

SCHOOL POLICY AND FUNDING ADVISORY COUNCIL OFFICIAL STATEMENT NO.15: JULY 2022

COVID-19 AND WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Council discussed the ongoing impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and influenza cases on school communities, the challenges arising for the education workforce through increased staff absences, and measures in place to support the continuity of learning across all school settings.

Council acknowledged the coordinated efforts of the sectors to provide schools with support and resourcing. Council noted the importance of promoting consistent messaging to families, students, and staff about the Department of Health's recommendation to wear masks to help minimise the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections.

ENTERPRISE BARGAINING AGREEMENT FOR GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Council noted that the Victorian Government Schools Agreement was approved by the Fair Work Commission on Monday 18 July and is set to come into effect on 25 July 2022.

EDUCATION STATE – STATE-WIDE ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Council reviewed key state-wide reporting data and trends emerging from an analysis of the 2021 NAPLAN results. Sectors agreed to engage in more detailed discussions to address shared challenges.

CROSS-JURISDICITON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Council heard about cross-jurisdiction risk mitigation strategies coordinated through the National Association of School Security & Emergency Managers (NASSEM).

NASSEM comprises of representatives from education departments in each Australian jurisdiction, and recently joined representatives from New Zealand. The group meets monthly to share knowledge, experience and insights of issues and challenges relating to emergency and security management.

BETRAYAL OF TRUST: INSURANCE RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

An overview of the department's 'Insurance Risk Assessment Framework' was presented with Council noting alignment to the Victorian Funding Guideline for Services to Children and the 2022-2025 Victorian Non-Government Schools Funding Agreement.

CHILD INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME AND CHILD LINK

Council acknowledged the importance of cross-sector engagement across education to support the implementation of reforms associated with the Child Information Sharing Schemes.

A school-based Child Link pilot utilising a web-based platform that displays information about a child to authorised professionals was discussed.

COMMONWEALTH-STATE UPDATE

Council noted that on 1 April 2022, state and territory Education Ministers endorsed Version 9.0 of the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum. Jurisdictions will continue to 'adopt and adapt' the curriculum, so that it meets the needs of each local context and students.

The Victorian Government's submission to the Productivity Commission on its review of the National Schools Reform Agreement was discussed, with Council acknowledging the input received from sectors. An interim report is

scheduled to be released in September 2022, with the Productivity Commission’s final report due for publication in December.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority is working with Education Services Australia and all states and territories to finalise an integrated program plan for NAPLAN 2023. This includes a schedule to support the earlier testing period in Term 1.

REGULATORY POLICY UPDATE

Council noted that the new **School Community Safety Order** scheme commenced on 28 June 2022 with guidance material to support implementation available from the department’s Policy and Advisory Library.

The new **Child Safe Standards Ministerial Order 1359** commenced on 1 July 2022 with a comprehensive suite of resources to support school implementation accessible from the department’s PROTECT website.

The **Education Legislation Amendment (Adult and Community Education and Other Matters) Bill 2022** is currently with the Legislative Council. Within the amendments, the Bill includes provisions to modernise and simplify regulations associated with the use, access, and disclosure of the Victorian Student Number (VSN).

ABOUT

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

Council meets three 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>

JULY 2022 MEETING

The July meeting was attended by the following appointed members and delegates:

- Jenny Atta**, Secretary, Department of Education and Training (Chair and representative for the department).
- Professor Kwong Lee Dow**, Independent Member (representing the interests of students in all Victorian schools).
- Dr David Howes**, Deputy Secretary, Department of Education and Training (representing the government school sector).
- Dr Mary Oski**, Director, Learning and Regional Services, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV).
- Dr Edward Simons**, Director, Governance and Strategy, CECV.
- Nigel Bartlett**, Manager, Independent Schools Victoria (ISV).
- Fiona Tracey**, Manager, Policy, and Governmental Relations, ISV.

MEMBERSHIP

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| Ms Jenny Atta (Chair) Secretary Department of Education and Training | Mr Jim Miles Executive Director Catholic Education Commission of Victoria | Ms Michelle Green Chief Executive Independent Schools Victoria | Prof. Kwong Lee Dow Independent Member University of Melbourne | Dr David Howes Deputy Secretary Department of Education and Training |
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MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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| Department of Education and Training | media.unit@education.vic.gov.au | (03) 8688 7776 |
| Independent Schools Victoria | enquiries@is.vic.edu.au | (03) 9825 7200 |

COUNCIL SECRETARIAT

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Contact the department if you need this information in an accessible format:

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