

Official Statement No. 22, 7 November 2024

School Policy and Funding Advisory Council

Council Updates

Council welcomed Rachel Holthouse, Chief Executive, Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) and Professor Elizabeth Labone, Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) as official members of the Council.

Council received an update on the *Education State - Excellence in Every Classroom* vision, which was recently launched by the Minister for Education.

2025 Non-Government Schools Funding Agreements

Council noted the update on the 2025 Non-Government Schools funding agreements developed by the Department of Education (the department) in consultation with the VCEA and ISV.

Consent Education and Respectful Relationships

Council received an update on the Victorian Government's women's safety package investment of \$7.8 million over 4 years to expand and embed the Respectful Relationships initiative in schools. Members discussed the opportunity to promote this initiative and to leverage the strong engagement from existing lead schools in the non-government school sector.

Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education

Council noted the work of the department to strengthen self-determination in education and improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations students, and the linkages to the work of the Yoorrook Justice Commission and Victoria's path to treaty.

Members discussed the findings of the *Self-Determination in Education, Campfire Conversations: reflections and directions* report, and the opportunities for government and non-government schools to support self-determination in education.

System Performance

Council discussed the 2024 cross-sectoral National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results. Members discussed in particular the challenges and opportunities in addressing numeracy outcomes across primary and secondary schooling which is a common issue across Australian jurisdictions. The department, VCEA and ISV agreed that there is an opportunity to collaborate and share information and best practice examples in responding to this issue.

Teacher Workload Reduction Fund

Council noted the Australian Government will provide funding for Victoria to trial new Operational Teaching Assistants in government and non-government schools to reduce teacher workload.

Members discussed opportunities for cross-sector collaboration on this initiative, including a system-wide approach to ensure a diversity of models is piloted.

Commonwealth-State Update

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

Regulation and Legislation Update

Council noted proposed amendments to education-related legislation that have implications for schools.

Council Work Plan

Council noted the progress made against the 2024 work plan and that the 2025 work plan will be developed in consultation with members.

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 Official Statements are 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

Ms Jenny Atta Secretary Department of Education (Chair)	Professor Elizabeth Labone Chief Executive Officer Victorian Catholic Education Authority	Ms Rachel Holthouse Chief Executive Independent Schools Victoria	Chris Wardlaw, Independent Member	Dr David Howes Deputy Secretary Schools and Regional Services, Department of Education
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