

WHAT THE PROFESSION NEEDS NOW FOR THE FUTURE

FINAL REPORT



FINAL REPORT: WHAT THE PROFESSION NEEDS NOW FOR THE FUTURE

FIONA LONGMUIR, TIM DELANY, JO LAMPERT, JANE WILKINSON

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This report was written on the lands of the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and includes contributions from First Nations teachers, education support employees and school leaders. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first educators of these lands and honour their continuous connection to Country. Sovereignty was never ceded. This always was and always will be Aboriginal Land. We acknowledge and pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Traditional Owners throughout Victoria, including Elders past and present, and First Nations leaders.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final report concludes the '*What the Profession Needs Now for the Future*' research project. The project has involved 18 months of engagement with members of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Education Union through a survey of over 8,000 members, and a subsequent feedback process that more than 1,300 members participated in. The focus of this work has been to generate important discussions to achieve significant positive change that addresses the needs of Victoria's public school workforce. This project has sought to ensure that the voices of Victoria's public school teachers, education support employees, and school leaders are central to these conversations.

This final report synthesises findings from the three prior discussion papers, with extensive AEU Victorian Branch member feedback, and supplementary research across a range of key topics. This report engages with each of the discussion papers individually, providing a summary of the paper followed by the draft recommendations and a discussion of these in consideration of the further information from the member feedback and any supplementary research. This is followed by a final section of this report, which synthesises the recommendations from across the three discussion papers and presents suggestions for short- and longer-term actions that are needed to address the question: *what does the profession need now for the future?*

Through this synthesis and further discussion of the prior papers, this report presents challenges and opportunities facing Victorian public schools that Victorian teachers, education support employees, and school leaders have identified as significant in their work. These include workforce retention, inadequate

remuneration, excessive workloads, and underfunding of infrastructure, resourcing, and support programs. A major concern is the retention of school employees. Significant numbers of teachers, education support employees, and school leaders are considering leaving the profession due to burnout, lack of recognition, and challenging working conditions.

Salary dissatisfaction is also widespread, with Victorian teachers being the lowest paid nationally. Comparative analysis with New South Wales highlights significant pay gaps across all roles, and remuneration for school employees does not adequately reflect their contribution, professionalism, and workload. Further, current salaries are insufficient to support living expenses such as housing costs. Workload pressures are also concerning, with teachers, principals, and education support employees all reporting substantial unpaid hours. For teachers, administrative and compliance tasks detract from core teaching responsibilities, contributing to stress and reduced job satisfaction. Members call for reduced documentation requirements, increased autonomy, and more flexible work arrangements to restore professional trust and work-life balance.

The report also addresses issues of adequate provision for Victoria's public schools. Issues highlighted here include insufficient funding, staffing shortages, inadequate facilities, and curriculum overload. Public schools, especially in disadvantaged areas, lack resources to meet diverse student needs. Recommendations include full funding to meet the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS), expanded staffing, modernised facilities, and curriculum reform.

Partnerships between schools, families, and

communities are recognised as vital but strained. While communication is generally positive, deeper engagement, especially with First Nations communities, is lacking. The report emphasises the need for culturally safe environments, co-designed initiatives, and recognition of the unique burdens placed on First Nations employees by colonial education systems. The Yoorrook Justice Commission's recommendations are highlighted as essential for advancing educational justice.

Strong partnerships between schools, families, and communities are essential to supporting student learning and wellbeing, especially in the face of growing social and economic pressures. While there is a shared commitment to student success among

school employees and parents/carers, safety concerns and declining respect are undermining morale and retention, highlighting the urgent need for clearer behavioural guidelines and systemic support.

Strong belief in the importance of school, parent/ carer and community partnerships is evident. However, the evidence presented in this report suggests that the effective development of partnerships is constrained by limited time, resources, and systemic challenges, including staffing shortages and increasing demands on schools. AEU members emphasise the need for clearer communication frameworks, flexible engagement strategies, and targeted support to foster respectful, collaborative environments.

Nine synthesised recommendations are proposed:

1. **Funding**
Fairly and adequately fund Victoria's public schools now, to at least 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard.
2. **Remuneration and recognition**
Value the profession through significantly improved pay and conditions which respect school employees and reflect their contributions and the importance of their work.
3. **Workforce retention**
Strengthen focus on workforce retention (and consequently attraction) through improved pay, reduced workloads (including actively reducing administration and compliance tasks) and increased support to manage complex and challenging student behaviour.
4. **Time use**
Improve capacity for the profession to use time flexibly to enhance employee work-life balance, thus increasing attraction and retention of the workforce.
5. **Facilities**
Increase investment in modern and inclusive school facilities and infrastructure.
6. **Productive partnerships**
Enhance engagement between schools, parent/ carers, and communities, including through increased resourcing and supporting workplace arrangements which enable parents/carers and school employees time and opportunity to engage meaningfully about student learning and wellbeing.
7. **First Nations commitments**
Deepen partnerships with First Nations communities and workforce through Treaty and engagement with Yoorrook Justice Commission recommendations.
8. **Student support**
Strengthen support for diverse learning needs and better resource support for complex and challenging student behaviours.
9. **Class sizes**
Establish and fund short-, medium- and long-term goals for sequential reductions in class sizes across public schools to ensure equity and excellence.

Urgent actions include reinstating deferred funding, increasing salaries, reviewing leave arrangements, reducing administrative burdens, and implementing safety measures. Medium-to-long-term goals focus on flexible work models, modernised school schedules, increased workforce diversity, and fostering a culture of professionalism and innovation.

This report calls for commitment to transformative changes to ensure Victoria's public education system can meet current challenges and future demands, with a shared commitment from the profession, policymakers, and communities.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is the final in a series of discussion papers in the ‘*What the Profession Needs Now for the Future*’ research project commissioned by the AEU Victorian Branch. The goal of this work is to identify key issues faced by the Victorian public school education workforce (teachers, education support employees and school leaders) and examine opportunities for necessary system and school-based reforms. This project seeks to inform future policy and system changes that will ensure a healthy and sustainable education workforce for Victoria, which is well resourced and supported to enable students across the state to access and benefit from high-quality public education.

The previous three discussion papers were informed by a significant survey conducted over Term 2 of 2024, which was responded to by over 8,000 AEU Victoria members. As well, a literature review, desktop scan of other relevant jurisdictions, and a survey of over 1,600 public school parents that was conducted in Term 3, 2024. For further information about the data sources and analysis see the discussion papers, particularly Discussion Paper 1.

The discussion papers were released approximately four months apart: Discussion Paper 1 in July 2024; Discussion Paper 2 in October 2024; and Discussion Paper 3 in February 2025. For each paper, a direct feedback process was conducted with AEU members, which sought to collect members’ views about the key findings and recommendations for each paper. In total, more than 1,300 members from across Victoria shared their views across the three cycles of member feedback data collection. This involved 33 regional meetings, 60 sub-branch meetings, as well as dedicated meetings with First Nations members, principal class members, education support members, and casual relief teacher members. There were also opportunities for members to provide individual submissions via email or an online form that was distributed at presentations of the discussion papers and via union email communications with members.

Since the publication of each of the papers and the member feedback processes, AEU Victoria has conducted an analysis of the salary rates of school employees in jurisdictions across the nation (AEU, 2025a) and commissioned a research project investigating the housing affordability for school employees across Victoria (Eacott, et al., 2025).

The purpose of this culminating report is to bring together the key information in each of the three discussion papers with the feedback from the AEU members as well as any new information from further research and policy developments. This final report concludes this phase of a broad investigation into the state of public schools in Victoria, and presents a range of key recommendations for implementation that are needed to support and sustain the public education workforce in Victoria in the short and long term.

In each of the following three sections, we first summarise each of the discussion papers and then present a further discussion on topics that emerged as a priority through member feedback. These topics foreground the reflections and further insights from members as well as the supplementary research and policy developments. The discussion papers provided the foundation for member feedback and additional research, which are both used as evidence to advance discussion of the relevant key themes in each section.

For each topic, it is important to note that these are not unique to the particular section or discussion paper that they are presented with below. Members raised similar issues and key priorities for change and improvement across all the discussion papers. Their responses also extended beyond the narrow individual recommendations in the paper to encompass many areas of concern. As a result, each topic is an important area that is often relevant across the themes of each of the discussion papers and each have broad-ranging components and consequences. Together, they inform the final synthesised recommendations and possible interventions presented in the final section of this report.

2. WORK IN VICTORIA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The workforce in Victoria’s public schools is characterised by a rich diversity of roles and experience levels, yet persistent structural inequities continue to shape the professional landscape. Gender disparities remain a defining feature of the workforce. Women are disproportionately represented in lower-paid education support roles and are underrepresented in leadership positions. The *Workplace Gender Audit* (Victorian Department of Education, 2021) found that 76% of the government teaching service identified as women, while this decreased to only 44% of executive class employees and 56% of principal class employees.

This imbalance is compounded by the fact that 90% of the lowest-paid education support employees are women, highlighting a gendered stratification of roles and remuneration. Mid-career women face particularly acute challenges. Our survey found that women in their 30s and 40s are more likely than men to be uncertain about their future in the profession, with 5–6% more women in each age category expressing doubt about remaining in public education. Limited access to flexible work arrangements, such as part-time roles, exacerbates these challenges. Women are more likely to work part time than men (33% versus 13%), yet

the overall workforce remains predominantly full time, with 71% of respondents employed in full-time roles. Although the Victorian Government Schools Agreement (2022) has made some progress in promoting part-time opportunities for principals, broader systemic support for flexible work remains insufficient.

Access to permanent positions also plays a critical role in shaping workforce stability and morale. Encouragingly, our survey found that approximately 90% of respondents were employed in ongoing permanent positions, with only 8% on fixed-term contracts and 2% working casually. This marks a significant shift from earlier trends toward precarious employment. The Victorian Government Schools Agreements of 2017 and 2022 have been instrumental in reversing this trend, converting over 17,000 fixed-term employees to permanent roles. This move toward greater employment security is vital, as research shows that permanency is linked to a stronger sense of belonging and reduced burnout among teachers (Amitai & Houtte, 2022; Longmuir et al., 2022). However, younger school employees remain more likely to be employed on non-permanent contracts, indicating areas where further progress is needed.

The sustainability of Victoria's public education system is threatened by a retention crisis. Our survey found that 30% of respondents intend to remain in Victorian public schools until retirement, which is similar to the latest (2023) Australian Teacher Workforce Data (ATWD) where slightly fewer respondents, 26%, reported intending to remain until retirement (AITSL, 2025). Our study found that mid-career teachers (those with six to 20 years of experience) are the most likely to intend to leave (27.5% versus 26% early career) or feel uncertain about staying in the profession (41.5% versus 38% early career), representing a significant concern about loss of expertise. While the ATWD does not report intentions to leave the profession against years of experience, it did find that those in the age group of 30–39 were most likely (51%) to report that they intended to leave the profession (AITSL, 2025). The loss of teachers with mid-career experience is particularly concerning to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Victorian public school workforce. These teachers play critical roles in activities that are vital to the sustainability of the workforce and the provision of excellence and equity in student learning. Common mid-career responsibilities include mentoring early career teachers, holding middle leadership and administrative roles, and preparing for future school and system leadership. A further concerning finding from our study is that 55% of principal class respondents reported considering relinquishing their leadership roles, either by leaving the profession or returning to a teaching position. These trends, evident in the data from the survey, coupled with declining applications for principal positions, signal a concerning growing leadership vacuum.

Salary dissatisfaction is widespread and deeply felt. Many respondents reported that their remuneration does not reflect the complexity, responsibility or societal value of their work. Only 12% of education support employees reported satisfaction with their pay,

compared to 30% of principal class employees and 17% of teachers. This sentiment is compounded by cost-of-living pressures and the perception that teaching is no longer a financially viable, middle-class profession. Education support employees, who play a vital role in student learning and wellbeing, face additional challenges, including limited career progression, inadequate leave provisions, and insufficient time to collaborate with colleagues or to support students effectively. Despite their essential contributions, their work is often undervalued and under-resourced.

Workload pressures are a central concern across all roles. Our survey found that teachers, principals, and education support employees report working substantial unpaid hours each week, averaging 5.5 hours for education support employees, 12.4 hours for teachers, and 17.5 for principals. These results are similar to the latest ATWD figures, which report 12 extra hours for teachers and 17 extra hours for school leaders in senior positions (AITSL, 2025). Administrative and compliance tasks consume a disproportionate amount of time, detracting from core teaching and learning activities. Teacher respondents described a lack of time for planning, assessing student work, and engaging in self-directed professional learning, which they value highly. School leaders, meanwhile, reported spending the majority of their workday managing administrative requirements. With 72% noting an increase in compliance activities over the past two years, this is a concerning trend, which takes school leaders away from their availability for important instructional and relational leadership work that supports school improvement (Gümüş, et al., 2025).

Concerns about student and parent behaviour are increasingly impacting employee wellbeing and retention (Commonwealth of Australia Senate, 2024). This study revealed that 68% of respondents cited student behaviour as a reason for intending to leave the profession, while 31% pointed to parent or carer behaviour. These issues are particularly pronounced among younger school employees, with 72% of those aged 20–29 identifying student behaviour as a concern. Many employees feel inadequately supported in managing complex behavioural needs, including education support employees, who often find themselves on the frontline without sufficient resources or training. The escalation of challenging behaviours, combined with limited support from the Victorian Department of Education (the department), contributes to a stressful and sometimes unsafe working environment, undermining morale and professional satisfaction.

Victorian public school employees are a committed but strained workforce, grappling with systemic issues that undermine professional efficacy, wellbeing and retention. Addressing these challenges requires urgent and sustained investment in salaries, workload reduction, flexible work arrangements, and leadership support to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for Victoria's public education system.

Draft Recommendations from Discussion Paper 1:

1. Focus on retaining teachers, school leaders and education support staff by investing to support all staff currently working in Victoria's public schools to stay. This is crucial to mitigate rising attrition, and particularly as a measure to address the shortage of teachers.
2. Increase teacher, school leader, and education support staff salaries by an amount that provides adequate compensation for the critical and demanding work. Salaries need to reflect the importance and value of the work, including in the context of salaries available in other states and territories and other sectors.
3. Enhance flexibility in time use so that education professionals are able to determine their time use. This will demonstrate greater respect for the profession, enhance capacity to manage workload demands, and will support work-life balance.
4. Reduce administration, compliance, and meeting requirements to support education professionals, particularly teachers and school leaders, to better manage their workloads and prioritise teaching and learning activities.
5. Review leave provisions to better respond to the stressors on education support staff, teachers, and school leaders, and provide some flexibility. This will support health and wellbeing, and enhance capacity to manage workloads.
6. Review conditions for education support staff to ensure they have appropriate compensation and support, particularly the provision of extra time to work with students and collaborate with other staff. This will increase the diversity and quality of support in schools, enhance the productivity of the Victorian public school workforce, and improve student learning.
7. Increase support for school leadership in order to retain principal class staff, attract new leaders, and enhance their capacity to support teachers and education support staff.

2.1 DISCUSSION OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:

The member feedback on Discussion Paper 1 positioned employee retention as a serious concern that underlies other issues as illustrated by the comment that "retention is the key". Member feedback indicates the ways that other issues, not least of these being salary and conditions, contribute to the retention of school employees – e.g: "why would staff stay if they can get a better deal somewhere else?" This was expanded on in another comment: "...with manageable workloads, better salaries, no aggressive and unsafe parent or student behaviour and options to work from home". The member feedback also noted the tendency of government policy to focus on

recruiting new teachers to the profession rather than retaining the teachers already working hard in schools. One member illustrated this succinctly: "Existing teachers need recognition for their experiences and should not be overlooked as the focus has been on teacher recruitment." Further, members noted that for existing staff, the focus on attraction triggers feelings of being devalued, impacting both their morale and intentions to stay. One member observed: "Tensions are created by TFI [targeted financial incentives] payments to new staff, while those who have stayed at the school through thick and thin receive nothing."

It is also important to note here that there are unique aspects of work challenges for First Nations employees, whose burnout risks are compounded by challenges linked to colonial load, cultural responsibilities, and cultural safety¹. Feedback from First Nations members noted that they often carry the responsibility for important First Nations-related activities and strategies, but receive little support or acknowledgement for these efforts. With important work ahead for all Victorians in relation to Treaty, truth-telling, and self-determination, guided by the deliberations of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, the Victorian Parliament, and the findings and recommendations of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, this is a vital consideration in the context of a sustainable workforce. We revisit some of these matters in further detail, in response to the School Family/Community Partnerships section below, in recognition of the important place that Victoria's public schools have in the advancement of recognition and educational justice for First Nations People in our state.

Two main issues that emerged from the member feedback as high priorities for action in regard to work arrangements are discussed in further detail in the following sections: recognition and reward for the work that school employees do, including adequate salaries; and the issue of workload and flexibility in work conditions. As with all discussions in this report, there are entangled and overlapping concerns. Our choices of specific focus areas, linked to the theme of each discussion paper, are intended to best capture the nuance of the evidence and the feedback in order to inform the final recommendations.

¹ Colonial load refers to the additional load borne by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees at work, where they are the only one or one of a small number, see Gari Yala Speak the Truth Synopsis Report: Centring the Work Experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2020, UTS and Diversity Council Australia, https://www.dca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/dca_synopsisreport_web_0.pdf

Cultural safety refers to being able to practice your culture free of condemnation within a workplace that acknowledges, respects and accommodates difference, see Gari Yala Speak the Truth Synopsis Report 2020 (link above).

2.1.1 FINANCIAL REMUNERATION AND RECOGNITION

The importance of salary as an issue for Victoria's public school workforce is both a material factor, in terms of adequate wages for the workload expected, as well as a symbolic factor, in terms of recognition of their important contribution to Victorian communities. Salaries and other financial incentives are also a key lever through which governments can have an impact on the satisfaction that employees feel in their roles and, therefore, on their retention (Esteve et al., 2017; Serreqi, 2020).

Members called for appropriate recognition of the unpaid hours of work occurring in all roles. As described above, the survey results showed Victorian school employees work many more hours than those for which they are paid. One member's feedback described the impact of these hours on work-life balance: "The amount of unpaid overtime teachers, school leaders and ES [education support] staff do is HUGE and is not recognised. There is no work-life balance anymore, and as such, increasing the value and importance of our jobs, and it being recognised by financial incentive, is essential." Members noted in their feedback that they felt the work of education support employees was particularly undervalued and underpaid, while their responsibilities are increasing as student needs become more varied, complex and demanding. A member observed that: "ES are badly underpaid and often expected to go far beyond their job description. They do a power of work in the government system for little recognition."

Measures of the appropriateness of salaries for school employees are varied. One growing key concern for those working in Victorian public schools is the affordability of housing. According to recent research, the ability of the state government to adequately staff Victoria's public schools is compromised by housing costs (Eacott et al., 2025). Eacott et al. (2025) found that 43% ($n=23,149$) of teaching positions are in a Local Government Area where it is unaffordable for a graduate teacher to rent a one-bedroom property. Over 4,900 teaching positions, or 9.1% of public school teachers, are in LGAs where it is unaffordable to rent a three-bedroom property for a graduate teacher with a median-salaried partner and their family. Meeting rental costs is even more difficult for education support employees. This depends on whether rental vacancies can be found, as vacancy rates are between 0.8% and 1.5% throughout the state. As a result, public school employees are being forced to live further away from their workplaces to find housing they can afford.

Purchasing a property is even more difficult. For a family on a single top-of-the-scale teacher income, 74% of LGAs have a median house price that is seriously unaffordable or worse. For education support employees, the median house value in 80% of LGAs is severely or impossibly unaffordable. With high rents making it difficult for families to save, at current values it can take a graduate teacher and median-salaried

partner 12 years to save a 20% deposit; while for an education support employee and median-salaried partner, 19 years. Without intervention, Victoria runs the risk of being unable to staff public schools because employees cannot afford to live in reasonable proximity to their workplace (Eacott, et al., 2025, p. 3). Housing affordability is a critical concern, and it is important to note that such cost-of-living issues are not limited to housing. Employees in Victoria's schools require salaries sufficient to afford all the basic costs of modern lifestyles.

Currently, Victorian public school teachers are the lowest paid in the country, with education support employees and school leaders also undervalued. To illustrate this, Table 1 below provides a range of examples, at both entry level and top level salary rates, that enables a comparison to the salaries of New South Wales public school employees, across a range of role types (AEU, 2025a).

Table 1: Salary differences between Victoria and NSW school employees.

	SALARY LEVEL	VICTORIA	NSW (2026)	GAP
TEACHERS	Entry	\$79,589	\$92,882	16.70%
	Highest	\$118,063	\$133,422	13.01%
CLASSROOM-BASED EDUCATION SUPPORT EMPLOYEES	Entry	\$56,580	\$62,500	10.46%
BUSINESS MANAGER	Entry	\$73,467	\$99,421	35.33%
ALLIED HEALTH: SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST	Entry	\$93,265	\$104,156	11.68%
	Highest	\$109,967	\$153,531	39.62%
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL	Entry	\$156,335	\$184,176	17.81%
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	Entry	\$136,022	\$153,531	12.87%

Note: Current Victorian salaries, which without a new EBA will not increase in 2026, are compared to 2026 NSW rates. Overall, Victoria has the lowest paid teachers in Australia, with some other jurisdictions (e.g. ACT, NT) paying more than NSW wages.

Members regularly compared Victorian salaries to other states in their feedback and suggested that, across all staffing categories, Victorian salaries need to be at least comparable with those in other states. Members also considered the issue of salaries needing to be more commensurate with other sectors and comparable professions in order to attract and retain school employees in public schools. This comment reflects this sentiment: "What exactly is adequate compensation/salary that values the work we do? Look into comparing with other professions within the public service to measure it. How qualified are they? I'm managing two jobs to survive; the salary is not adequate when we are qualified educators."

As well as a focus on increased salaries, members made other suggestions aimed to make working in schools more financially attractive, which would contribute to the appropriate recognition of employees in Victoria's public schools. These suggestions included:

- Paying retention bonuses for existing employees: While financial incentives have been used by the Victorian government to attract staff into the system, there is little reward for those who stay. Members suggested that bonus payments, and/or superannuation boost payments, at different increments of time (e.g. every five years), would support the retention of skilled and experienced school employees.
- Revise salary progression steps and leadership pay rates: Members noted that the current structure for career progression is limited for experienced employees. As well, members called for a higher entry rate for leadership positions (Leading Teacher, Learning Specialist, and Assistant Principal roles) in order to encourage and reward those who take up leadership responsibilities.
- Remove or reduce HECS debts: Members suggested that incentives to remain in public education could include the reduction or removal of HECS debts. A scheme of reduction of debt based on years of service could be an effective strategy to support both the attraction and retention of public school teachers.

2.1.2 WORKLOAD, TIME USE, AND LEAVE PROVISIONS

While financial remuneration and recognition are critical for school employees, many other factors have been noted by this project and the wider literature that contribute to work satisfaction and to attracting and retaining a workforce. This section considers the issues of workload, time use, and leave provisions raised in Discussion Paper 1, along with the feedback of members and further relevant evidence from appropriate sources.

These issues are interrelated and all reflect concerns from Victorian school employees about the conditions that make it challenging for them to engage in their careers in healthy and sustainable ways. Reflecting on the information and recommendations in Discussion Paper 1, members noted workload issues included the increasing demands to do unpaid work hours, e.g: "Workload is ever increasing and creating dramatic imbalances in our home and work life"; and "The department keeps upping the workload without ever removing work." Members noted that the increasing expectations of work have been significantly exacerbated by the staffing shortages being experienced widely across Victorian public schools, where school employees are "taking on the brunt of the work created by staff shortages, and are in a vicious cycle of burning themselves out to cover for the absences."

The key workload pressures outlined by members

in considering the discussion paper commonly focused on excessive and increasing administrative/ compliance/reporting demands. Members described these demands as overly excessive, with a substantial administrative load being placed on employees across many different areas of their work. This included unnecessary documentation requirements, duplication of data entry in multiple locations and/or software systems, the redocumentation of materials in different formats, HR and recruitment requirements, mandated professional learning on topics that were already known, first aid compliance, and many others. These comments from members indicate some of these: "Risk assessments, modules, compliance documents, IEPs [Individual Education Plans], BS [Behaviour Support] Plans, etc, etc, etc. – the list of these kinds of documents is endless and takes away from our core business." Many members felt that these increasing demands have consequences for the quality of education provided to students in their schools. Further comments expanded on this sentiment: "These extra demands on teachers' time are taking away from the learning of other students"; and "we spend years at university learning how to teach (not complete administration requirements). This is now happening at the loss of planning engaging lessons for students."

The impacts of the increasingly demanding and damaging workloads experienced by Victorian public school employees have been exacerbated by arrangements and conditions that undermine their capacity to have any control over their working arrangements. Members noted that: "Currently, there is such limited flexibility and lack of professional trust that teachers feel completely micromanaged and unable to adequately use the time available to complete work-related tasks." Where members noted limited flexibility, this was inevitably linked to their autonomy, trust in, and respect for the profession. They expressed this in terms of, among others, "micro-management", "counting every minute", and having "little say" on how their time is allocated during their time at school. They noted that there were too many meetings for compliance and the delivery of the many department initiatives and requirements. This left little time to do tasks that they determined were important to their work: "Due to lack of free periods and endless meetings/demands from department and school, it never ends, so there is no time at work to complete everything that needs to be done." Some members commented on the resulting negative work cultures where "being treated like the children we take care of is demoralising and creates a work culture that becomes untrustworthy."

Many members noted that this lack of consultation and flexibility with regard to their work time, combined with the requirement to document everything, resulted in feelings of discontent, distrust and a lack of respect for their professionalism. The current approaches to documentation reflect a lack of faith in teachers' ability to do the work they are trained to do. Excessive documentation demands can be seen as undermining

teachers' professional judgment and expertise. By reducing these requirements, we can better value and trust in teachers' abilities, allowing them to focus more on preparing for and evaluating teaching and learning, which are at the core of their roles. These concerns are reflected in the recent review into administrative and compliance activities commissioned by the department (Roberts-Hull, 2025). This review provides helpful recommendations, but we note that the necessary changes require sustained commitment from the department and schools, and the provision of appropriate ongoing funding and resourcing.

While workload and time use are crucial factors that need to be well balanced and considered in order to best support the Victorian public school workforce, provisions in relation to leave are another condition of concern. Discussion Paper 1 raised that the flexibility and availability of leave is a concern for many, with some noting that leave entitlements were being exhausted as they struggled to manage their wellbeing and that of their families.

While some were exhausting their leave entitlements, other members noted that the increasing expectations and stressors of the work, particularly in situations of teacher shortages, made it difficult to take leave when they needed it. Members described the toll of having to prepare lesson plans, notes and materials for replacement staff, demonstrating that often taking a day off led to more work. This deterred them from taking leave. As one member observed: "Teachers often do not take leave unless completely unavoidable

due to the amount of work required of them adapting, completing, and communicating lesson plans." A second barrier identified by members was that of teacher shortages. For example: "Staff shortages mean we can't actually take the leave or TIL [time in lieu] we are entitled too. More people will burn out and leave."

Member feedback provided a range of suggestions for ways to reduce workload, including: reducing accountability and meeting requirements (attention to some of the recommendations from the Roberts-Hull inquiry (2025) could support this); creating a specific administrator role to manage documentation demands; reducing class sizes, stating that "less students will reduce workloads and increase individualisation, and teaching will be successful for students and rewarding for teachers"; and increasing system involvement in administrative processes to reduce the burden on schools.

In this section, the feedback of members has drawn attention to the importance of conditions in supporting a healthy and sustained workforce in Victoria's public schools. Underpinning principles should include ensuring that work expectations are reasonable, that school employees feel trusted and respected for their professionalism, and that they are supported to focus on teaching and learning excellence. Leave provisions that are appropriately accessible and available for Victoria's school employees also need to be in place to support them to manage their wellbeing and health needs.

3. PROVISION FOR VICTORIA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Victoria's public schools are facing a pivotal moment, shaped by complex social, economic, and political pressures that are exposing long-standing deficiencies in how education is funded, staffed and supported. Discussion Paper 2 presented the five key areas of funding, staffing, facilities, curriculum, and support for diverse learners, as central to understanding the challenges and opportunities for improving public education provision across the state. At the heart of these issues are the intertwined problems of inadequate funding and widespread staffing shortages, which are undermining the ability of schools to deliver equitable, high-quality education.

Funding disparities between government and non-government schools continue to entrench inequality. Public schools, which educate the majority of disadvantaged students, receive significantly less funding per student than private schools (Cobbold, 2024). This gap has widened over time, contributing to social segregation and limiting the capacity of public schools to provide essential programs and resources. Our survey showed that many teachers, education support employees, and school leaders in Victoria's public schools report that their schools are under-resourced in both academic and wellbeing programs,

with regional areas more significantly impacted. A lack of funding affects everything from classroom materials to staffing levels; and, in the survey, employees frequently expressed frustration at the visible inequities between public and private school environments. Calls for fair funding of public schools are widespread, and investment in school facilities and resources, as well as appropriate salaries, are needed.

Currently, staffing shortages are a critical concern, with schools struggling to recruit and retain qualified teachers, education support employees, and allied health professionals. Comparatively lower salaries, excessive workloads, and inflexible working conditions have contributed to a reduction in teaching being seen as an attractive career. School employees are taking on additional duties due to staffing gaps, and in some cases school leaders are required to teach classes themselves. The reliance on temporary authorisations (such as "permission to teach" programs) and casual staff obscures the full extent of the crisis, while competition between schools and sectors further exacerbates recruitment challenges (Preston, 2023).

Our survey results demonstrated that there is strong support among employees for structural reforms to improve working conditions and attract new staff.

Suggestions made by participants about ways to improve the provision of high-quality education in Victoria's public schools involve calls for more school employees including more classroom-based education support and allied health employees, and more time for employees to work together to support diverse and complex student needs. Smaller class sizes were also noted as a key solution, offering benefits for both student outcomes and teacher wellbeing. Respondents also expressed interest in more flexible work arrangements, such as a four-day work week or dedicated non-teaching days, to help manage workload and improve work-life balance.

School facilities are another area of concern. Survey respondents reported working in classrooms with inadequate heating, cooling and acoustics, and some describe conditions that are unsafe or unhygienic. A majority of survey participants felt that improvements to facilities were needed to support the provision of high-quality education in Victoria's public schools. Equity issues are significant when it comes to the quality of facilities and are particularly pronounced in low socioeconomic status schools, which are also less able to raise local funds for upgrades (Rowe and Perry, 2022; AEU, 2024). There is a clear need for ongoing investment in school facilities, with a focus on equity and ensuring that all students have access to safe, stimulating learning environments.

Issues related to curriculum demands were noted by survey respondents as challenging their ability to provide high-quality education. Many teachers reported that they feel the volume of content required is unmanageable within the available instructional time, leading to rushed lessons and students being left behind. Concerns were also raised about the structure of senior secondary education, with the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) seen as overly rigid and exam-focused. Members suggested more diverse pathways to better support all learners. Assessment and reporting requirements are another source of stress, with teachers describing the administrative burden of data collection, and questioning the value of standardised testing regimes. There is strong support for curriculum reform that prioritises depth over breadth and recognises teacher expertise in assessment.

Support for diverse learners is a growing challenge, and respondents to the survey reported that they lack the time, resources and support to meet the diverse and complex needs of students with disabilities, behavioural issues and other learning differences. With public schools continuing to be chronically underfunded – yet, enrolling higher proportions of students from low SES backgrounds, students with disabilities, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, and students living in regional and rural locations (Cobbold, 2021) – the complexity and diversity of student learning needs is significant. The transition to new inclusion models has increased funding for students with disabilities but also introduced new workload pressures, particularly around documentation and compliance. Teachers described

the emotional toll of working in classrooms with unmet needs and the difficulty of balancing individual support with whole-class teaching. Additional time to work with individual students, more specialised programs in literacy and numeracy, and increased access to allied health services were called for in order to enable the provision of high-quality education for all students. It is important to note that the lack of support not only affects students with additional needs but also impacts the learning experiences of their peers and contributes to teacher burnout.

Across all areas related to provision, teachers, education support employees, and school leaders express a desire for bold, systemic change. They call for full funding to meet the national benchmark Schooling Resource Standard (SRS), competitive salaries, expanded staffing, modernised facilities, curriculum reform, and enhanced support for diverse learners. These measures are seen as essential to ensuring that every student in Victoria has access to high-quality public education and that teachers, education support employees, and school leaders are empowered to do their best work in safe, supportive environments. Without significant investment and policy reform, the challenges facing Victoria's public schools will continue to grow, further threatening the wellbeing of students and employees and undermining the future of public education.

Draft Recommendations from Discussion Paper 2:

1. Fully fund Victoria's public schools to at least 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard.
2. Increase pay (including salaries and allowances) for Victorian school staff to levels that are competitive with other states, sectors and comparable professions.
3. Increase and diversify the school staff workforce – more teachers, school leaders and education support staff. This should include more allied health and wellbeing staff, and an expansion of education support staff positions to undertake administration and compliance tasks currently being done by teachers and school leaders.
4. Commit to the ongoing upgrade of all school facilities to provide modern, healthy and safe teaching and learning spaces.
5. Explore options for the modernisation of school provision (e.g. school hours/days/term/year lengths) to better meet the needs of staff and student working and learning arrangements. This should include further research into, and a trial of, a four-day work week for school staff.
6. Work with school staff to review curriculum provision and assessment practices, including senior secondary certifications. Such a review should particularly consider the volume of curriculum required to be taught and learnt. It could include a review of assessment and reporting to establish maximum requirements to limit workloads.

7. Improve capacity to support diverse learning needs, which ensures the health and safety of students and staff in Victoria's schools and the individual rights of all students to education.
8. Review Disability Inclusion (DI) processes, especially in relation to associated workloads.
9. Reduce class sizes. This could include reducing class sizes where there are high numbers of students who require Individual Education Plans or students with additional learning needs.

3.1 DISCUSSION OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Two key issues that emerged from the member feedback are discussed below in response to Discussion Paper 2: school funding and schooling structures. Both are very relevant to provision issues but also link back to discussion of work in Victoria's schools (above) and have implications for school and parent/carer partnerships, which we will turn our attention to in the next major section. While illustrating how such overlapping themes unfold throughout the project, these two issues are also cornerstones as we begin to imagine an education future that is built on full funding of public schools and school planning and design that reflects rapid social and technological change.

3.1.1 SCHOOL FUNDING

The issue of funding is foundational to many of the concerns and issues raised throughout the entirety of the project. Earlier this year, after the research and member feedback processes for this project were completed, the Victorian and Commonwealth governments agreed to long-awaited increases in the Commonwealth contribution to the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS), which should see an estimated \$2.5 billion in funding for Victorian schools over the next decade (Albanese, et al., 2025). However, subsequent budgetary decisions by the Victorian government will result in \$2.4 billion of state and Commonwealth funding being delayed until 2031, consigning Victoria's public schools to remaining the lowest funded in Australia (AEU, 2025b).

Prior to these disappointing developments in funding arrangements for Victoria's public schools, members noted through the feedback process that sufficient funding is urgently needed to alleviate the pressures on school employees, to attract and retain the workforce, and to properly support students. Feedback comments observed: "We are already 10% under the minimum standard of funding for schools, which is disappointing and somewhat laughable 12 years after Gonski's team recommended the funding

measures needed to support schools at a minimum level. We should be aiming above minimum levels of funding if we are serious about supporting staff, demonstrating some respect for the profession and that we are actually investing appropriately in our system." In addition to pointing out the discrepancies between current funding and the recommended minimum SRS, members also noted that discrepancies between public and private schools need to be addressed: "There needs to be clearer strategies provided, such as addressing the funding chasm between public schools and independent/private schools. It's not just about pay but the actual resources to maintain schools, providing more incentives for further study and employing more expert and specialist health staff in schools to support what is being done"; and: "Public schools, especially in low socio-economic areas, should be fully resourced in line with Gonski. School staff in these schools are tired of trying to achieve high student outcomes with inadequate resources."

The verification through the member feedback of the importance of adequate and fair funding was clear. Key possible solutions that could be available, if adequate and fair funding was forthcoming, included reducing class sizes, which could decrease the workload demands on teachers while improving the provision of higher quality education – "less students will reduce workloads and increase individualisation, and teaching will be successful for students and rewarding for teachers." Members noted a range of benefits of smaller classes, including "...reduced admin, compliance work. Smaller class sizes would help a lot. Having 26 students [in secondary school] in a class is too many, with 10–15 students who come in with additional needs ... for the six teachers who teach these students, that's a lot." Other members reflected on the potential for greater administrative and allied health support that would be possible with more funding and which would reduce the workload burden and enable greater focus on high-quality teaching and learning experiences.

Adequate and fair funding is foundational to a wide range of improvements for Victoria's public schools. One of these important areas is the quality and safety of buildings and facilities. Regardless of the disparities in resource funding between public and private sectors, the baseline funding for buildings and facilities in many of Victoria's public schools is inadequate. Many buildings and facilities are unsafe for teachers and students, as these member comments demonstrate: "I don't want to trip and fall walking from one classroom to another but that is a real risk. I don't want to teach in a classroom with a hole in the wall but that is what I do each day. Do I and my students deserve a nice classroom to learn in that is warm in winter and cool

in summer? Yes.”; and: “We deserve to work and have our students in facilities which do not compromise our health.” Members were forceful in their comments about this issue and talked in terms of facilities needing to meet – and not yet meeting – at least a minimum standard: “This should be a given. Why should teachers be expected to work in sub-standard physical spaces? Why should children be expected to learn in them?”; and: “Government ought to commit to government schools looking well-cared for.” For members, this included access to effective heating and cooling, improved cleaning and maintenance, safe footpaths, roofs that don’t leak, better internet and improved bathroom facilities.

It is important that advocacy for more funding for Victoria’s public schools is grounded in the requirement of basic quality of buildings and facilities. While the arguments for further funding to reduce class sizes, or employ additional education support employees to help with administration burden, or any other such measure, are important – the basics of buildings and facilities that enable school employees and students to be safe and healthy in their daily environments should be a minimum expectation.

3.1.2 MODERNISING SCHOOLING STRUCTURES

The second discussion area encompasses the varied components of provision in Victoria’s public schools related to the structures and arrangements of schooling. The survey project and the member feedback elicited many reflections and suggestions from school employees in a range of related areas, with an underlying call to action here for modernisation and improved support for public schools in Victoria. Exploring possibilities for modernisation could have the potential to provide a range of solutions to difficult problems, but in order to leverage these, commitment and innovation are needed. Traditional expectations and arrangements do not meet the current or future needs of students, school employees and communities, but breaking through the barriers to change is inherently difficult. This project has shown that there is a growing recognition that problems facing Victoria’s public schools are significant and that there is an appetite from school employees and parents/carers for transformative change. In this section, we discuss some of the ideas for modernising the provision of schooling in Victoria. Some of these ideas represent the kind of courageous and transformational thinking that would result in substantive change, and other ideas are less bold but hold potential for different ways of operating that could have positive influence on issues of provision.

The idea of a four-day working week is arguably the most disruptive idea that was explored throughout this project. As reported in Discussion Paper 2, there was considerable support, with 65% agreeing or strongly agreeing that a four-day week could improve high-quality teaching and learning. In Discussion Paper 3, we

also reported that over 50% of parents and carers were supportive of the idea. It is important to note that there is no clear indication or evidence of a particular model or way forward regarding a four-day working week, but rather that the support is for further examination of the idea and a possible trial. Resistance to such a significant disruption is predictable, but there are many models around the world that could be further investigated. While it represents a significant departure from the traditional ways of operating and staffing schools, this is the exact reason that it holds significant potential for improvement, particularly in times of workforce stress and attrition. The discussion of this idea is worthy not only for the inherent possibilities of this changed approach to staffing, but also as a test case for other potential significant disruptions. If a genuinely open and curious examination of an idea as significant as a four-day working week is possible, it paves the way for the Victorian system to engage in further bold ideas and possibilities. If this idea is dismissed without reasonable consideration, simply because it might be significantly disruptive, it will represent an inherent inertia in the arrangements of Victoria’s schools that will continue to constrain the transformation needed.

In terms of the sentiment regarding the idea of the four-day working week, many members were supportive and the member feedback demonstrated this – e.g. “endorse a four-day work week” – and many had further ideas for how this could potentially work, e.g. “Agree with a four-day week for all staff. If students attend five days, have enough staff to cover this, with potential for special events on one day per week such as outdoor/craft/other activities, where grades can be mixed together.” While the support to further examine the idea was clear, the members in their feedback discussions were conscious of the barriers, for example: “Trials of a four-day week sound good, but this [needs to be] thought through about exactly how it would work and impact all involved.” Important for members was that there would be no reduction in pay if a four-day week was considered and adopted, noting they are already experiencing cost-of-living and housing affordability pressures at current salary levels. It was clear from the feedback that any such significant change to working conditions must be seen as a solution to current issues, not as a way to further push performance or productivity when school employees are already stretched to their limits.

The arrangements related to scheduling and time use were a dominant theme in evidence and feedback around provision. As well as the idea above of a four-day week, other ideas about reconstructing school times rose to the surface as possible ways to modernise schooling provision. Member feedback described the potential to disrupt the standard scheduling of school days and hours: “I think we tend to have one view of how the school week looks; that’s all we’ve experienced. But if you actually talk to people in other states or internationally, the way schools construct that time can be very, very different”; and: “More

exploration in this area is needed so we move with the times as the model is very old and people won't want to become a teacher if we don't do something about it." Suggestions from member feedback related to reconstructing time use included: considering different start and finish times; and blending online learning, particularly for senior students.

An idea that had support across the various aspects of the project – including in comments from the survey and through the member feedback – was a rearrangement of the school terms and holidays schedule. Calls to balance the length of school terms were common, with members noting the strain of the longer terms, particularly when Term 4 is longest. Members noted that those last late weeks after a long, drawn-out term were often unproductive and difficult for students and employees. Members argued that student engagement, wellbeing of employees and students, and workload concerns would all benefit from a simple change to make the term lengths uniform,

e.g. "In my opinion, four equal terms of 10 weeks each would provide an equal balance, allowing better planning for the curriculum. It would also offer routine for all." A more consistent term and holiday schedule would also support enhanced consistency for teaching programs and predictability for families.

Members' responses on the two key issues of funding and modernising schooling show that there is interest in and support for significant change. It highlights that the issue of fair and adequate funding is central to the likelihood of Victoria's public schools being able to provide high-quality education into the future. It also demonstrates that an approach to provision that invites and supports innovative responses – whether significantly disruptive, or more modest but still counter to the traditional ways of operating – hold great potential if only the culture of the department, the community, and individual schools can be adapted to encourage transformative possibilities.

4. SCHOOL STAFF, PARENT/CARER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN VICTORIA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The strength of partnerships between schools, families, and communities is a vital factor in supporting student success and wellbeing as Victoria's public schools navigate increasingly complex social, economic, and educational landscapes. These partnerships are central to fostering inclusive, resilient, and high-performing school environments. When effectively cultivated, they enhance academic outcomes, promote social cohesion, and contribute to safer, healthier communities. However, the current conditions in schools that are shaping these relationships are marked by significant challenges, including resource constraints, behavioural concerns, and systemic inequities.

The broader context of education marketisation further complicates partnership efforts. Policies that position parents as consumers rather than collaborators can erode trust and shift focus away from collective goals. Schools in affluent areas are better equipped to meet demands and foster engagement, while those in disadvantaged communities struggle with fewer resources and complex challenges. This inequity undermines the potential of partnerships to drive systemic improvement and reinforces social divides. A renewed commitment to education as a public good is needed, one that prioritises inclusive, community-driven approaches over transactional models.

Our survey of school employees along with the focus groups and survey of parents and carers (Essential Research, 2024) as reported in Discussion Paper 3, shows that teachers, education support employees, school leaders, and families alike recognise the importance of collaboration to ensure students' success. Further, it was clear that there is broad support for strengthening school/family/community connections. Despite oft-reported discontent in school and family

relationships – for example, in the mainstream media – in our survey, most school employees reported that communication with families is generally appropriate, and parents similarly express confidence in the way schools communicate about their child's education. This shows that the majority of relationships between parents/carers and school employees are positive and productive. However, the findings in this paper shown that deeper engagement, including more participation in decision-making, involvement in school activities, and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, is less consistently evident. These gaps suggest opportunities for the department to support schools to build more inclusive and reciprocal relationships, particularly with historically marginalised groups.

This project has illustrated that contextual factors play a role in shaping perceptions of school employees and parent/carer and community partnership quality. Staff in specialist schools and smaller schools tend to rate parent communication more positively than those in larger or less advantaged schools. Parents/carers express a desire for more integrated services and community-based schooling models, and there is strong support for schools acting as hubs that offer health, wellbeing, and social services. These findings suggest that there is a shared desire for schools to be central pillars of community life, capable of responding to diverse needs through collaborative approaches.

Despite these indications of shared commitments to partnerships in schools, barriers to engagement persist. Parents/carers reported that time constraints are an obstacle to their engagement, followed by uncertainty about how to engage, past negative experiences, and perceptions that schools do not value

their involvement. For school employees, resource limitations were reported as the major concern. Fewer than half of school leaders feel they have the necessary resources to support effective partnerships, particularly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. School leaders call for interventions such as increased funding, dedicated liaison staff, and professional development to improve engagement strategies. These measures could help to overcome barriers and build sustainable, effective partnerships.

With communities across Victoria experiencing strained social cohesion and increasing volatilities, schools are central to efforts to counter these trends. However, the implications of these broader pressures play out within school boundaries. Discussion Paper 3 reported that significant proportions of teachers, principals, and education support employees cite complex and challenging student behaviours and lack of respect for the profession as reasons for considering leaving their roles. As well, principals, in particular, report high levels of concern about parent behaviour, reflecting the intensity of their interactions with some families. Parents and carers who participated in the project (Essential Research, 2024) acknowledged these issues and noted the increasing complexity of teaching. Factors such as difficult to manage class sizes, expanded curriculum demands, and the growing number of students requiring additional support are all emerging as challenges to productive partnership work. These are all then compounded by the impact of teacher shortages, and require dedicated resourcing and support to address.

Shared interest from school employees and families in supporting students in safe and productive ways offer a foundation for constructive dialogue and joint problem-solving. Importantly, the project found that both parents/carers and school employees are open to reimagining schooling arrangements, with support for initiatives like a four-day school week and more innovative approaches to structuring schools. A shared commitment to bold reforms, on a platform of strong school/family/community partnerships, could lead to solutions that may alleviate pressure on staff and families while enhancing educational outcomes.

The paper reported that partnerships with First Nations communities require particular attention. Both school employees and parents reported low levels of consultation and involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in school decision-making. This is despite policy commitments to strengthen these relationships and the clear evidence that culturally responsive education improves outcomes for First Nations students. Building authentic partnerships will require non-First Nations people and systems to listen and respond to what First Nations peoples are telling them, and policies that are implemented in ways that empower and build the capacity of First Nations communities (Fredericks, 2024). Authentic partnerships will also need adequate resourcing, and a commitment to elevating Aboriginal voices and knowledge systems. Schools must be supported to move beyond tokenistic

engagement to embrace models of shared decision-making and cultural safety.

To realise the full potential of school/family/community partnerships, systemic support is essential. Schools need adequate funding, staffing, and policy frameworks that enable meaningful engagement. This includes recognising the cultural labour of First Nations employees, addressing behavioural and respect issues, and creating space for innovative conversations about the future of schooling. School employees and families are ready to work together; what they need is the support to do so effectively.

Draft recommendations from Discussion Paper 3:

1. Urgently build on the commitment to fund Victoria's public schools to 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard by delivering the additional resources quickly as a first step to combatting entrenched funding inequity.
2. Review and learn from the variety of school, family and community partnership arrangements in place across Victoria, and scale up through cohesive and comprehensive initiatives. For example, funding a broad trial of family engagement officers to build strong connections between schools and families and ensure parents are fully engaged partners in their children's education.
3. Enhance mutual respect between parents/carers and school staff. This should include: identifying common ways for schools to better incorporate parents/carers' knowledge of their children to support student learning and wellbeing; enhancing school staff and parent/carer awareness of the need for, and benefit of, greater involvement of parents/carers with their child's education; improving the recognition of school staff as key educational experts; and better valuing the rich cultural and social capitals of families and communities.
4. Identify common, system-wide ways in which schools could enable improved involvement of parents/carers in their children's school education. This should include investigation of the barriers to involvement and ways to overcome these.
5. Develop processes for inviting families and community members into conversations about the modernisation of schooling arrangements (e.g. school hours/days/terms/year lengths) in Victoria in order to better meet the needs of students, staff and families.
6. Listen to – and act on – what First Nations teachers, school leaders, education support personnel, researchers, the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, and Traditional Owners say about building partnerships on unceded sovereign lands.
7. Reset system-wide expectations for respectful and appropriate conduct for all stakeholders

in Victoria's public schools. This should investigate the ways that policies and resources support responses to challenging behaviours (for example, the impact of class size and/or access to appropriate specialist support staff). This should also consider how expectations of respect and appropriate conduct enhance the status of the profession and contribute to improved learning outcomes for students.

8. Re-establish system-wide processes that apply to all schools to provide a common basis from which to work with students with complex and challenging behaviours.

4.1 DISCUSSION OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following sections, we focus on two key areas raised by members: firstly, creating an equitable and inclusive schooling system with and for First Nations students, families, communities and school employees; and secondly, the challenges posed to effective partnership between schools, families and communities resulting from increases in community volatilities, and the impacts on behaviour and respect in schools. Similarly to previous sections discussing draft recommendations, we note that each of these important areas are often relevant across the themes of the three Discussion Papers and have broad-ranging components and consequences. For example, First Nations concerns for Victoria's public schools discussed below are not just important for school and community partnerships – these are also important issues for the workforce and for school provision. While not wanting to diminish connections with other themes addressed across the entire project, we have chosen to focus on better supporting First Nations communities and school employees, and addressing challenging relationships and behaviours of students and families, in this section because the alignment to, and impact for, partnerships are so crucial.

4.1.1 TREATY AND TRUTH-TELLING – PARTNERSHIPS WITH FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES AND RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION JUSTICE

Some months after the release of Discussion Paper 3, which considered different dimensions and tensions within the relationships between school employees, parents and communities, Victoria's Yoorrook Justice Commission released a series of reports to communicate their findings and recommendations based on hearings and research conducted over the previous two years (Yoorrook Justice Commission, 2025). These timely and historically significant Commission reports lay new foundations for building partnerships between First Peoples and the public education system. Any fair consideration of responses related to this theme must be guided by the

recommendations of the Yoorrook Justice Commission.

Feedback from AEU First Nations members on the discussion papers raised concerns relating to colonial load, cultural safety and the under-representation of First Nations students, parents and carers, school employees and communities in decision-making that impacts them. This clearly suggests that more work needs to be undertaken at system, regional, and school leadership levels to highlight the consequences of not investing in these partnerships but rather relying on the generosity of First Nations school employees. Productive partnerships rely on mutual respect, safety, and a deep commitment to learning about how colonisation and its associated racisms form the structure around which education and other colonial institutions operate. Thus, as we consider possible directions for improved education partnerships between First Nations families and communities, and employees working in Victorian public schools, we must centre the knowledge, experience, and expertise of our First Nations education workforce, whilst acknowledging the extra burden that is placed upon them.

First Nations employees are often central to partnerships with local First Nations communities, and support successful partnerships (AITSL, 2024). These employees then shoulder the colonial load and the burden of both seeking out their own cultural safety and attempting to ensure it for other school community members from First Nations backgrounds (see Discussion Paper 1). Member feedback noted that these unique burdens contribute to a higher risk of burnout for First Nations members. One First Nations member described how there is “an ingrained responsibility for us to contribute to our community and it is invisible to the rest of public education staff... [and that] doesn't disappear or appear when you arrive or leave work”.

While First Nations members explained that barriers are significant, they also described them as surmountable. They highlight four overlapping reform options to better support First Nations employees. Firstly, they recommended recognising and remunerating First Nations employees for additional workload and wellbeing demands, including through the provision of more flexible leave arrangements and compensation such as time-in-lieu for colonial work performed by First Nations employees. Secondly, they recommended professional learning to create safe and inclusive workplaces and build the capacity of *all* school employees to participate in First Nations-related activities, identifying a general lack of understanding, particularly from leadership in schools, about First Nations knowledge, cultural safety, and colonial load. One member reported frustration about “having conversations with leadership when they do or say something culturally unsafe and them not understanding what the problem is or why you're upset.” Thirdly, First Nations members want their voices to be heard and valued. This was particularly pronounced for employees working in education

support roles, with one respondent noting that they “don’t feel Mob ES voices are valued enough in the workplace.” Members called for the increased involvement and representation of First Nations employees in meetings and leadership decision-making that relate to them and the First Nations students, parents/carers and communities they work with. Finally, First Nations members recommended improved career security and progression opportunities. As one member noted, “quite often Mob jobs are not sustainable, they’re short-term. It’s token, confined, and insecure work without any view to progression.”

Recognising and remunerating colonial load as part of an employee’s workload, focusing on *workplace* readiness (cultural safety) rather than *worker* readiness, ensuring any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-related work is Indigenous-led and -informed, and focusing on sustainable careers and career development, are all approaches and strategies consistent with advice for organisations that seek to address issues of racism from the *Gari Yala Report* (Diversity Council of Australia, 2020). Further, the Yoorrook Justice Commission reports and the department’s Aboriginal Employment Plan (Victorian Department of Education, 2025) both identify a need for increased numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in schools, and appropriate strategies to support them. As well, Yoorrook offers a range of recommendations that focus specifically on reducing school and system-level racism that contribute to disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families, including reviewing enrolment, attendance, and exclusion policies. The recommendations also call for greater representation of First Peoples in decision-making related to curriculum, pedagogy, governance, and resource allocation. Importantly, work to improve partnerships with First Nations families that centre Aboriginal voices also provides standards and examples of practice and policy that could benefit school, family, and community partnerships more broadly. Central to these recommendations is the necessity, identified by the Yoorrook Justice Commission, for a significant systemic shift in policies, strategies and approaches taken by governments, which to date have not been successful in improving the education experiences of First Nations students or the attraction of First Nations employees to the profession. Much more fundamental transformation is needed and can be achieved through Treaty and truth-telling (Yoorrook Justice Commission, 2025).

4.1.2 PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY VOLATILITY AND SUPPORT STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AT SCHOOL

Given the current broader social and community conditions characterised by declining cohesion and increasing volatility, schools are crucially situated to support productive responses in partnership

with parents/carers and communities. However, the potential of these partnerships is limited by a range of factors, including the changing nature of work and family life, with parents and community members having less time and opportunity to engage with schools, and the intensified expectations that schools support an increasing range of complex social and educational needs, with inadequate support and resources. The ways that these broader social challenges are filtering into schools and impacting students, school employees, and parents/carers, can result in conflict that undermines positive partnership work. These challenges are experienced inequitably across communities and exacerbated by an increasingly performative and standardising education policy environment, the chronic underfunding of public schools, and by staff shortages.

While the findings from this project show that there is shared commitment from school employees and parents/carers to provide the best support for children and young people in our communities, more time, resources and support services are needed to avoid further deterioration in relationships and respect. In this research project and elsewhere, school employees have reported safety concerns relating to student and parent behaviour that impacts on their capacity to provide high-quality teaching and learning experiences and undermines their intentions to remain in the profession (see for example, Discussion Paper 3 and Longmuir et al., 2025). This points to a spiral of challenging external social conditions, negative behaviours in schools, insufficient time and resources to support productive responses, and reduced respect between families and schools. This spiral is concerning and must be disrupted. This circumstance highlights both the complexity and the importance of sustainable and positive parent/carer and community partnerships for schools, and points to an urgent need for new policy and resourcing.

Some member feedback on the notion of building better school and parent/carer and community partnerships identified the challenges described above. They further evidenced the complex and demanding situations that affect working conditions and that are stretching current provision arrangements. According to one member: “The behaviour, actions and complexities (needs) of students is contributing to the intensity of the work.” Others suggested that there is a need to “change the process for getting funding for students,” and that there needs to be “a more realistic approach to how schools and teachers can support students and families.” AEU members also recommended the communication of clear guidelines around respectful and appropriate behaviour for all stakeholders, suggesting that the boundaries need to be renegotiated and redefined so that partnerships can be effectively fostered. System resources, such as a common or agreed standard for communication, and protocols for responding to disrespectful or unsafe interactions, were identified by members as needed.

These challenges related to productive partnerships

indicate the complexity of the system and the work required to change school culture. The balance of prioritisation of productive partnerships with broader educational objectives relating to student academic achievement and wellbeing should be considered, as schools will prioritise resources according to system and community-level expectations. More attention to and support for partnership work is essential, and AEU members are supportive of a focus on improving partnerships with parents/carers and communities. AEU member feedback recommended that schools and the system learn from existing successful partnership arrangements, and several examples of different ways to effectively engage with parents and carers were shared. These included: engaging with parents

through celebrations of student learning rather than only discussing issues; increasing parent engagement through the use of hybrid models (e.g. online and in-person options for meetings); having a parent room onsite at schools where families can raise concerns as a first port of call with an attending parent-liaison employee; and time-in-lieu for staff to engage with families outside of school hours. These ideas illustrate that the profession and school communities could and should be consulted and then supported to implement context-specific responses to local concerns.

5. SYNTHESISED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WHAT THE PROFESSION NEEDS NOW FOR THE FUTURE

The individual discussion papers – and our further consideration of the findings above, through the lens of member feedback – frame a comprehensive suite of recommendations for responding to issues of work, provision, and partnerships with parents/carers and communities for Victoria's public schools. This review, reflection from members, and connection with further evidence, suggests that there are a number of overlapping and interconnected recommendations across the three discussion papers. In this section, we move from the separately themed discussions presented in this report to a cohesive and comprehensive set of recommendations.

In our review of the discussion papers and informed by member feedback, we have noted the attention and prioritisation of issues covered in the recommendations. While all the original recommendations remain important in the context of deeper detail about each focus area, it is helpful to consolidate these in this final section of the project report, so that they can be operationalised and inform advocacy in ways that best represent the synthesised knowledge gained and the interests of the profession.

To do this, we have considered the discussions above as well as reviewed the full suite of member feedback, and noted the quantity and intensity of interest in the various areas. These processes have led to the combination of recommendations across the most important areas and we offer the following nine synthesised recommendations:

1. Funding

Fairly and adequately fund Victoria's public schools now, to at least 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard.

2. Remuneration and recognition

Value the profession through significantly improved pay and conditions which respect school employees and reflect their contributions and the importance of their work.

3. Workforce retention

Strengthen focus on workforce retention (and consequently attraction) through improved pay, reduced workloads (including actively reducing administration and compliance tasks), and increased support to manage complex and challenging student behaviour.

4. Time use

Improve capacity for the profession to use time flexibly to enhance employee work-life balance, thereby increasing attraction and retention of the workforce.

5. Facilities

Increase investment in modern and inclusive school facilities and infrastructure.

6. Productive partnerships

Enhance engagement between schools, parent/carers and communities, including support through increased resourcing and workplace arrangements that enable parents/carers and school employees time and opportunity to engage meaningfully on student learning and wellbeing.

7. First Nations commitments

Deepen partnerships with First Nations communities and workforce through Treaty and engagement with Yoorrook Justice Commission recommendations.

8. Student support

Strengthen support for diverse learning needs and better resource support for complex and challenging student behaviours.

9. Class sizes

Establish and fund short-, medium- and long-term goals for sequential reductions in class sizes across public schools to ensure equity and excellence.

Table 2 below captures the full suite of recommendations from each of the three discussion papers and indicates how they have been combined into these nine areas. Attention to the connections between the synthesised recommendations and the original recommendations is important and valuable, as it provides useful detail that is foundational to understanding each recommendation.

It is important to note here that underpinning all of these recommendations is the need for transformative change, along with increased government investment and support. We have shown through this project that school employees, parents, families and communities are supportive of many ways to improve Victoria's public schools in order to provide excellent learning environments and opportunities for students into the future. These recommendations identify the key areas where government attention is needed – both to

address the immediate and pressing challenges facing the profession and Victoria's public schools; and, more ambitiously, to drive longer-term improvements and transformation. The recommendations are informed by the views of the public education profession, whose voices and insights are often underrepresented in government policy design and development.

Given the breadth of these nine recommendations, the final section of this report offers a plan of action and attention separated into what is urgent and what should inform medium-to-longer-term change. We believe this staged approach will help prioritise the actions urgently needed to address current challenges, before shifting to the longer-term goals and ambitions that will drive the transformation required for future success.

Table 2: Synthesised recommendations from the three discussion papers

Synthesised Recommendation Area	Covers Original Recommendations
Funding	DP2: Fully fund schools to at least 100% of the SRS DP3: Urgently build on the commitment to fund schools to 100% of the SRS
Remuneration and recognition	DP1: Increase teacher, school leader and education support staff salaries DP2: Increase staff pay – competitive with other states/professions DP1: Review conditions for education support staff DP1: Review leave provisions
Workforce retention	DP1: Focus on retaining teachers, school leaders and education support staff DP2: Increase and diversify the school staff workforce DP1: Increase support for school leadership
Time use	DP1: Enhance flexibility in time use DP1: Reduce administration, compliance, and meetings DP2: Review Disability Inclusion (DI) processes, especially in relation to associated workloads
Facilities and infrastructure	DP2: Commit to the ongoing upgrade of school facilities DP2: Explore options for the modernisation of school provision DP3: Develop processes for inviting families and community members into conversations about the modernisation of schooling arrangements
Productive partnerships	DP3: Review, learn and scale up from the variety of partnership arrangements in place DP3: Enhance mutual respect between parents/carers and school staff DP3: Identify common, system-wide ways in which schools could enable improved involvement of parents/carers DP3: Reset system-wide expectations for respectful and appropriate conduct for all stakeholders
Student support	DP2: Work with school staff to review curriculum provision and assessment practices DP2: Improve capacity to support diverse learning needs DP3: Re-establish system-wide processes to support students with complex and challenging behaviours
First Nations commitments	DP3: Listen to – and act on – what First Nations stakeholders say about building partnerships on unceded sovereign lands
Class sizes	DP2: Reduce class sizes

Note: DP# refers to the Discussion Paper number

6.1 WHAT THE PROFESSION NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

In this section, we present the actions that are needed to address the most pressing concerns for Victorian public school employees. These reflect the recommendations, or parts thereof, and are informed by the broader research project. There are significant challenges to public education, including but not limited to increasing inequality, increasingly complex and diverse student needs, and decreasing respect, recognition and appreciation of the education profession. The challenges are the result of systemic arrangements that are either designed to reinforce – or are not adequately responding to – our colonial histories and damaging marketisation and competition imperatives, which undermine the collective and democratic principles at the heart of public education.

The suggestions below are underpinned by the foundational evidence, presented throughout this report and throughout the discussion papers, that a healthy and sustainable public education system in Victoria is crucial to the economic and social success of the state, both right now and into the future. For public education to meet its purpose, a shared and significant commitment to both short- and long-term programs of transformation are needed.

6.1.1 URGENT ACTIONS

These interventions should be prioritised for urgent attention – as without immediate action, the evidence suggests that the issues confronting the profession will continue to undermine its status (including growing attrition rates and reduced attractiveness), and the capacity of Victoria's public schools to provide high-quality education will be compromised. Immediate action on these intervention areas – starting in 2026 – should inform the current funding, policy, workplace, and industrial relations approach of the department.

1. Invest the full amount of funding to meet the SRS commitments

Urgently reinstate the \$2.4 billion that the State Government has deferred until 2031.

2. Increase salaries for teachers, education support employees, and school leaders

Salaries must be increased to be comparable to other states and other sectors in order to retain current school employees and attract future employees with the skills and experience needed.

3. Review leave arrangements, including flexibility, for all employees

Change leave arrangements to improve the accessibility, availability and flexibility of leave. This will support wellbeing and retention, and make the profession more attractive.

4. Introduce workload reduction measures

An immediate reduction in workload requirements should be implemented. As a first step, the adoption of strategies to reduce administration, data reporting and compliance requirements should be fast-tracked (as suggested by the recent Independent Review into administrative and compliance activities in Victorian government schools).

5. Enhance mutual respect and safety in Victoria's public schools

Embed a comprehensive, system-wide approach to improving mutual respect between all stakeholders. Attention to psychosocial and physical safety, which builds on existing efforts, should be enhanced. Workplace safety standards and interventions that aim to minimise employee injury should be prioritised in recognition that safe workplaces for school employees are safe learning environments for students. Importantly, the approach must engage productively with issues of marginalisation of historically excluded groups of students and families to ensure these students' needs are being met through any responses to issues of safety and respect.

6. Adopt education-focused recommendations from the Yoorrook Justice Commission

The recommendations of the Yoorrook Justice Commission that are pertinent to Victoria's public schools should be actioned to demonstrate commitment to voice, truth and justice for First Nations communities.

6.1.2 MEDIUM-TERM AND LONG-TERM ACTIONS

In this section, we present the interventions that should be the focus for significant attention and change over the coming one to three years and beyond. These interventions will continue to improve the working conditions for school employees and the learning conditions of Victoria's students. They represent important steps toward the essential transformation of Victoria's public schools. The suggestions are all underpinned by the understanding that fair and adequate funding and a commitment to equity are essential. These suggested interventions reflect the recommendations, or parts thereof, and are informed by all components of the full project.

1. Investigate and implement options for more flexible working arrangements

School-based work currently has minimal flexibility. More flexible options, including part-time and work-from-home opportunities and more flexible on-site start and finish times, would make school-based work more attractive and enhance satisfaction, supporting greater retention.

2. Modernisation of school schedules

The arrangements for the number of instructional school days per year, and their distribution across five days per week across four school terms, have prevailed for many decades, with little consideration of their suitability for supporting the best provision of teaching and learning and the attraction and retention of school employees. For example, standardising the length of school terms to 10 weeks would be a concrete step. In the longer term, further research and a trial of other options for staff attendance (for example, a four-day working week) and student engagement should be undertaken. Modernisation initiatives should also consider currently onerous curriculum requirements.

3. Increase diversity in school staffing

There are two important considerations related to diversity that should be addressed. Firstly, to meet the increasingly diverse and complex needs of students and to manage workload challenges, greater diversity of skills is needed in Victoria's schools. Strategies to recruit allied health professionals, administration support, and others should be developed based on school needs. Secondly, staff in Victoria's public schools need to reflect the diverse communities of Victoria. Currently, employees in schools are primarily from the dominant cultural group of Anglo-celtic background (Hawkins et al., forthcoming). Strategies to attract and support teachers, education support employees, and school leaders from diverse backgrounds should be implemented.

4. Reduce class sizes

Reducing the number of students assigned to each teacher would lead to significant improvements across all aspects of teaching and learning in Victoria's public schools. Smaller class sizes would result in more manageable workloads and enable deeper, higher-quality engagement with individual student needs. While a long-term goal should be the overall reduction of class sizes, a more immediate and targeted intervention is needed for students requiring Individual Education Plans

(IEPs). Recognising the substantial effort involved in supporting these students (across wellbeing, engagement, and learning domains), each student with an IEP should be counted as equivalent to two students for the purposes of class allocation. This adjustment would better reflect the complexity of the work and support teachers in delivering meaningful, differentiated learning experiences.

5. Foster a culture that values teacher, education support employee and school leader professionalism, and supports innovation

As demonstrated throughout this project, the current structure and priorities of schooling in Victoria are not adequately equipped to meet the future needs of our state. Increasingly, education policy is dominated by standardised and narrowly focused approaches that undermine the professionalism of teachers. These policies limit school employees' ability to differentiate and respond to the diverse needs of their students. While fostering collaboration and sharing best practices is essential for a healthy and sustainable workforce, interventions that restrict professional judgement and agency are counterproductive. Such measures risk eroding the capacity of Victoria's schools to develop innovative and transformative practices that are vital for nurturing capable, agile and aspirational future generations.

6. Support and enhance partnerships between schools and parents/carers and communities

Increasing investment in programs that foster productive and respectful partnerships is essential. To strengthen the connection between schools and their communities, it is vital to investigate and implement contextually relevant initiatives that promote collaboration and mutual respect between families and schools. These partnerships not only enrich the educational experience in Victoria's public schools but also contribute to the development of thriving, vibrant communities across the state.

REFERENCES:

- Albanese, A., Allan, J., Clare, J., & Carroll, B. (2025, January 24). *Putting all Victorian public schools on a path to full and fair funding [Media release]*. Prime Minister of Australia.
- Amitai, A., & Van Houtte, M. (2022). *Being pushed out of the career: Former teachers' reasons for leaving the profession*. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 110.
- Australian Education Union Victorian Branch. (2022). *VGSA 2022: Implementation guide*. Australian Education Union.
- Australian Education Union Victorian Branch (2023). *Making our words and actions meet: Understanding the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators in the workforce*. Australian Education Union.
- Australian Education Union. (2024b). *Ending the capital funding divide in Australia*.
- Australian Education Union Victorian Branch (2025a). *Report on Comparative Salaries for Victorian and NSW public school staff in 2025/2026*. Australian Education Union
- Australian Education Union Victorian Branch. (2025b). *Single largest lobbying event ever at Victorian Parliament targets public schools funding cuts*.
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership. (2024). *In Focus: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers* (April 2024 ed.).
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL]. (2025). *ATWD National Trends: Teacher Workforce* (June 2025 ed., 2019-2023).
- Cobbold, T. (2021). *The disadvantage burden of public schools is three times that of private schools*. Save our schools.
- Cobbold, T. (2024). *Private schools serving richest families in Australia are over-funded by nearly \$1 billion*. Save our schools.
- Commonwealth of Australia Senate. (2024). *The issue of increasing disruption in Australian school classrooms: Final Report*.
- Diversity Council Australia. (2020). *Gari Yala (Speak the Truth): Centring the work experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australians at work*. Diversity Council Australia.
- Eacott, S., Gilbert, C., MacDonald, K. (2025). *Public Education in Victoria: Housing Affordability*. Unpublished report. AEU Victoria.
- Essential Research. (2024). *Understanding the views of parents of public school students in Victoria*. Unpublished report. AEU Victoria.
- Esteve, M., Schuster, C., Albareda, A., & Losada, C. (2017). *The Effects of Doing More with Less in the Public Sector: Evidence from a Large-Scale Survey*. *Public Administration Review*, 77 (4), 544–553.
- Fredericks, B. (2024). Co-designing a shared future for all Australians. The Routledge Handbook of Australian Indigenous Peoples and Futures. Taylor and Francis. *"Co-designing a shared future for all Australians"*
- Gümüş, S., Liu, Y., Bellibaş, M. Ş., & Lee, M. (2024). *A global typology of school principals' time use: Exploring the effects of contextual and individual factors*. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 125.
- Hawkins, A., Wilkinson, J., Longmuir, F., Lampert, J., Smith, E., Morris, R. & Ramku, W. (forthcoming). *The cultural, racial, linguistic and ethnic homogeneity of the Australian school workforce: Moving beyond anecdotal claims of whiteness*.
- Longmuir, F., Gallo Cordoba, B., Phillips, M., Allen, K.-A., & Moharami, M. (2022). *Australian Teachers' Perceptions of their Work in 2022*. Monash University.
- Longmuir, F., McKay, A., Gallo Cordoba, B., Allen, K. A., & Phillips, M. (2025a). *Australian teachers' perceptions of safety, violence and limited support in their workplaces*. *Journal of School Violence*, 24 (1), 1–20.
- Preston, B. (2023). *The Australian school teaching workforce*. Barbara Preston Research.
- Roberts-Hull, K. (2025). *Independent Review into administrative and compliance activities in Victorian government schools*. Victorian Department of Education.
- Rowe, E., & Perry, L. B. (2022). *Voluntary school fees in segregated public schools: How selective public schools turbo-charge inequity and funding gaps*. *Comparative Education*, 58 (1), 106–123.
- Serreqi, M. (2020). *Relationship of Pay and Job Satisfaction*. *European Journal of Marketing and Economics*, 3 (2), 124–131.
- Yoorrook Justice Commission. (2025). *Yoorrook for Transformation: Third interim report (Vol. 3)*. Parliament of Victoria. Retrieved 21 August 2025.
- Victorian Department of Education (2021). *Workplace Gender Audit: Summary Report*. State of Victoria.
- Victorian Department of Education (2025) *Aboriginal Employment Plan 2025-2029*. State of Victoria. Retrieved 3 November.