initiative is also operating statewide to improve education outcomes for children in out of home care (these initiatives are also discussed further in Approach 3). We are also commencing implementation of reforms to our health and wellbeing programs and boosting service capacity.
Early indications are positive for the *Skills First* reforms on students, employers, industries and regions across Victoria. The Reforms are delivering a more stable training system with stronger public providers and greater focus on jobs, quality and integrity.

From 1 January 2019, 30 priority TAFE courses and 18 pre-apprenticeship courses across the state will be free. This initiative will assist in ensuring that every Victorian has the training they need to get the job they want.

The Department will continue to rebuild the TAFE and training sector to provide Victorians with the skills they need for the jobs available today and into the future. This will include reducing the financial barriers for students wanting to train in courses that lead to jobs; giving vulnerable Victorians access to training to develop essential literacy and numeracy skills; introducing reforms to strengthen and recognise quality apprenticeships and traineeships; and building better TAFEs to deliver modern and fit-for-purpose facilities.

A five year TAFE Strategy has been developed to guide reform of the TAFE network, to ensure they become agile, modern and sustainable providers of choice. Implementation of the Strategy began in 2017 and focuses on driving improvements across three outcome areas, effectiveness, efficiency and financial resilience. The Strategy aims to place TAFEs in the top quartile of providers for student and employer outcomes, and to reduce dependency on government funding by 2022. The introduction of new TAFE compacts this year outlines the individual institute priorities to improve against the TAFE Strategy.
APPROACH 2: WORKFORCE STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

The education workforce is at the heart of educational achievement. Without a highly skilled and engaged workforce, the system cannot deliver world class outcomes. It is critical that, across sectors, our educators and those who facilitate their work are given the support, resources and skills they need to succeed.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The quality of the workforce is a key determinant of outcomes for young children. While the Department is not the main employer of this workforce, it plays an important role in building the capability and performance of our early childhood professionals.

Two notable elements of the Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan will support a skilled workforce.

1. Investment in kindergarten (including school readiness funding) - Allowing kindergartens to provide additional support to those who need it.

   Initiatives include building the skills of staff working with children to develop their language skills. Other investments will provide quality improvement grants to services, for example for intensive coaching, training and advice. The Department will also significantly increase supports to the early childhood sector through new regional staff with expertise based across the State. These additional staff will work closely with kindergarten providers implementing School Readiness Funding and building their capacity to deliver high quality early childhood services. They will develop a relationship with providers to ensure a good understanding of their needs, respond to quality improvement priorities and identify appropriate supports.

2. Significant investment in the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Service workforce of nurses and allied health practitioners

   This includes workforce attraction initiatives to support service expansion for families experiencing vulnerability, address expected attrition, and increase workforce diversity. In addition, the Plan includes significant investment in professional development for MCH nurses, including support for working with families experiencing, or at risk of family violence, and in managing increasingly complex family needs and issues such as trauma.

   In addition, early years educators will have access to the Respectful Relationships professional learning program. This learning focuses on building their capacity to model and instil respectful relationships in everything they do with children and their families and lays the foundations for children’s long-term positive relationships. The professional learning will be aligned with the Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework and National Quality Standards.

   The Department will also continue to roll out the ‘Let’s Count’ professional development program for early childhood educators aimed at building children’s maths skills.

WORKFORCE STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

This approach will:

- develop excellence in educational practice, targeted to individual learning and development needs
- support students to learn independently and contribute to each other’s learning
- build creative and critical thinking through a world-class curriculum
- build performance, develop capabilities and share expertise across all workforces
- unify the education system through new pathways between schools and central and regional offices
- build workforce capacity to support all children, young people and families, regardless of circumstances
- ensure high-quality professional learning opportunities for every teacher.
SCHOOL EDUCATION

Professional Leadership

Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership (Bastow) prepares the next generation of school leaders by offering programs that support leaders to develop the capabilities they need at each stage of their career. This approach to leadership development stems from the view that professional learning has its greatest impact when tailored to the individual’s specific role and context. It is also driven by the need for schools to build leadership capacity at all levels of their organisations and not just at the top.

Comprehensive and differentiated professional learning

Bastow provides a coherent, tailored suite of leadership development activities that suit a range of needs and contexts.

1. Leadership development programs tailored to career stages – Bastow provides long-term leadership development programs (five to ten days over eight to eighteen months) tailored to school leaders’ development needs at different stages of their career (for example, emerging leaders through to experienced principals).

This approach builds the pipeline of quality leaders across the education system.

2. Leadership development courses targeting key areas of leadership practice and directly impacting improved outcomes for school and early childhood leaders – Medium-term leadership development courses (four to eight days over nine months) are designed to strengthen capabilities in key areas of leadership practice (for example, Leading Literacy, Leading Mathematics, Leading Pedagogy and Leading People in Early Childhood Settings).

3. Leadership development workshops targeting specific leadership knowledge and skills – Short-term professional practice workshops (one to two days) develop specific knowledge and skills (for example, Have Challenging Conversations and Effectively Manage Resistance to Change); they are designed for teachers and school leaders and, increasingly regional staff and early childhood professionals.

Bastow is providing professional learning to support school leaders to implement the Education State: Literacy and Numeracy Strategy.
Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Acknowledging that improving the quality of teaching in every classroom is the single most important thing we can do to improve student outcomes, the Department has committed to a range of teaching and learning initiatives including:

- the Education State: Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, which will provide teachers and school leaders with high quality, evidence-based teaching and school leadership resources and professional learning to support their practice in literacy and numeracy, across curriculum, pedagogy and assessment (including formative assessment)
- pedagogical resources for teachers to support the use of high-impact, evidence-based pedagogical practices
- the Primary Maths and Science Specialists initiative, by training 200 teachers in rural, regional and disadvantaged schools, enabling them to lead school-wide improvement
- implementation of the whole-of-practice performance and development approach through the provision of statewide professional learning programs, guidelines, materials and resources available to all principals, teachers and education support class employees
- the Excellence in Teacher Education reforms, which build on the national agenda for initial teacher education reform and leverage best practices already underway in Victoria. Together these reforms aim to raise the status of the teaching profession, attract more diverse, high-quality entrants, and inspire and equip them to help our kids reach their full potential
- the professional practice elements of the Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2017 provides teachers with four days a year release from scheduled duties to further focus on the improved delivery of high quality teaching and learning, reconfiguring the working week to focus on teaching, and new classroom-based learning specialists to support teachers to improve their practice
- the STEM Catalysts initiative is training 60 teachers from 30 disadvantaged secondary schools to lead, encourage and support changes to teaching year 7 and 8 students
- the Insight Assessment Platform, operated by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, which aims to help teachers assess the progress of all learners and support more targeted teaching practices
- continuing the scale-up of the Professional Learning Communities initiative, to build system-wide capacity of teachers and school leadership to drive improved student learning through a structured cycle of data-driven inquiry
- building capability of the school workforce to use online tools and systems and digital technologies for improved teaching and learning
- a comprehensive suite of initiatives aimed at improving confidence in the use of data to build capability of the school workforce in the use of data and evidence

Over the next four years, the Department will implement a range of initiatives to attract high-caliber teachers to improve initial teacher education and build leadership capacity and capability within the school workforce.
OUR STORIES: EMPOWERING TEACHERS THROUGH INCLUSION ONLINE COURSES

Since 2012, more than 12,000 Victorian teachers have completed Inclusion Online courses. The program consists of four online courses; Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder; Understanding Dyslexia and Significant Difficulties in Reading; Inclusion of Students with Speech, Language and Communication Needs; and Understanding Hearing Loss. The courses are designed to build teacher’s capabilities by providing up to 20 hours professional learning per course, including three face-to-face sessions or web-conference sessions.

Rachel Broughton is one such teacher to complete the free Inclusion Online training. “The training has made me realise how every student is an individual with their own strengths and way of learning.” Since adopting the Inclusion approach, Rachel believes her students are much happier, more engaged and better behaved. “The feedback from teachers has also been overwhelmingly positive. They say how much it’s improved the way they relate to, and teach, every single student. In my own classroom, Year 6, I’ve seen how the Inclusion approach transforms lives”

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The VET workforce comprises a broad range of industry-skilled and experienced trainers, teachers and practitioners who work across TAFE, private providers, Learn Local community providers and dual sector universities.

Under Skills First, the Government has set a new distinct role for the TAFE network to work collaboratively leading the training and TAFE system in excellence, quality, and innovation to deliver better outcomes for learners and industry. Central to this is achieving workforce and practice reform, arguably the single greatest contribution to building an efficient TAFE sector that can deliver training that meets the needs of the economy now and into the future.

Over the next four years, the Department will support the TAFE sector to develop a stronger performance culture and improve its organisational capability. The Department will continue to support professional development of the VET workforce through the VET Development Centre, the fellowship program through the International Specialised Skills Institute, the Victorian TAFE Association and the Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board for the development of the Learn Local workforce.

The new multi-enterprise agreement for TAFE teachers, agreed to in-principle by the Australian Education Union and the Victorian TAFE Association, recognises the central role of TAFE teachers in building a world class public training system. This agreement will further modernise Victorian TAFEs, allowing them to operate with greater flexibility to meet the needs of industry, learners and local communities.
APPROACH 3: PARTNERSHIP AND INNOVATION

This approach recognises the central role that innovative approaches and partnerships play in problem solving ensuring our system delivers the best possible outcomes for Victoria.

USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE

The use and application of high quality evidence continues to strengthen all of our work across the Department. The Strategy and Performance Group undertakes the collection, analysis and dissemination of high quality evidence to support decision making and improve outcomes for children and young people, as well as coordinating and supporting priority research and strategic evaluations, and undertaking specialist analytical projects that link data sets and generate deeper insights.

The effective use of data and evidence supports policy development, business and investment planning, evaluation, review, performance monitoring and reporting. Using evidence as the foundation for department decisions is crucial for delivering better education and training outcomes for all Victorians.

The use of data and evidence to improve outcomes is supported through:

- empowering schools and school leaders in the use of data through access to data and reports that help schools to identify strengths and potential areas for improvement, as well as the coaching needed to understand this data
- supporting planning, policy and programs across the Department to identify the evidence and data needed to support strategic and operational policies through the Department’s Outcomes Framework, which allows the monitoring of outcomes over time against the measures that matter most to children and young people
- disseminating data and insights through the development of high quality reporting and analytical products, including the State of Victoria’s Children Report which provides a comprehensive picture of the health, wellbeing, learning, safety and development of Victoria’s children and young people

The Department is committed to further partnership and innovation by empowering sector service providers and stakeholders through the continual provision of better data, information, evidence and insights that are most relevant to local decision making.

Working with our Stakeholders

In making Victoria the Education State, engagement with all parts of the community has been and will continue to be critical to our success in policy design, program development and service delivery.

The Department works collaboratively to build and maintain stakeholder relationships, recognising that our stakeholders have diverse experience, knowledge and insights that contribute to producing better outcomes for our students.
and education systems. As part of this, we are committed to engaging effectively with students, parents, carers, local communities, teachers and education providers across early childhood, schools, vocational training and higher education. We also work closely with key stakeholders such as peak bodies, community organisations, business, industry and other Commonwealth, state and local government agencies.

In early 2017, the Department formed the Schools Guiding Coalition with key partners, stakeholders and institutions to build productive, meaningful collaboration and dialogue to achieve the common goal of improving student outcomes. The Guiding Coalition shares the responsibility of building a high performing public education system and progress the Education State in Schools agenda. Guiding Coalition members include school principals, students, academics, professional associations and other community partners, and departmental staff.

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; as well as the contribution higher education providers make to local and regional economies as a result of their location.

The Department meets with Vice-Chancellors of Victorian universities three times a year to address a range of shared strategic priorities and interests including:

- the ongoing development of an integrated, world class Victorian tertiary education system that will deliver skills and knowledge for a modern, adaptive and agile workforce into the future
- promotion of collaborative research, nationally and internationally, to support economic growth in Victoria through research excellence to support existing and emerging industries
- contribution of a Victorian perspective to the national debate on higher education and research policies and strategic directions.

Cross-government Collaboration

Collaboration across government continues to be essential in delivering our strategic directions and priorities. The Department works with Victorian Government central agencies – the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) – to progress whole-of-government reforms that benefit all Victorians, such as:

- the implementation of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence
- the Asylum Seeker VET program to provide access to training for refugees and asylum seekers
- the implementation of a holistic approach to respectful relationships in schools and early years services.

The Department also works across government to facilitate shared, coordinated efforts to support achievement of Education State school targets, and to align area-based partnerships and relevant reform agendas.

Our relationship with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is being strengthened to improve outcomes for Victoria’s most vulnerable children and families and better connect services within communities. A continued area of focus in 2018 is working with DHHS on a coordinated approach to the Roadmap for Reform: strong families, safe children creating services that meet the needs of vulnerable families and children, and developing ways of working together better to share information. This work builds on existing collaborative initiatives such as Cradle to Kinder, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies and right@home, and supports the implementation of the Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan.

In addition, Supporting Children and Families in the Early Years: A Compact between the Department of Education and Training, Department of Health and Human Services and Local Government (represented by the Municipal Association of Victoria) formalises a closer working relationship to lift outcomes for young children and families. The Compact is a commitment to work together in new ways improving joint planning, coordination and information sharing to better support children and families wherever they live. It sets a clear, shared view of the role of state and local government, and recognises the
key role local government plays in supporting and responding to the needs of children and families at the local level.

The Children Legislation Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2018 (the Act) received Royal Assent on 10 April 2018, enabling the implementation of the new Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS). This legislation seeks to protect vulnerable children by simplifying and improving information sharing arrangements to create a more collaborative, integrated service that can intervene early and prevent tragedy.

The CISS will allow prescribed information sharing entities to share information to promote a child or group of children’s wellbeing and safety. It will be rolled out in two phases:

- Phase one (late 2018) – will prescribe key services who work with vulnerable children and families, such as Maternal and Child Health Nurses, Child Protection, child and family services and the Victorian Police.
- Phase two (January 2020) – will prescribe other important key services working with Victoria’s children and families, including schools, hospitals and early childhood services.

The Act also enables the development of the Child Link information technology platform. Child Link will create a register that links key factual information about each child in Victoria from a number of existing government information management systems, including a child’s enrolment and participation in relevant government and government funded services. This will enable authorised practitioners to identify risks to the safety and wellbeing of a child or group of children, and promote collaboration between services to improve child outcomes. Child Link will also increase the availability of high quality, cross program longitudinal data sets to inform ongoing policy and service design. Rollout of Child Link across Victoria will be complete before the end of 2021.

The Department also works closely with the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) so that education and training provision is aligned with industry needs and to promote international education as a growing export industry.

We also work with the coordinating departments for Regional Partnerships (DEDJTR) and Metropolitan Partnerships (DELWP). These partnerships bring a whole-of-government lens to the complex issues facing Victorian communities and the Department works with other government departments to implement the resulting actions. These partnerships support our ability to participate in the planning of new communities and in planning for future early years, school, higher education and community service provision across Victoria.

The Department works with the Commonwealth Government to pursue Victoria’s interests and lead policy development at intergovernmental forums. For example, the Department is working closely with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories to transition from the paper-based NAPLAN to online delivery.

In 2018 the Department will negotiate a number of intergovernmental agreements with the Commonwealth. This includes a new agreement on school funding and reform, a proposed National Partnership Agreement on the Skilling Australians Fund, and a further one-year extension of the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. The Department will also advocate to the Commonwealth for sustainable, ongoing funding arrangements for early childhood.

Cross-agency Collaboration

The Department has partnership agreements with peak bodies such as the Municipal Association of Victoria on behalf of local government, and the Victorian Council of Social Services representing the Victorian community sector. These agreements commit parties to collaborate on policies and projects to improve student outcomes, particularly for vulnerable students.

Cross-agency partnerships are a particular hallmark of the implementation of the Tech Schools initiative. Under the initiative, 10 state-of-the-art Tech Schools are being delivered.
across Victoria to improve STEM education and prepare students for the jobs of the future. The initiative involves multiple stakeholders, locations and a diverse range of education programs, with the local partnership for each Tech School including secondary schools, TAFE institutes, universities, local government and industry-body representatives. Collaboration between these partners ensures that development and operation will be driven by local knowledge, insight and needs.

In addition, the Victorian Skills Commissioner engages Victorian industry to ascertain their skills and training priorities and provide industry-led advice to the Minister for Training and Skills. The Department will continue working with the Commissioner and engaging with industry to consider opportunities and barriers to the uptake of apprenticeships and traineeships.

In February 2018, the new Ballarat Tech School officially opened, giving thousands of students from 15 local high schools access to programs using the latest technology to solve real-world problems. Ballarat Tech School, hosted by Federation University, provides students with the opportunity to be immersed in innovative educational programs developed in collaboration with industry and other partners.

Ballarat Tech School programs include the use of robotics, virtual reality, computer-aided design, 3D printing and engineering theory.

“The central Tech Schools team is able to work with all 10 Tech Schools and see how each one responds to the specific needs of their local schools and local industry”.

Dan O’Brien, Director of Tech Schools

Our Stories: Tech Schools Linking Students to the Community and Industry

The Department will continue to work with families, carers and the community to increase awareness of the importance of the early years, and how they can give children the best start in life. To support the engagement of those students at risk of leaving education we are rolling out the Navigator program statewide from the existing eight pilot areas, with funding provided in the 2018–19 Budget. This builds on strong evidence of the pilot’s success in re-engaging young people in education.

The LOOKOUT Education Support Centres became operational across all four Department regions in 2017. These Centres are supporting children in out-of-home care to get the best out of their education. To do this we work in close partnership with a range of organisations. The out-of-home care partnering agreement between the Department and DHHS is being refreshed during 2018 to strengthen the work of LOOKOUT and the ongoing partnership across Government to better support children and young people in care.

The Department works in partnership with training providers to encourage Victorians to participate in skills development. Well targeted training and support improves job prospects and careers development for those who participate. TAFEs and Learn Locals and contracted community-based training organisations play a particularly important role in reaching out to those who may be reluctant to enrol in training. These providers also act as hubs to engage with the community.

Vulnerable young people who leave school early often face multiple barriers to re-engaging in education and training and transitioning to the workforce or further training. The Reconnect Program provides young early school leavers or long term unemployed youth with the wrap around supports they need to re-engage in education and training and into employment.

Over the next four years, we will continue to improve the connection of education and allied health services with other government and community services. We will deliver quality Student Support Services (SSS), which help schools to build community support for learning by investigating ways to give students a stronger voice in their learning, and increase the engagement of parents and carers as partners in their children’s education. This is supported by aligning the SSS workforce with the Department’s areas and its multidisciplinary operating model, Learning Places.
APPROACH 4: ORGANISATIONAL REFORM

The Department supports a culture of integrity and respect, and safe and inclusive workplaces. This approach endeavours to:

- develop our staff so that they can perform at their best and feel empowered to deliver on outcomes
- promote public sector leadership and the highest standards of governance, integrity and conduct
- build inclusive workplaces based on the public sector values
- ensure use of resources provides value for money and meets community expectations
- establish shared responsibility and clear accountability
- provide stronger, more direct and place-based support to schools, services and providers.

School Delivery Unit

The Department is also implementing a new approach to school engagement and implementation so that schools receive the right information, at the right time, and with the right support and can focus on improving student outcomes. The School Delivery Unit has been established to provide oversight and coordination of our engagement with schools, following significant feedback from principals and key stakeholders. The School Delivery Unit will help the Department prioritise initiatives, streamline engagement with schools and deliver appropriate support that is communicated effectively to help schools focus on teaching and learning.

Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Principal Health and Wellbeing Strategy was launched in May 2018 and aims to promote positive mental and physical health and wellbeing outcomes for principals across Victoria. We recognise that leading a school is very rewarding with the opportunity to fundamentally change lives, but is also complex and comes with great responsibility. Department data shows that principals are at greater risk of mental health injury than other school staff. Workers’ compensation claims relating to mental health injury from principals, from January 2011 to October 2016, made up 4.6 per cent of these claims, when principals constitute only two per cent of the workforce. Data also shows that school principals are nine times more likely to experience violence than the general public. 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 can flourish.

Funding of $5.2 million has been provided for seven pilot initiatives commencing in 2018, including:

- school policy templates portal - to minimise administrative workload
- principal mentor program - to reduce isolation and build social capital
- regional capability building - to improve the support received from regional leaders and staff
- proactive wellbeing supervision - to provide opportunities to debrief with experienced psychologists and new principal check-ins (currently being piloted in two principal networks)
- principal health checks - free and confidential proactive health consultations. To date over 200 principals have booked these health checks
- complex matter support team - to minimise workload and stress associated with managing and responding to complex cases
- early intervention program - to provide proactive access to professional support to prevent health and wellbeing risks from escalating.
Next Generation Schools’ Administration Program

The Education State is building a system that provides every student with the knowledge, capabilities and attributes that will see them thrive throughout their lives. School and student administration is a vital enabler and consists of the policies, processes, information and technology which supports families, students, and school staff through the journey of enrolment, attendance, communication and the day-to-day operations of running a school.

The Next Generation Schools’ Administration Program is working to define the future state policy, process, and systems for Victorian government schools’ administration.

As requirements for handling the collection, use and sharing of information have grown, these have become increasingly complex. Existing policies and technology are aging and no longer adequately support the current and emerging needs of schools and their communities.

This program aims to address these needs through an investment in policy, practice and technology reform. It will modernise and streamline how a school performs administration activities, and provide a contemporary, intuitive and well-integrated technology platform to support them. In doing so, the program will undertake significant change management, communication and training activities to ensure that school staff are ready, willing and able to successfully implement these new ways of working.

Investing in our People (IoP)

The Investing in our People: The Department of Education and Training VPS People Strategy 2016-2020, released in December 2016, supports the Department’s vision of creating a workforce that is high-performing, empowered, valued and supported.

The strategy contains the five objectives:

- Leading for outcomes – strengthening our leadership practice and developing our future leaders.
- Learning-centred organisation – developing our people to be their best.
- Culture of integrity and respect – ensuring we act with the highest ethical standards and treat each other with respect.
- Safe and inclusive workplaces – safe and healthy workplaces free from physical and psychological harm, where everyone’s contribution is valued.
- Empowered and responsible people – delivering on commitments at every level of our organisation.

The Strategy provides a holistic and balanced approach to ensuring our people are capable, able to perform at their best, and feel empowered, valued and supported. The focus areas and example actions contained in the Strategy show how executives, managers and all VPS staff can deliver each of these objectives.

OUR STORIES: MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING CHARTER

The Department is committed to implementing the whole of Victorian Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter, launched in October 2016. The Charter has been developed to actively demonstrate the Victorian government’s commitment to having an engaged workforce that is physically and mentally safe and healthy. A range of supports and resources have been developed for staff, including regular information sessions, RU OK? morning teas, an online mental health and wellbeing portal, and access to the Employee Assistance Program and Conflict Resolution Support Service.

A safe workplace that promotes mental health and wellbeing, along with respect and inclusion for all is a key ingredient for staff not only wanting to come to work, but to be motivated and able to give their best. It provides a supportive psychological environment, and ensures our staff are able to deal with the day to day challenges with increased resilience, optimism and flexibility. Mental health and wellbeing is important for all of the Department’s employees, and underpins the drive towards greater productivity, reduced absenteeism, increased social inclusion, and ensuring we meet stakeholders (including the community’s) expectations in relation to the work we undertake on their behalf and the students we educate.
Aboriginal Inclusion Plan 2018-2020

The Department has a strong commitment to Aboriginal inclusion and is currently developing its Aboriginal Inclusion Plan 2018–2020, which follows plans for 2012–2014 and 2015–2017. The plan supports a more inclusive culture and provides better support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed by the Department. The Investing in our People strategy supports the Department’s commitment to Aboriginal inclusion by promoting a workplace which respects Koorie culture, values and practices through the provision of a safe and welcoming environment that makes the Department a more inclusive workplace and an employer of choice.

DET’s People and Place approach

As part of the Department’s Operating Model, the Department embeds a people and place approach to improve decision-making processes and cooperation on investments in programs, services and infrastructure. This approach recognises that regions and areas are best placed to provide expert advice and support on complex issues at the local level.

The Department’s regional model, Learning Places, 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.

In 2016, the Department created 17 areas within the four regions and appointed approximately 150 additional staff to support schools at a local level by providing multi-disciplinary teams in each area. Early in 2017, these multi-disciplinary teams were further bolstered by the integration of the Student Support Services workforce into the regional areas.

Multi-disciplinary teams and approaches provide schools, students and their families with better local access to a range of experts – from executive leaders to curriculum and assessment expertise, and a dedicated health and wellbeing workforce. These teams work together to ensure that a holistic, focused and complementary set of skills and resources are available to those most in need.

**OUR STORIES: INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE: LAUNCHING THE Koorie STAFF NETWORK**

In February 2018, the Department launched the Koorie Staff Network to support and strengthen our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. The Network aims to provide a culturally safe and collegiate environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within the Department to share ideas, discuss issues and seek advice, provide collegiate support, undertake professional development and inform relevant policy development. This includes providing input into the DET Aboriginal Inclusion Plan, the VPS Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017–2020, and Barring Djinang: Aboriginal Employment Strategy.

The Koorie Staff Network will meet three times a year, including a two-day forum. The Network is a deliverable in the Department’s VPS Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and involves both VPS and non-VPS staff.
A Focus on Leadership

While building the systems and support our people need to achieve improved outcomes, the Department's leadership group also recognises the need to continually develop its skills and capacities to lead and facilitate this work effectively. All leaders have committed to a Leadership Charter that sets out a promise to:

- work as one
- be accountable – and work with integrity
- invest in and empower staff
- always focus on the wellbeing and outcomes of the children, young people, adults and families they serve.

The Leadership Charter is underpinned by the Department's Leadership Capability Framework. This contains ten skills and attributes our leaders need to realise our strategic priorities and deliver the Education State reform agendas (refer Figure 5 below).

Integrity Strategy 2018–20

Over the next three years, the Department will progress the Integrity Reform agenda through a dedicated Integrity Strategy for 2018–20. Leveraging the gains made through the Integrity Reform Program (IRP), 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. Lessons learnt from the IRP will inform reform initiatives for early childhood and TAFE sectors.

The Strategy provides a coordinated and dedicated focus on ethical leadership and cultural reforms, good governance and policy, and effective system controls – underpinned by the public sector values.

Procurement and Financial Management

The Department continues to implement reforms to strengthen its procurement, funding and financial management functions. For finance, an operating structure has been implemented together with a strengthened assurance framework including school targeted funding, responsive business monitoring with analytic technology and improved business partnering.

Procurement arrangements have been strengthened through the creation of a new school procurement branch, the development of a school procurement policy and guidelines, and by updating the corporate procurement policy and guidelines. The procurement policies are supported by investment in additional training to increase capability for relevant staff.

Work is also underway to improve awareness and provide guidance around the Department’s travel and fleet policy, and the grants management policy. The gifts, benefits and hospitality policy has also been updated in line with Victorian Public Sector Commission minimum accountabilities. The consideration and management of offered gifts, benefits and hospitality is a critical element of the Department’s efforts to strengthen the management of conflicts of interest and the Integrity Reform agenda.

Figure 5: Leadership Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUR LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading with integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Department is responsible for delivering and regulating statewide learning and development services. Our services reach around one-third of all Victorians every year across the early childhood, schools and training and skills sectors.

Context
Victoria continues to change rapidly, with shifts in both the economic and social dynamics across the state. These changes are fundamental to how Victorians work and live and have far-reaching impacts for how we deliver education to meet the current and future needs of learners.

The Department faces a number of high-level risks that may affect our ability to achieve our vision and objectives. These risks are influenced by challenges such as a growing population, globalisation, technology changes (including the increasing focus on cyber security), and a changing economy from traditional manufacturing base to knowledge and service-based industries. There is also divergence in outcomes between learners from different backgrounds, increased demand for early childhood services and changing expectation of parents.

Victoria’s growing population places an immediate and prolonged pressure on our education systems to respond to increasing demand, both in established and new communities.

This is reflected across all educational stages and settings, from the growing demand for early childhood services to the changing workforce participation needs of families and the increased need and desire for lifelong learning.

Similarly, the challenges of the divergence in educational outcomes between learners from different backgrounds and the increased threat of family violence means it is more important than ever to give all Victorians, regardless of background or circumstance, the opportunity to shape and reshape their lives through education.

To ensure that we are prepared to face these risks and challenges, the Department has fully aligned risk management and corporate planning. This guides what actions we take, and how we undertake them. Through regular reviews of risk and planning activities, the Department is able to design and implement programs and projects that mitigate our risks and ensure all Victorian learners, regardless of their background or circumstance, are prepared for the modern world.

Risks And Challenges

As the Department delivers on its strategic intent it needs to manage significant risks and challenges. These include:

- moving a large and already high functioning education system to further improvement
- ensuring integrity within the education system
- dealing effectively with other levels of government
- maintaining staff capability
- effectively utilising the increased funding in infrastructure and community based programs
- providing safe, equitable, engaging and inclusive education services for vulnerable learners.

The design of risk management at DET is based on the Three Lines of Defence model. This outlines the ownership, accountabilities, resources and governance for risk management activities within the Department.

The three lines are:

- First line – Functions that own and manage risk.
- Second line – Functions that oversee and support the management of risk.
- Third line – Functions that provide independent assurance over the management of risk.

Figure 6: Three of Defence Model
THE DEPARTMENT’S SERVICES
The Department’s services are outlined in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Department services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early childhood education</th>
<th>School education</th>
<th>Training and skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth to 8</td>
<td>5 to 18</td>
<td>15 to 65+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 400,000 children and families</td>
<td>More than 970,000 students</td>
<td>More than 346,000 government subsidised enrolments in vocational education and training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Maternal and child health services
- Early years learning and development including early childhood education and care services
- Early childhood intervention services
- Supported playgroups and parenting supports

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

- 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
- 657(a) maternal and child health service locations

- 1,531 government schools
- 713 non-government schools (494 Catholic schools and 219 independent schools)

- 12 TAFE institutes
- 8 public universities (4 of which are dual-sector universities that also provide vocational education and training), 1 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 ACFE board to deliver pre-accredited training
- 321 government contracted private registered training organisations

(a) as at May 2018
WORKFORCE OUTLOOK

Early Childhood Education

Although the Department is not the main employer of the early childhood workforce, it plays an important role in building capability and performance of our early childhood professionals. To ensure the quality of the early childhood education and care service, providers must comply with the National Quality Framework (NQF). The NQF raises quality, drive continuous improvement and consistency, and includes minimum workforce requirements for qualification levels and skills, and educator to child ratios. Further changes from 2020 will require a second early childhood teacher to be in attendance at long day care and kindergarten services.

A critical focus for the Department is the supply and quality of the early childhood education and care workforce, including the qualifications, skills and professionalism required to support a quality system. In Victoria, 87 per cent of undergraduate early childhood teaching programs now provide graduates with a dual qualification. The Excellence in Teacher Education Reforms will further improve the quality of early childhood teaching through higher standards for selection into dual early childhood and primary teaching courses, improvements to course quality, and strengthened induction and mentoring for beginning teachers.

In addition, the Department continues to support of the MCH workforce through the MCH scholarship program and through provision of specific professional development opportunities aimed at helping the workforce respond to the increasingly complex needs of many families.

School Education

The Department, through the development of a Victorian framework for selection into teacher education, continues to improve Victoria’s ability to attract, identify and develop a diverse range of candidates with the right skills and attributes to make great teachers. The Department will also support an extra 250 teaching students to work in schools in disadvantaged areas, and strengthen induction support for graduate teachers in government schools and mentoring programs to build graduate teacher practice.

The Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2017 introduced professional practice elements known to increase teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. This included new learning specialist positions, and four professional practice days per teacher per year.

The Department also recognises the importance of child’s health and wellbeing to their capacity to learn and thrive. The allied health workforce provides specialist skills and expertise that support teachers in building their capability. In addition, the Department continues to focus on attracting nurses with the skills to identify and support children with health and wellbeing related learning difficulties through the School Nursing Program.

Higher Education and Skills

Similar to the early childhood workforce, the Department plays an important role in building capability and performance across the sector. The Department does this through the work of the VET Development Centre, which runs a detailed Professional Development Program of workshops and events for all VET professionals. The Department also works with the International Specialised Skills Institute (ISSI) and the ACFE Board, which tailor support to the needs of the different sectors within vocational training.

The Department is also supporting the TAFE sector to improve its organisational capability, especially in the areas of leadership and culture, strategy development and financial sustainability. To this end, the TAFE Organisational Capability Development Program has been established to provide specific advice, support and funds to TAFE institutes.
The Department’s total output cost for 2018–19 is $14.94 billion, as per the 2018–19 State Budget papers. A breakdown across the output categories is shown in Figure 8:

Figure 8: Department output cost breakdown 2018–19

The 2018–19 Budget delivers new output and asset funding of approximately $3.6 billion across all three portfolios. This will continue the Government’s commitment to make Victoria the Education State.

Early Childhood Education

The 2018–19 Budget provided more than $126.9 million for vital early childhood initiatives that will create a higher quality, more equitable and inclusive early childhood system. This will help Victorian families get their kids ready for kinder, ready for school and ready for life.

Key investments include:

- **$64.8 million** to ensure kindergarten is accessible and equitable
  - **$33.9 million** to construct new, and upgrade existing, early learning facilities and integrated children’s centres.
  - **$27.2 million** in additional and ongoing funding to meet the expected increase in kindergarten enrolments in 2018.

- **$3.7 million** in additional funding to support children in the Wimmera South West region get the most out of kindergarten.

- **$34.8 million** to improve the quality of early childhood education
  - **$17.9 million** for language programs for children in kindergartens, including commencing 10 bilingual programs.
  - **$8.9 million** to help maintain universal access to 15 hours per week of kindergarten in 2019.
  - **$8.0 million** to continue to build a professional and skilled early childhood teaching workforce.

- **$27.3 million** to assist the Victorian children who are most in need
  - **$9.4 million** as part of a Whole of Government initiative totalling $43.4 million to support prescribed entities to appropriately share information. These reforms will improve early identification of issues and risks for children.
  - **$9.0 million** to develop new and better ways for communities, service providers and government to work together in partnership to build strong families and prevent harm to children before it occurs.
  - **$4.0 million** to meet the growing demand for the Early Start Kindergarten program. The LOOKOUT program will also be expanded.
  - **$4.0 million** to continue to provide Maternal and Child Health services for Aboriginal families.
  - **$0.9 million** to continue funding for Early Childhood Intervention Services to help around 120 children in 2018–19 who are ineligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
School Education

The 2018–19 Budget provided a total of $1.6 billion in output funding to implement the next phase of the Education State in our schools. This includes:

$1.1 billion

Ensure greater equity and access across the school system

- $690.4 million additional and ongoing funding will be provided to government and non-government schools to meet forecast student enrolment growth in the 2018 school year.
- $93.2 million in additional funding for 3,700 students will meet identified need in the Program for Students with Disabilities in the 2019 school year.
- $65.5 million to support the health and wellbeing of students through enhanced funding for school nurses and allied health services, including speech pathology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy services.
- $60.9 million for operating costs associated with school asset initiatives included in building the Education State.
- $43.8 million to expand the Navigator program statewide over three years. The program provides intensive support to young people aged 12–17 who are at risk of disengaging or have already disengaged from school.
- $39.2 million to increase the number of students supported by the English as an Additional Language program for the 2019 school year in line with growth in enrolments.
- $31.6 million to make Victoria a leader in inclusive education for students with a disability or additional learning needs.
- $26.3 million to provide students in participating schools with access to primary health care in school.
- $22.5 million for assisted travel to and from school for eligible Victorian school students.
- $22.1 million to provide professional development workshops and teaching tools to teacher and school leaders to improve literacy and numeracy practice.

$108.6 million

Prepare students for life after school

- $108.6 million to assist students to make the better career pathway decisions and to meet the needs of business and industry.
- $49.8 million to pilot a new model for school-based apprenticeships and traineeships in high-demand trades such as construction and emerging industries.
- $25.6 million to develop a Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) Quality Assurance Framework that will assist schools in purchasing high quality VETiS.

$184 million

$148.3 million

Technological and educational advancements

- $35.8 million to continue to provide software technologies to support the daily operations of all government schools and the Department of Education and Training.
- $32.9 million to train 200 teachers to become Primary Maths and Science Specialists.
- $29.6 million to strengthen school financial and asset management.
- $28.6 million continued funding for 10 Tech Schools in the Ballarat, Banyule-Nillumbik,
Bendigo, Casey, Geelong, Gippsland, Monash, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Yarra Ranges regions, which are connecting students to the skills and jobs of the future.

- **$17.0 million** to strengthen teaching practice by establishing new digital student assessment tools.
- **$4.4 million** to establish the Victorian Aspiring Principal Assessment (VAPA) to guide development of aspiring principals.

**$85.2 million**

Provide school students with tools for life outside the classroom

- **$36.1 million** to support eligible students from the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund.
- **$22.3 million** to continue to support schools and early childhood educators promote respect, positive attitudes and behaviours.
- **$11.2 million** to continue to fund the Victorian Young Leaders to China Program to support a six-week immersion program in China for Year 9 students.
- **$9.5 million** in additional funding to support Victorian government, Catholic primary and specialist schools contribute towards the cost of swimming and water safety education.
- **$4.0 million** for additional lifeguard services, resources and school swimming and water safety programs.
- **$1.1 million** to support student participation in interschool sports competitions.
- **$1.0 million** to support government schools to purchase music-related resources.

**Training, Higher Education, Workforce Development and Skills**

The 2018–19 Budget provided **$523.8 million** in output funding to grow Victoria’s Training and TAFE sector. This continues the Government’s Skills First strategy. Initiatives will modernise the system to meet evolving demands and improve accessibility. The funding provided is:

**$303.8 million**

More funding for more training

- continue and further extend investment in the TAFE and training sector to support eligible students to access training and develop skills.

**$172 million**

Free TAFE for priority courses

- make TAFE free for 30 priority courses and 18 pre-apprenticeship courses commencing 1 January 2019

**$43.8 million**

Supporting our apprentices

- improve quality standards for apprenticeships and traineeships.
ASSET OUTLOOK

The Department caters to diverse learning and development needs across the early childhood, school education and higher education and skills portfolios. The Government has committed to substantially improving Victoria’s educational infrastructure in order to achieve the Education State vision.

The Government has responded to population growth by providing $1.38 billion in the 2018–19 Budget to improve the infrastructure that serves the education goals of Victorians.

Early Childhood Education

The 2018–19 Budget provided funding of $9.0 million to build new early childhood education facilities and co-located facilities with the following schools:

- Botanic Ridge Primary School.
- Davis Creek Primary School.
- Wyndham South (Riverwalk) Primary School.

School Education

The 2018–19 Budget provided funding of $1.25 billion to upgrade existing schools and build new schools to improve educational outcomes across the State:

- $482.8 million to provide funding at 134 schools across Victoria.
- $341.3 million to meet growing demand from Victoria’s strong population growth through building new schools and additional stages of school buildings in some of the fastest growing parts of the State.
- $271.7 million to acquire land for new schools.
- $70.5 million to provide relocatable building to relieve pressure at schools reaching their capacity.
- $45.0 million to continue to remove asbestos in schools.
- $17.2 million to fund master planning, detailed design and early work at 14 current and future sites.
- $10.0 million for the School Pride and Sport fund to deliver minor refurbishments and upgrades.
- $10.0 million to continue to provide school infrastructure such as inclusive playgrounds, outdoor sensory areas and quiet re-engagement spaces.

Training, Higher Education, Workforce Development and Skills

The 2018–19 Budget provided funding of $120.4 million to modernise TAFE facilities. This will improve the usability and accessibility of facilities. The following TAFE facilities will receive funding:

- $35.5 million to redevelop Federation Training Morwell, including a Future Skills Training Centre and a Technical Training Centre of Excellence.
- $25 million for Federation Training’s Port of Sale Development to consolidate its services in Sale into a new Educational Community and Industry Hub.
- $59.9 million to revitalise the Bendigo Kangan Institute Bendigo City Campus.