
SCHOOL POLICY & FUNDING ADVISORY COUNCIL

OFFICIAL STATEMENT No. 8: APRIL 2020

ABOUT

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

Council meets three times each year and Official Statements are shared with the school community after each meeting. The Department provides secretariat support to the Council.

Previous statements can be found online on the [Department's website](#).

APRIL 2020 MEETING

The April meeting was attended by the following appointed members or their delegate:

- Jenny Atta, Secretary, Department of Education and Training (the Department) (Chair and representative for the Department)
- Jim Miles, Acting Executive Director, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV)
- Michelle Green, Chief Executive, Independent Schools Victoria (ISV)
- Professor Kwong Lee Dow, Independent Member (representing the views of students in all Victorian schools)
- Stephen Gniel, Deputy Secretary, Department of Education and Training (representing the government school sector).

CROSS-SECTOR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Council acknowledged the unprecedented challenge presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and commended the collaboration across school sectors in response to the situation. Council further recognised the uncertainty facing schools and students, especially for schools still recovering from bushfires. Council affirmed the priorities of ensuring student health and wellbeing and supporting learning continuity through this difficult time.

Key issues that the three sectors are working collaboratively to address include:

- provision of senior secondary education including VCE and VCAL
- providing support to international students and students without internet access, and
- onsite provision for vulnerable students and children of essential service workers.

Council committed to continuing communication and collaboration to ensure a consistent response across all sectors. Processes are in place to ensure that regular dialogue continues between the school sectors and that key issues are responded to effectively.

BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Providing support for schools, families and communities affected by bushfires remains a key priority for both the government and non-government school sectors.

Progress has been made to support schools impacted by bushfires, with the initial response transitioning to work on long-term recovery with a focus on addressing specific needs of local communities through self-determination and the establishment of community hubs.

Additional supports specific to each individual community continue to be rolled out on a regional basis. An update on individual recovery programs being implemented will be presented to Council at the July 2020 meeting.

Contact the Department if you need this information in an accessible format; please telephone on 03 7022 2820, or email sp.fac@edumail.vic.gov.au.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND FORWARD AGENDA FOR 2020

Council reaffirmed its continued focus on its [priority work areas](#) agreed to in 2019.

The forward agenda for 2020 aims to progress key priority work areas and includes:

- discussion of access and inclusion matters
- an update on the multicultural inclusion and social cohesion priority work area, and
- the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding between the Department and non-government school sector representatives.

Council will continue to discuss cross-sector responses to emergency management, including COVID-19 and bushfire recovery, at the July and November meetings of 2020.

Ms Jenny Atta (Chair)

Secretary

Department of Education and
Training

Mr Jim Miles

Acting Executive Director

Catholic Education Commission
of Victoria

Ms Michelle Green

Chief Executive

Independent Schools Victoria

Prof. Kwong Lee Dow

Independent Member

University of Melbourne

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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COUNCIL SECRETARIAT

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