

Official Statement No.19, 8 December 2023

School Policy and Funding Advisory Council

Changes to Council membership

Council acknowledged the significant contribution of the outgoing member, Ms Michelle Green, who has represented the interests of independent schools since the Council was established in 2015.

Council welcomed the new independent member Mr Chris Wardlaw, noting his extensive experience in policy, funding and regulation for the education sector.

2024 Non-Government Schools Funding Agreements and Memorandum of Understanding

Council noted the progress of the 2024 Non-Government Schools Funding Agreements, and Memorandum of Understanding with the Victorian Catholic Education Authority and Independent Schools Victoria.

Self-Determination in Education Reforms

Council noted the preliminary themes and findings from the self-determination in education Campfire Conversations, and heard that targeted resources are being developed to support the reform directions. Council acknowledged the ongoing cross-sector collaboration through the Koorie Education Working Group in supporting this work.

Inclusive Education and Disability Royal Commission

Council was provided an update on the 2023 Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability, the Disability Royal Commission's final report and National Disability Insurance Scheme Review, and the implementation of Disability Inclusion and the Fighting for Students with Disability and their Families package of initiatives in Victorian government schools.

Complementary Education Settings review

Council noted the initial findings and proposed directions of the Complementary Education Settings review. Council acknowledged the contribution of the Catholic and independent sectors to the review, noting the importance of collaboration at the local level to support optimal provision, best practice, mutual support and knowledge-sharing.

Supports for Jewish and Islamic schools

Council noted the various supports being provided to Jewish and Islamic affiliated non-government schools in Victoria. This includes the Safer Faith-Based Schools Program to assist eligible schools to ensure their students have access to safe learning environments, with \$2 million being made available in the 2023–24 financial year. Council also heard about the range of resources and programs provided by the Department of Education to support schools prevent and address racism and strengthen multicultural inclusion.

Updates for Council

Council was provided an update on Commonwealth-State matters and new or ongoing changes to legislation affecting the school sector.

About

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

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

Membership

Ms Jenny Atta Secretary Department of Education (Chair)	Mr Jim Miles Chief Executive Officer Victorian Catholic Education Authority	Ms Meg Hansen Acting Chief Executive Independent Schools Victoria	Chris Wardlaw, Independent Member	Dr David Howes Deputy Secretary Schools and Regional Services, Department of Education
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Media enquiries

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Council Secretariat

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