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# SCHOOL POLICY & FUNDING ADVISORY COUNCIL

OFFICIAL STATEMENT No. 3: SEPTEMBER 2018

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## ABOUT

Welcome to the third Official Statement of the School Policy and Funding Advisory Council (Council).

Established in 2015, Council provides advice to the Minister for Education on regulatory, policy and funding issues that affect government and non-government schools. Council is made up of the following members:

- Gill Callister, Secretary, Department of Education & Training (Chair)
- Stephen Elder, Executive Director, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV)
- Michelle Green, Chief Executive, Independent Schools Victoria (ISV)
- Katy Haire, Deputy Secretary – Early Childhood & School Education Group, Department of Education & Training (DET)
- Professor Kwong Lee Dow, Independent Member, representing the views of students in all Victorian schools.

Council meets at least three times each year, and Official Statements are shared with the school community after each meeting. The Department provides secretariat support to the Council.

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## COLLABORATING ACROSS THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Victoria's school sectors have a long history of working together to identify opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration and partnerships to support improved student outcomes. Establishing the Council in legislation as an advisor to the Minister is only the latest chapter in this collaborative working history.

Last year, the Council's Collaboration Working Group developed a collaboration toolkit, which provides schools from the three sectors with practical guidance on processes and considerations for establishing collaborative partnerships, and with a number of case studies to highlight the potential benefits arising from cross-sectoral collaboration.

Since its release, the *Improving Together: A Cross-Sector Collaboration Toolkit for Principals* has been promoted to all Victorian schools and to key stakeholder forums. For example, the Country Education Partnership to encourage cross-sectoral collaboration and partnerships within rural and remote communities.

School leaders are encouraged by Council to access the toolkit as they commence their planning for the 2019 academic year. To download a copy of the toolkit, please see: [School Networks](#) (DET).



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## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The school sectors in Victoria are taking a shared approach to ensure that students with disabilities and additional learning needs feel welcome, accepted and engaged at their schools so that they can participate, achieve and thrive in school and life.

At the meeting in July, Council members benefited from hearing what each of the sectors are doing to support students with disabilities. To support the inclusive education reforms, representatives from the school sectors will convene every three months to identify and progress opportunities for strengthening and expanding collaboration at both the sectoral and school level, including:

- encouraging effective personalised learning and support planning
- maximising the impact of specialist and education support staff
- promoting inclusive education practices at the whole-school and classroom level.

Key reforms and policies that have cross-sectoral relevance have been supported through consultation on policy development and working group participation.

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## SUBCOMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS OF COUNCIL

As an advisory body to the Minister on regulatory, policy and funding issues for government and non-government schools, Council has relied on subcommittees and working groups to provide advice on cross-sectoral policy and programs.

Beyond the Council's subcommittees and working groups, a number of other channels for cross-sector engagement exist to support a variety of policy and advisory functions. The relevant program area of the Department's work collaboratively with their respective subcommittees and working group counterparts across CECV and ISV in the delivery of Council priorities and advice.

Since Council's establishment in 2015, several subcommittees and working groups have been created to support the Council. Currently there are six subcommittees and working groups which have both an ongoing and time-defined role:

### SUBSTANTIVE



#### NGS REFERENCE GROUP

is the primary consultation forum for discussion between DET, CECV and ISV on funding and related matters



#### PERFORMANCE REPORTING & DATA SHARING WORKING GROUP

works to develop an enhanced approach to the access, analysis and reporting to Council and the Minister on school system-level performance data



#### COLLABORATION WORKING GROUP

is a forum for cross-sector collaborative opportunities and discussing issues relevant to improving student outcomes

### TIME-LIMITED



#### NAPLAN ONLINE STEERING COMMITTEE

provides recommendations and advice on critical decisions for the Victorian transition to NAPLAN Online



#### SCHOOL LEADERS FOR GENDER EQUITY AND RESPECT WORKING GROUP

a cross-sectoral advisory group to champion gender equality and respect, and build relationships with principals, teachers and community leaders across the State to address family violence through education



#### KOORIE EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

considers cross-sector collaborative opportunities and provides a forum for discussing raising the aspirations and achievement for Koorie students, including implementing the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy*

If you wish to learn more about the work of Council or its subcommittees, you are welcome contact the secretariat by email: [ngs.support@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:ngs.support@edumail.vic.gov.au)



**Ms Gill Callister** (Chair)  
Secretary  
Department of Education  
and Training



**Mr Stephen Elder**  
Executive Director  
Catholic Education  
Commission of Victoria



**Ms Michelle Green**  
Chief Executive  
Independent Schools  
Victoria



**Ms Katy Haire**  
Deputy Secretary  
Department of Education  
and Training



**Prof. Kwong Lee Dow**  
Independent Member  
University of Melbourne

#### Media Enquiries

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria	<a href="mailto:media@cecv.catholic.edu.au">media@cecv.catholic.edu.au</a>	(03) 9267 0228
Department of Education and Training	<a href="mailto:media.unit@edumail.vic.gov.au">media.unit@edumail.vic.gov.au</a>	(03) 9637 2871
Independent Schools Victoria	<a href="mailto:enquiries@is.vic.edu.au">enquiries@is.vic.edu.au</a>	(03) 9825 7200

#### Council Secretariat

Department of Education and Training [ngs.support@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:ngs.support@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Contact the Department if you need this document in an accessible format such as large print or audio; please telephone on 03 8683 2111, or email [ngs.support@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:ngs.support@edumail.vic.gov.au)