

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
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BOOSTING ABORIGINAL SELF-DETERMINATION IN EDUCATION

The Allan Labor Government will implement education reforms co-designed with the Victorian Aboriginal community with the highest single investment in Aboriginal education in Victoria to date.

A \$51 million investment from the *Victorian Budget 2024/25* is the result of one of the state's biggest consultation processes, making sure Aboriginal self-determination shapes Victoria's education system.

The consultation, completed in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated, reaffirmed the fact that Aboriginal people know what is best for their communities.

An investment of \$3.7 million from the Labor Government in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* gave 3,100 people the opportunity to have their voice heard at one of more than 180 Campfire Conversations held at 89 schools and 12 Aboriginal organisations.

The resulting *Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education* report, released today, outlines what was heard, identifies six areas for reform and includes tangible actions enabling schools to make meaningful and impactful change in partnership with the Koorie community.

The six areas for reform are reciprocal partnerships, truth-telling in the Victorian curriculum, Aboriginal voice in decision-making, ongoing capacity building to support school and community engagement, meaningful accountability measures and creating a culturally safe and responsive school system.

The funding includes \$31 million to increase the capacity of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to support education outcomes and inclusion for Aboriginal students.

This investment will also support the development and delivery of locally tailored First Nation curriculum resources and truth-telling through the curriculum, so that all Victorian teachers and students have the opportunity to enhance their understanding of Aboriginal histories, cultures and communities.

These reforms will mean that Victoria's education system better reflects the experiences, cultures and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, amplifying their voice and expertise through genuine partnerships and shared decision making.

The investments in the *Victorian Budget 2024/25* builds on \$86.3 million already invested by the Labor Government in Aboriginal education since the Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan was released in 2016, including funding for programs that support excellence, equity and wellbeing for Aboriginal students.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"We've seen Koorie outcomes improve in some important areas in recent years, but we know there is more to do, so we look forward to working with communities and our schools to empower Koorie learners and families."

"Aboriginal people are best placed to know what works in their communities – that's why we have made the biggest single investment in Aboriginal education in this state and are determined to put Aboriginal self-determination at the heart of the education system."

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Quotes attributable to Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated president Geraldine Atkinson

“For generations, our community has tirelessly advocated for self-determination in education.”

“Our community is determined to create a better education system so our students can thrive in their learning, and Koorie people are empowered at all levels to determine their own futures, learning goals, aspirations, and successes.”