Official Statement No. 24, 4 July 2025

School Policy and Funding Advisory Council

**Council update**

Council acknowledged the significant cross-sectoral collaboration that has taken place since the meeting of 3 April 2025.

**Numeracy challenges**

Council discussed an analysis of Victoria’s numeracy performance, and opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration on programs and initiatives to improve this performance.

Council heard that in line with other high performing states, Victorian NAPLAN numeracy results declined between 2018 and 2022. A slight decline was also evident under the new NAPLAN scale between 2023 and 2024.

Council noted the new Mathematics Position Statement outlining Victoria’s approach to teaching mathematics in government schools, and the appointment of 4 Victorian Mathematics Ambassadors (including 2 from Catholic schools) to promote excellence in teaching and to strengthen engagement and aspirations across all school sectors.

All Victorian schools can also access Victorian Lesson Plans to support mathematics teachers, especially those who are teaching out-of-field.

**2024 Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) results**

Council noted the 2024 AEDC results indicated that the rates of developmentally vulnerable and children needing further assessment have increased for prep students, both in Victoria and nationally.

Members discussed implications for the school system of higher rates of children starting school developmentally vulnerable or needing further assessment.

**Youth Justice**

Council heard an update on the implementation of the Youth Justice (Department of Justice and Community Safety) Enhanced Bail Supervision and Support (EBSS) Trial.

Council acknowledged the cross sectoral collaboration to support the education and engagement of young people in the EBSS Trial.

**2026-2029 Non-Governments Schools Funding Agreement**

Council noted the proposed approach to the development of the Victorian Government’s Non-Government Schools Funding Agreement 2026-2029.

Members noted that the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement (2025 – 2034) will require consistent reporting processes across government and non-government schools that will be reflected in the new Funding Agreement.

**Commonwealth-State update**

Council was provided with an update on Commonwealth-State matters.

**Legislation update**

Council was provided with an update on Education portfolio legislation which impacts the schooling sector.

About

Established in 2015, the Council provides advice to the Minister for Education on regulatory, policy and funding issues that affect public and non-government schools.

Council meets 3 times each year and an Official Statement is shared after each meeting. The department provides secretariat support to the Council. Previous statements can be found online on the department’s website:<https://www.vic.gov.au/school-policy-and-funding-advisory-council>  
**Membership**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tony Bates**  Acting Secretary  Department of Education  (Chair) | **Professor Elizabeth Labone**  Chief Executive Officer  Victorian Catholic Education Authority | **Rachel Holthouse**  Chief Executive  Independent Schools Victoria | **Chris Wardlaw** Independent Member | **David Howes**  Deputy Secretary  Schools and Regional Services  Department of Education |

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Contact the Council Secretariat if you need this information in an accessible format.