MARRUNG

VICTORIA State Government

# Marrung 2026–2036
# First Nations Education Strategy



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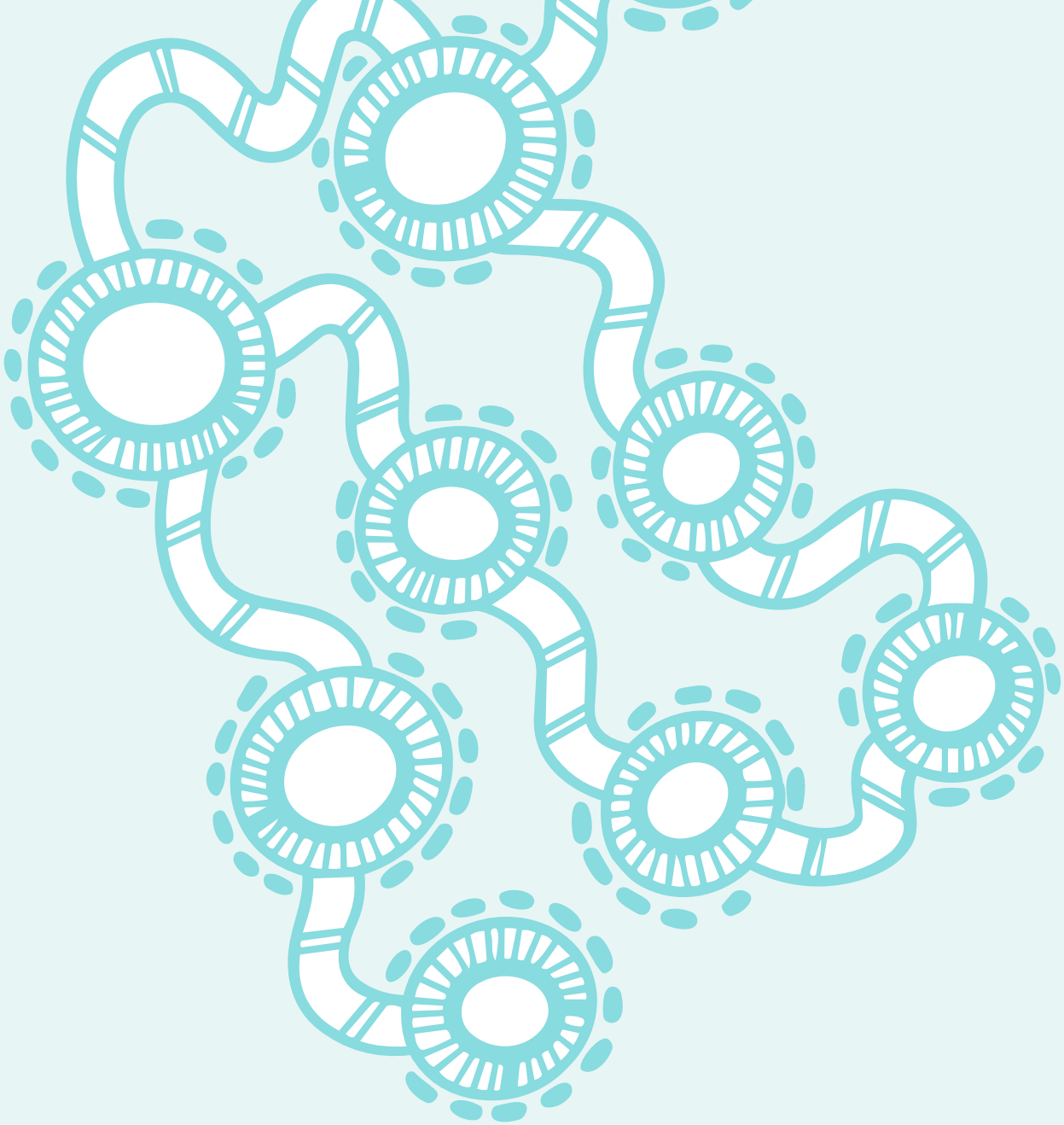


## Acknowledgment of Country

We, the partners of this strategy, proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the unceded lands, waterways and skies across what is now known as Victoria, and pay respect to all Elders past and present.

We recognise First Nations people as Victoria's first educators, artists and scientists, and we value their ongoing contributions to Victorian life and how this enriches us all.

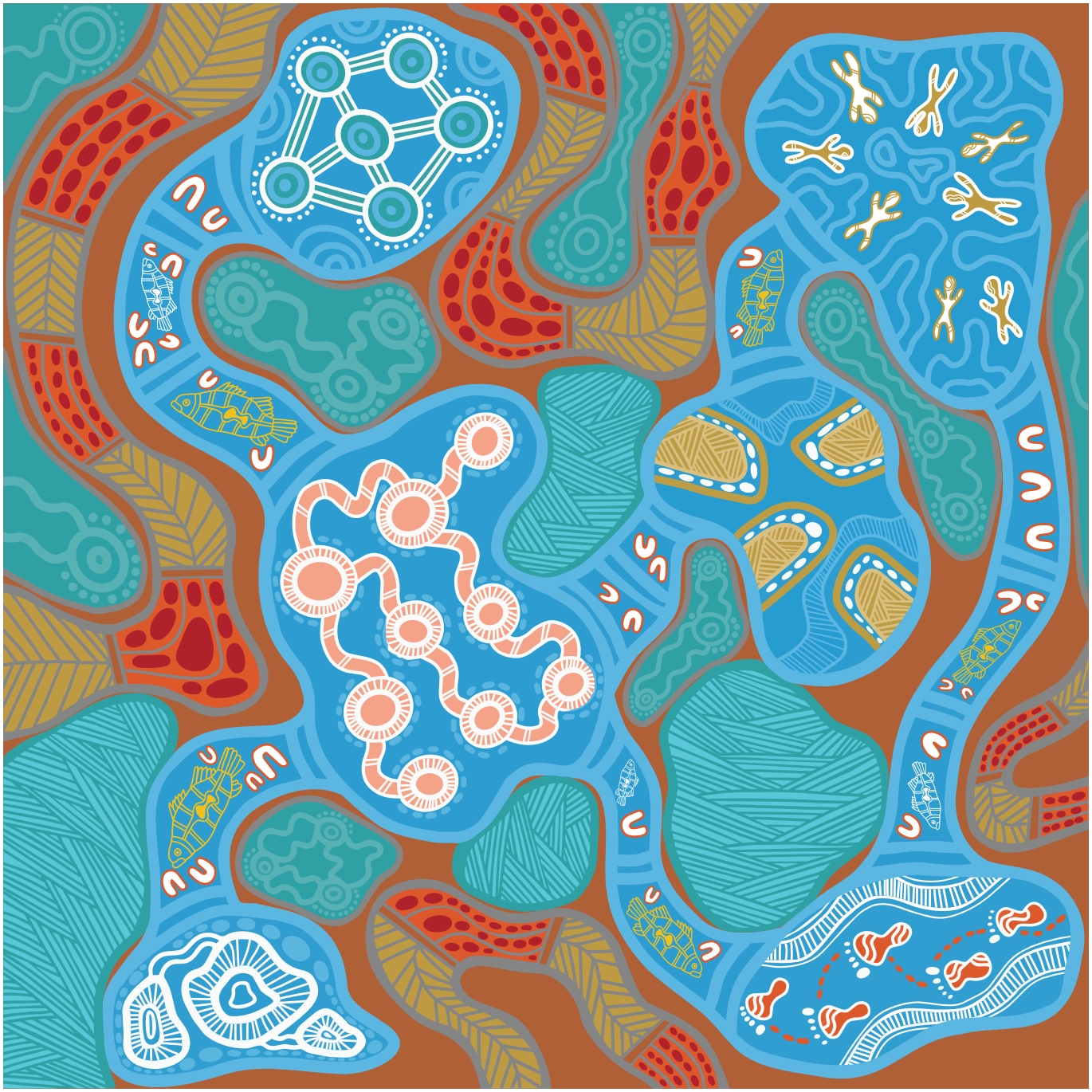
We also commit to working together to deliver the Victorian Government's commitment to self-determination, Truth and Treaty.

## Language statement

Throughout this publication, the terms 'Koorie' or 'First Nations' are used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Use of the terms 'Aboriginal' or 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' are retained in the names of programs and data references.

MARRUNG (MA-roong) is a Wamba Wemba word for the Murray Cypress pine tree (*Callitris columellaris*) — representing branches of education and knowledge.

We thank the Wamba Wemba people for allowing the use of their language in the naming of this strategy.



Artwork Name:

# nyuka-yangga

(to approach, to come this way)

Artist:

**Emma Bamblett**

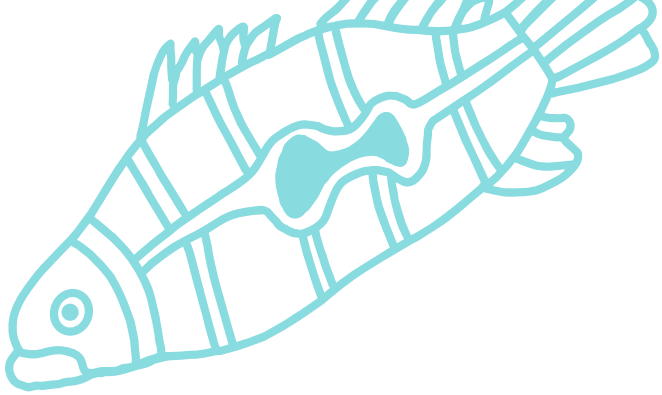
Mob:

**Wemba Wemba, Gunditjmara, Ngadjonji and Taungurung Connections**

**nyuka-yangga** is a visual representation of the 'Marrung 2026–2036 First Nations Education Strategy', and the education journey from early childhood to tertiary pathways. Red and ochre streams represent the guiding principles of self-determination, advancing systemic transformation, and cultural safety and responsiveness.

Connected symbols reflect the strategy's six priorities: workforce capacity and capability; First Nations leadership and partnership; First Nations languages; curriculum and teacher practice; learner engagement, participation and voice; and transitions and pathways.

Blue waterways connect these elements, while Murray cod symbolise partnership between the department and community. Gathering places and repeated linework acknowledge Elders sharing knowledge, culture and support through consultation, listening and connection.



# Introduction from the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporation

*Geraldine Atkinson*

Marrung is built on self-determination, giving our communities a recognised voice and a central place at the table across education and training systems. When community partnerships are nurtured with respect and honesty, we grow a stronger education system, one that values Koorie history, culture and identity. Like a tree, Marrung reminds us that our knowledge has deep roots and our branches are connected.

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) is proud to introduce 'Marrung 2026–2036', Victoria's First Nations education strategy. 'Marrung 2026–2036' provides the framework to ensure all Koorie Victorians are supported to achieve their learning aspirations across all stages of education. 'Marrung' (pronounced MA-roong) is the Wamba Wemba word for the Murray Cypress pine tree. Marrung represents growth, strength and the interconnected branches of education and knowledge that support lifelong learning.

The first 'Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan' (2016–2026) was the most proactive Aboriginal education plan developed in Victoria. Its 10-year structure ensured continuity and stability, enabling the strategy to continue beyond changes in government. Marrung's focus was on creating an education system that is inclusive, culturally responsive and grounded in respect for Koorie learners, culture and community.

VAEAI was formed 50 years ago as the Victorian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group — with the aim to increase the voice of Koorie people in education and training decision-making to create better educational outcomes for the Victorian Koorie community. In 1990, the 'Partnership in Education: Koorie Education Policy' was formalised between VAEAI and the Victorian Government, the first partnership of its kind in Australia. Within the context of this partnership, Marrung was able to develop and thrive.

Marrung has provided a solid governance structure for Koorie self-determination in Victorian education and training, amplifying Koorie voices through Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECGs), Koorie Education Roundtables, Regional Partnership Forums, Marrung Central Governance Committee and the Marrung Ministerial Roundtable.

Under Marrung, improvements in learning experiences and outcomes for the Koorie community include increased kindergarten participation, higher Year 12 completion rates, improved TAFE outcomes and growth in university enrolments. Initiatives under Marrung include the naming of all new Victorian government schools in a local Aboriginal language — through the work of the Victorian School Building Authority. The introduction of Marrung Leads in schools and the establishment of Marrung Area Implementation Teams further reflect key achievements in embedding Marrung across the school system.

'Marrung 2026–2036' builds on the solid foundations of the original 10-year plan, strengthening and extending partnerships and frameworks to embed greater accountability across the education and training system and better meet the aspirations of the Koorie community.



**Photo:** Geraldine Atkinson

As VAEAI looks to the future, we acknowledge that there is still important work to be done across education and training systems. Addressing racism, strengthening cultural safety, and improving attendance remain critical priorities to ensure Koorie learners feel safe and supported across all Victorian education and training sectors.

We would also like to acknowledge the support of the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited and the Koorie Youth Council in informing the development of 'Marrung 2026–2036'.

The important contributions from these Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations have been invaluable in providing insights from a cross-sector perspective.

This is an exciting time for the Victorian Koorie community, with statewide Treaty negotiations progressing and the establishment of Gellung Warl, the First Peoples' representative body. Within this evolving landscape, VAEAI's strong community-based structure and longstanding partnership with the Victorian Government place us in a strong position to drive broader statewide conversations, actions and outcomes for Koorie self-determination across education and training.

When we talk about Koorie learners, we are talking about babies, children, young people, adults, aunties, uncles, families, carers and the communities that surround them. VAEAI will continue to advocate for education as a lifelong journey — from birth through to adulthood — journeys which must be culturally strong, community-led and aspirational.

**Geraldine Atkinson, Bangerang**
**President, Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated**

# Vision

Victoria will be a state where:



The rich and thriving cultures, knowledge and experiences of First Nations people are celebrated by all Victorians



education service systems are inclusive, responsive and respectful of First Nations people at every stage of the learning and development journey



every First Nations person achieves their aspirations and is strong in their cultural identity.

# Ministers' Foreword

Education is the cornerstone of opportunity, and for Victoria's First Nations communities, it is a vital pathway to realising the aspirations of self-determination.

We are proud to present 'Marrung 2026–2036: First Nations Education Strategy', a comprehensive blueprint to support every First Nations learner to achieve their aspirations. This strategy is underpinned by 3 guiding principles: self-determination, cultural safety and responsiveness, and advancing systemic transformation. It represents our unwavering commitment to creating an education system that is inclusive, responsive and respectful, and which celebrates First Nations cultures, histories, and knowledge.

'Marrung 2026–2036' has been guided by the voices, wisdom, and resilience of First Nations communities across the state. As the ministers responsible for Children, Education, and Skills and Training, we are united in our dedication to ensuring that the policies and programs shaping First Nations educational experiences are informed by the knowledge and experience of First Nations people.

To achieve true equity, our approach must be holistic, supporting learners across every stage of their education journey. From the early years where foundational development begins, throughout the vital school years across all sectors, and on to tertiary education including vocational training opportunities and university, this strategy spans the entire life course.

Importantly, 'Marrung 2026–2036' marks a truly sector-wide commitment to First Nations education. For the first time, this strategy formally includes the Catholic and independent school sectors alongside the government school sector, forging a unified, statewide approach. This landmark collaboration ensures that, regardless of where First Nations students learn, they will be supported by a culturally responsive and respectful education system that prioritises their success and wellbeing.

'Marrung 2026–2036' would not be possible without the profound expertise of our community partners, who have walked alongside us every step of the way. We extend our deepest gratitude to the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), our principal partner in education. VAEAI's tireless advocacy of First Nations educational needs has been a guiding force behind our shared efforts to transform our system.

We also recognise that educational success is intrinsically linked to the community's broader health, wellbeing, and empowerment. To this end, we acknowledge the essential contributions of the Koorie Youth Council, Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited.

Together, these organisations have ensured that 'Marrung 2026-2036' is holistic in its approach, resonates at the grassroots level, and elevates the voices of First Nations people.

In implementing 'Marrung 2026–2036', our collective focus is on rigorous, transparent, and accountable implementation that translates the promises of this strategy into tangible, on-the-ground outcomes. This means delivering initiatives that promote cultural safety, combat racism, and elevate First Nations perspectives across all educational settings. We commit to holding ourselves accountable to the community for the progress we make together, marking a new era of shared responsibility.

We invite all Victorians to embrace the vision outlined in this strategy. Together, in true partnership with First Nations communities, we can continue to build an education system that not only closes the gap but sets a new standard of excellence, equity, and self-determination. We look forward to walking this path with you.



**Gabrielle Williams MP**
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Skills and Training
Minister for First Peoples
Minister for Women and Gender Equality



**Hon. Lizzie Blandthorn MP**
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Children
Minister for Disability

# Policy Context

Victoria's journey in First Nations education has been shaped by decades of strong advocacy, partnership and reform. From early commitments such as 'Partnership in Education: Koorie Education Policy' (1990), 'Yalca' (2001) and 'Wannik' (2008), successive strategies have been grounded in formal partnership with VAEAI, ensuring First Nations community voice and leadership remain central to education policy and decision-making.

'Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026' marked a significant step forward. Co-designed with VAEAI, Marrung focused on creating an inclusive, culturally safe, and responsive education system by strengthening self-determination and fostering deeper connections between learners, their families, communities and education providers.

As the first phase concluded, 'Marrung 2026–2036' has been developed to drive a more ambitious, whole-of-system transformation spanning early childhood through to tertiary education. 'Marrung 2026–2036' operates within a broader landscape of state and national reform that is redefining government relationships with First Nations peoples. In Victoria, through the country's first Treaty, a new relationship between the state and First Nations people is being forged based on respect, trust, accountability and integrity.

Victoria's Statewide Treaty, the work of the Yoorrook Justice Commission, the Self-Determination Reform Framework, and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap all reinforce the importance of transferring decision-making and resources to First Nations communities. This next phase heavily prioritises self-determination and aligns with critical state and national commitments, including efforts across government to improve social, health, wellbeing, disability inclusion, housing and justice outcomes for First Nations peoples.

We know that education is a key protective factor across all areas and stages of life. Strong engagement and attainment in education contribute to improved wellbeing and stronger cultural connection, with well-established links to future positive outcomes such as increased economic participation and housing security, and



reduced risks of homelessness, family violence, child protection, contact with the justice system and adverse health outcomes. 'Marrung 2026-2036' is intended to complement broader reform efforts across government as well as enhance collaboration across systems.

This strategy has been co-designed with VAEAI, the Victorian Government's principal partner in Koorie education and training, with support from the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited, Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency, and the Koorie Youth Council, and will be implemented with their support. These partnerships have ensured that community priorities shape the development and implementation of 'Marrung 2026–2036', and that accountability is grounded in community-defined measures of success.

A key shift in this next phase is the strengthening of cross-sector collaboration. For the first time, Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) and the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) join government and community partners in a shared responsibility for all First Nations learners across the state. This builds on the longstanding approach of VAEAI, whose advocacy and partnership has long been sector-blind, championing improved outcomes across all education systems.

This strategy also includes Victoria's diverse tertiary education system, including local adult community and further education providers, Aboriginal Community Controlled Registered Training Organisations, public TAFEs and dual sector universities, other Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers, and Victoria's universities. Victorian universities are included in this strategy, with action to support improved outcomes for First Nations people at university, and universities' engagement with First Nations communities will be guided through the Toorong Marnong Higher Education Accord, the partnership between VAEAI and the Victorian Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

Recognising education as a connected lifelong journey, 'Marrung 2026–2036' commits to accelerating action to improve outcomes for First Nations learners and integrating reforms across all educational stages. This includes a steadfast focus on advancing systemic transformation, cultural safety and responsiveness, and self-determination, embedded through the strategy as guiding principles to underpin this continuing work.

Data

# Where were we, where are we now, and what does that tell us?

'Marrung 2016–2026' established baseline data, highlighting where outcomes for First Nations learners improved and where challenges remained. However, it also revealed the limits of traditional measures. While data tracked enrolments, attendance, education outcomes and completions, it did not capture progress against community-defined measures of success.

'Marrung 2026–2036' will report progress against community-defined measures of success and relational health measures, as well as existing measures and targets.

Kindergarten enrolments for 3 and 4-year-old First Nations children have increased significantly in recent years, with participation in 4-year-old kindergarten reported at 100% since 2022. In addition, in 2025 participation in 3-year-old kindergarten was reported at 100%. The growth in enrolment numbers tells a clear story. Combined 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten enrolments grew from 1,831 in 2016 to 4,235 in 2025, an increase of 131%.

First Nations enrolments in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) operated kindergarten services remained relatively stable during this period and new ACCO operated services have opened in recent years. There remains an opportunity to further increase choice in service provision, particularly in relation to culturally strong and community-led early learning environments. Another key area of focus is increasing kindergarten attendance rates. As systematic attendance data collection and reporting is embedded across all kindergarten services, deeper insight into children's experiences of participation, engagement and belonging in these settings will be possible.

## Kindergarten

### Enrolment

**Enrolment rates remained very high in 2025**

3 YO enrolment*




4 YO enrolment*




*based on population estimates

**Source:** 2026-27 Department Performance Statement

### Participation

**Participation starts with enrolment. We can then focus on:**



Regular attendance



Experience of culturally safe and supportive learning environments



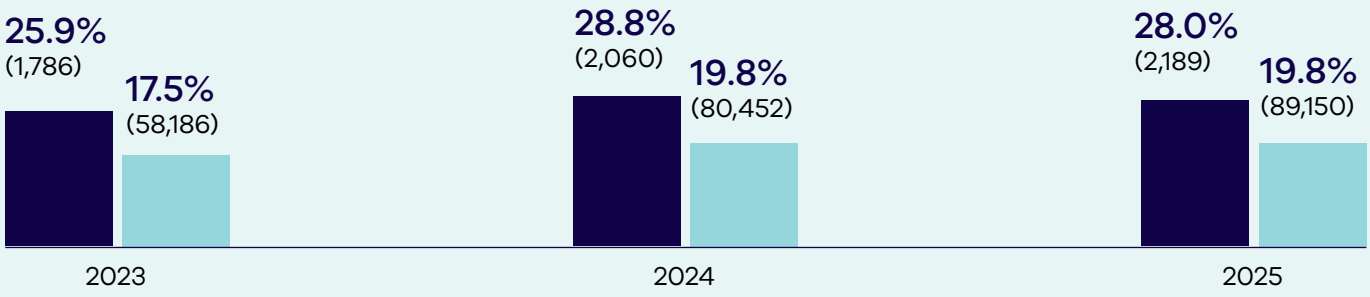

Full engagement

Through the school years, outcomes for First Nations learners have continued to improve in several key areas; however, disparities remain. In 2025, Victorian First Nations students achieved the strongest NAPLAN results nationally, recording the highest or second-highest mean score in 18 of 20 domains. More First Nations students are completing the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), including the VCE Vocational Major, and students have reported lower experiences of bullying over time. At the same time, attendance rates for First Nations students continue to remain lower than those of non-First Nations students, and gaps in engagement, wellbeing and educational outcomes persist for many learners. First Nations students are also reporting experiencing higher rates of racism compared to all students. These challenges highlight the continued importance of culturally safe, inclusive and responsive learning environments, alongside stronger supports for student wellbeing and connection to school. By 2025, 98% of Victorian government schools had undertaken Community Understanding and Safety Training (CUST) designed to foster culturally safe environments, while leadership initiatives signalled stronger system actions and accountability.

# School

## Experience of racism

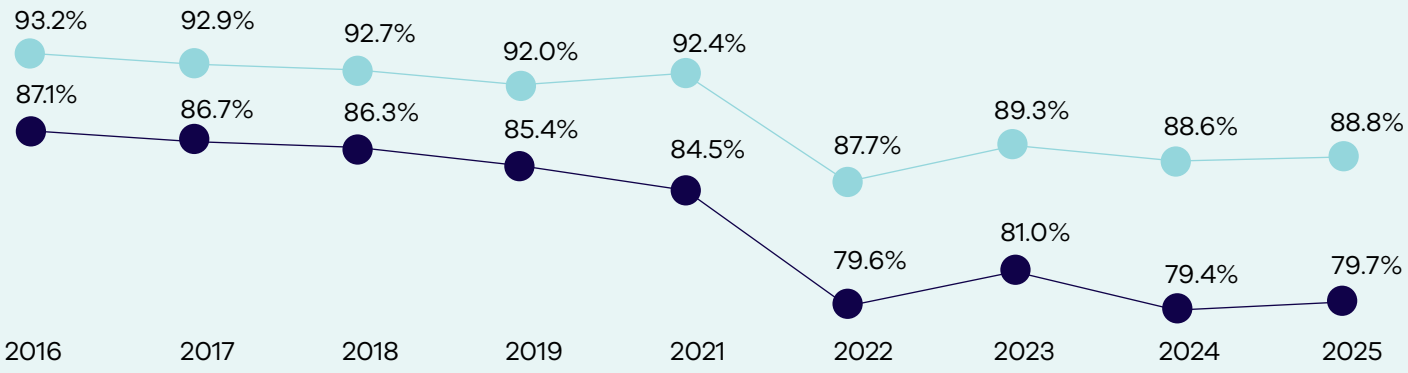
### I have experienced racism at this school in the past 12 months




**Source:** Departmental data, Victorian Government Schools data

## Attendance rates

### All sector Years 1-10 attendance rate, 2016 to 2025




**Attendance rate definition:**

The number of actual full-time equivalent student-days attended by full-time students in Years 1 to 10 in Semester 1 as a percentage of the total possible number of student-days in Semester 1.

***Time series note:***

School attendance data for 2020 was not published by ACARA due to inconsistencies in the data.

**Source:** ACARA National Report on Schooling Student attendance

# School

## Environment

There is meaningful progress in the school environment

**Increase in:**

- Completing a secondary school certificate
- Improved retention and attainment

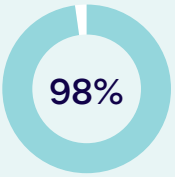
**Reduction in:**

- Self-reported experiences of bullying
- Safer and more inclusive school environments

**Source:** Departmental data, Victorian Government Schools data

## Initiatives

By 2025




**of schools supported staff to undertake CUST*.**

* Community Understanding and Safety Training = program designed to help schools provide culturally inclusive environments.

**Source:** Departmental Data, Victorian Government Schools data

# NAPLAN results 2023–2025

**First Nations students in Victoria across all school sectors achieved the strongest results nationwide in 2025, with the highest or second highest mean scores in 18 of 20 domains.**

First Nations students improved substantially in Year 5 Numeracy in 2025 compared to 2023, achieving a higher mean score with more high achievers and fewer low achievers.

## Reading

### Strong or exceeding

| | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | All students |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **YR 3** | 47.0% | 48.7% | **47.2%** | 71.4% |
| **YR 5** | 50.6% | 50.6% | **55.6%** | 77.6% |
| **YR 7** | 41.8% | 42.6% | **44.7%** | 74.0% |
| **YR 9** | 38.9% | 36.7% | **41.6%** | 69.1% |

## Numeracy

### Strong or exceeding

| | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | All students |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **YR 3** | 42.9% | 42.7% | **44.3%** | 69.8% |
| **YR 5** | 38.5% | 41.0% | **45.0%** | 73.4% |
| **YR 7** | 34.6% | 37.4% | **40.3%** | 72.7% |
| **YR 9** | 32.5% | 33.2% | **36.2%** | 68.9% |

**Source:** ACARA NAPLAN national results

# Completions | 2016–2025

## VCE, VCAL, VET in school completions, 2016–2023




**Source:** Departmental data, Victorian Government Schools data

## VCE completions, 2025

**703 students**

Number of Koorie students awarded the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), including VCE Vocational Major, an increase of 118 students since 2024.

## VPC completions, 2025

**55 students**

Number of Koorie students awarded the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC), an increase of 4 students since 2024.

**Source:** Departmental data, Victorian Government Schools data

## Destination of Year 12 Koorie completers, 2016–2024*

| Destination | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bachelor degree | 33.3% | 27.7% | 32.9% | 29.8% | 32.5% | 31.8% | 26.9% | 29.2% | 29.7% |
| Certificate/diploma | 19.9% | 12.9% | 16.8% | 15.7% | 13.9% | 12.4% | 10.8% | 12.0% | 12.3% |
| Apprenticeship/traineeship | 12.4% | 17.4% | 15.5% | 17.3% | 16.4% | 19.7% | 24.2% | 14.4% | 20.8% |
| Employed | 21.6% | 27.7% | 24.7% | 29.2% | 23.2% | 23.1% | 32.0% | 37.3% | 25.9% |
| Looking for work | 10.6% | 11.6% | 9.2% | 7.4% | 12.1% | 10.4% | 4.7% | 4.8% | 8.9% |
| NILFET** | 2.1% | 2.6% | 0.9% | 0.6% | 1.9% | 2.5% | 1.3% | 2.4% | 2.4% |
| **Total respondents** | **282** | **310** | **316** | **312** | **323** | **355** | **297** | **209** | **293** |

* The On Track Survey was not run in 2025.

** Not in labour force, education or training.

**Source:** Koorie Year 12 completers responses to the On Track Survey. All sectors.

Outcomes for First Nations learners in the tertiary education system continue to strengthen. Overall, more First Nations learners are participating in tertiary education — with increased enrolments at adult community and further education providers (Learn Local providers), TAFEs, Aboriginal Community Controlled Registered Training Organisations and universities (including dual sector). Importantly, completion rates for First Nations learners are also improving and First Nations learners in Victoria are enrolling in higher-level qualifications. For example, around 82% of First Nations commencements in vocational education and training are now at Certificate III level or higher, increasingly aligned to industry priority areas.

Learner survey data also indicates that First Nations students in vocational education and training report positive experiences of teaching and learning, slightly above the Victorian average. First Nations learner enrolments and completions in university and higher education qualifications have also increased, with significant increases in completions over the past 10 years. At the same time, there remain important opportunities to further close completion gaps between First Nations and non-First Nations learners, strengthen transitions into employment, and support higher-level tertiary pathways.

# Tertiary

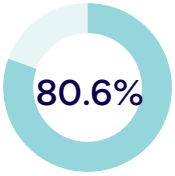
## Participation in Pre-Accredited Training

↑ 13.8%

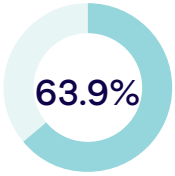
**Increase in pre-accredited training to First Nations learners between 2019–2025**

Includes learners funded through ACFE pre-accredited and digital skills programs.

### First Nations VET students report satisfaction levels above the Victoria average




Satisfaction with training




Satisfaction with improvement in non-technical skills

*Student Satisfaction Survey*, Victorian Skills Authority, Government Funded Vocational Education and Training.

### VET Completion Rate

↑ 10%

The VET completion rate has increased for First Nations learners in 2017–2025 but more work is needed to close the gap.

Based on Skills First Government Funded Students, non-Apprentice delivery, 4-year Completion Rate.

### First Nations learner rates of enrolment and completion at university has increased

Participation and completion rates have been increasing since 2016 for First Nations students at Victorian universities.

Enrolments in 2024 represent 1.17% of all domestic enrolments.

↑ 53%
Increase in enrolments (2016–2024)

↑ 139%
Increase in completions (2016–2024)

Selected Higher Education Statistics (2016–2024) — Australian Government.

### First Nations students are undertaking higher level qualifications

Over the last decade the qualification level studied by First Nations learners has risen.

These higher level qualifications are linked to better economic outcomes.

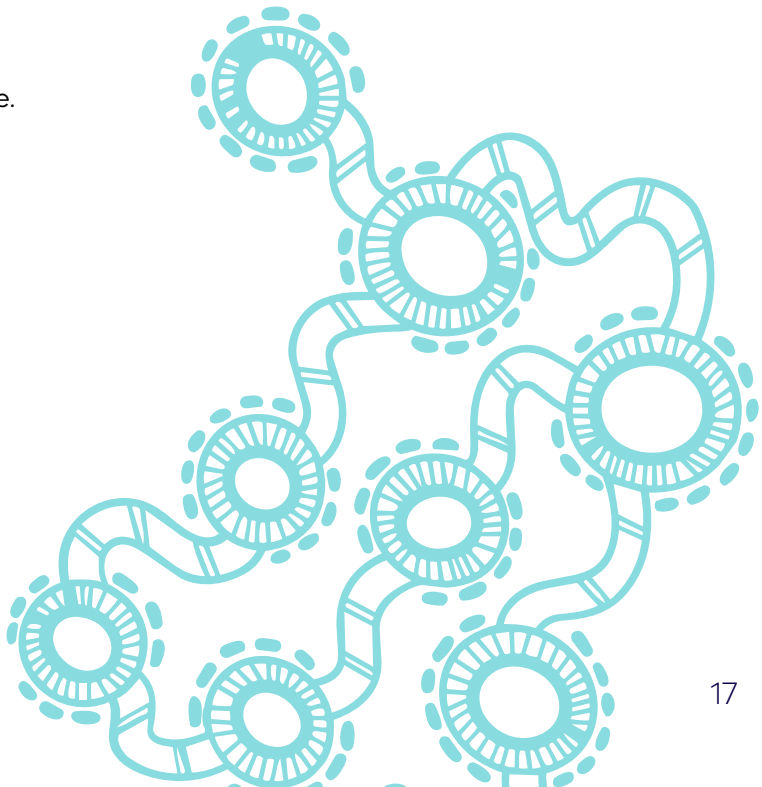
**Commencements of Certificate III and above**




Based on Skills First Government Funded Students

Importantly, across all sectors, there has been a strengthened understanding and commitment to culturally safe and responsive practice and a growing recognition that First Nations success must be defined on First Nations terms. This is reinforced by a number of broader commitments and compacts which, in general, recognise that achieving sustained improvement in First Nations outcomes requires that First Nations peoples are recognised not only as participants in the system, but as leaders and decision-makers in the governance, strategy and accountability frameworks that shape how the systems operate.

This indicates a profound change in how communities and educators experience the education system. 'Marrung 2026–2036' commits to a new approach to data that includes sharing place-based data and reporting against community-defined measures. Data sharing will evolve from reporting into a comprehensive story of change, illustrating past progress, current successes and areas requiring further effort.



What we heard

# Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education report.

The Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination report, informed through community Campfire Conversations, provides a critical foundation for 'Marrung 2026–2036'. These conversations created space for First Nations communities, young people, families and organisations to share their experiences, priorities and expectations for the future of education in Victoria.

Engaging over 3,000 participants across 89 schools, 12 ACCOs and 182 campfires, community consultations reinforced the need for self-determination to be embedded systemically. Communities reiterated the importance of genuine decision-making authority over education policy and programs, emphasising that First Nations organisations are best placed to lead solutions for their young people.

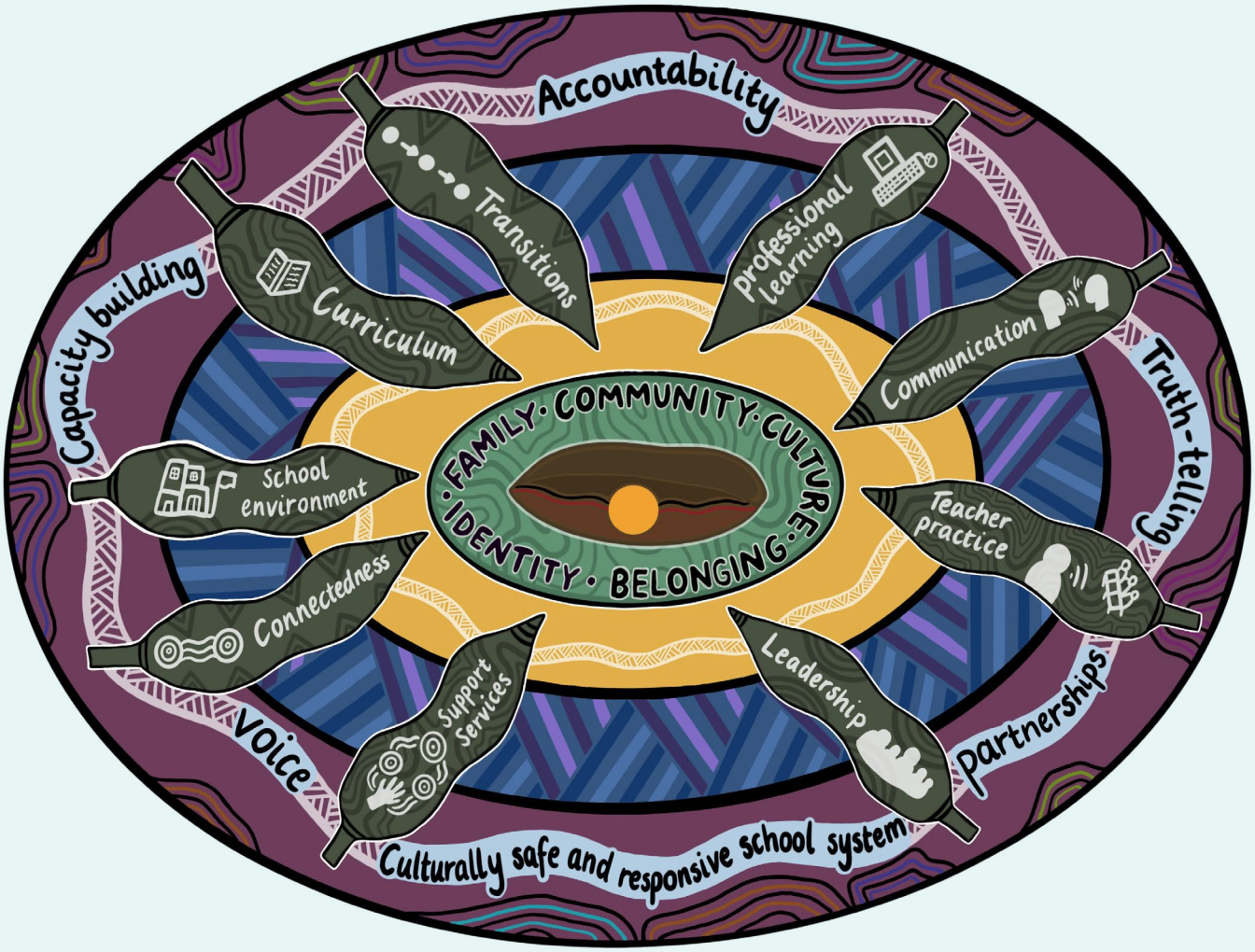
Participants highlighted the necessity of culturally safe environments that embed First Nations knowledge and language. Improved outcomes rely on all educators fostering inclusive spaces where identity is recognised, respected and celebrated. Furthermore, achieving this requires transparent, respectful partnerships built on shared accountability, specifically recognising ACCOs as essential delivery partners rather than just stakeholders.




**Possum Skin artwork by Nakia Cadd.**

**Possum skin cloaks were once everyday items for Aboriginal communities in parts of Victoria. Each person had a unique cloak, adding parts as they grew. Each new piece featured artwork, reflecting their life, identity, Country and totems.**

**Source:** Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education report




**Conceptual Framework artwork by Nakia Cadd**
**Source:** Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education report

Communities stressed the need for holistic, wraparound support across critical transitions, from early childhood through to employment. Crucially, the definition of success must be broadened; while educational attainment remains valued, true success must equally reflect cultural strength, wellbeing, community connection and pride in First Nations identity.

Through the Campfire Conversations, we heard from young people about their experiences with education. It was evident that young people share many of the same challenges in education despite their unique stories and journeys.

Together, these conversations and resulting report called for a strengthening of self-determination in education, helping to inform 'Marrung 2026–2036'. In particular, it provides clear direction for education to evolve as a system.

# Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles lay the foundation for 'Marrung 2026–2036'. They commit to improving outcomes for First Nations learners by recognising the strengths, knowledge and leadership of First Nations peoples. Meaningful, sustained change requires a fundamental shift in how the system operates, partners and ensures accountability across all stages of learning.

## Self-Determination

Self-determination underpins 'Marrung 2026–2036'. First Nations communities possess the knowledge, expertise and authority to determine what is best for learners. This strategy prioritises self-determination by embedding First Nations leadership and decision-making across all systemic levels. Transitioning towards shared decision-making and co-design, ensures First Nations peoples maintain a genuine, ongoing role in shaping education policies and programs.

## Advancing Systemic Transformation

Achieving ambitious targets requires a commitment to sustained systemic transformation, including addressing institutional barriers. The Victorian education system will shift its focus to policy and practice reform that recognises First Nations learners' experiences and strengths. This includes addressing structural racism and challenging bias.

This transformation relies on respectful, accountable partnerships with First Nations communities, grounded in trust, transparency and shared responsibility. Progress will be measured by improved outcomes, underpinned by relational trust, and the extent to which First Nations learners and families experience true inclusion, respect and influence the education system.

## Cultural Safety and Responsiveness

Cultural safety is non-negotiable. All learning environments must be safe, inclusive and respectful of First Nations identities, cultures and experiences. 'Marrung 2026–2036' commits to strengthening cultural responsiveness across curriculum, learning frameworks, practice and environments. This includes accurately and respectfully representing First Nations histories, cultures and the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

This includes strengthening approaches to prevent, identify and respond to racism in education settings, and ensuring culturally safe responses, supports and accountability mechanisms are in place when racism occurs.

A culturally responsive system supports First Nations learners in developing a strong sense of identity, belonging and wellbeing while valuing the strengths, knowledge and diversity of First Nations cultures. All educators share responsibility for utilising culturally responsive practices and ensuring First Nations perspectives are integral to teaching and learning.

# Key Priorities and Supporting Actions

'Marrung 2026–2036' is structured around 6 Key Priorities with 31 supporting actions. The actions apply to all sectors and are intended to be implemented within each sector's context, unless otherwise indicated in the wording of the action.

'Marrung 2026–2036' recognises the importance of alignment with existing cross-government reform agendas. Implementation of actions will occur in collaboration with existing cross government forums and portfolios to support coordinated reform, reduce duplication and strengthen shared accountability for improved outcomes for First Nations learners.

Many of these priorities and actions will support the delivery of existing Statewide Treaty commitments, with flexibility for future revision to ensure continued Treaty alignment.

This includes alignment with the emerging priorities of Gellung Warl as the democratically elected representative body for First Peoples in Victoria, with legislated powers and functions, and with any future Statewide or Traditional Owner Treaties.

Where supporting actions have the potential to relate to Statewide Treaty commitments or with the legislated powers and functions of Gellung Warl, departments and sectors will engage with Gellung Warl.

## Key Priorities



1

### Workforce Capacity and Capability



2

### First Nations Leadership and Partnership



3

### First Nations Languages



4

### Curriculum and Teacher Practice



5

### Learner Engagement, Participation and Voice



6

### Transitions and Pathways



## 1. Workforce Capacity and Capability

Develop culturally safe, inclusive, co-ordinated and responsive workforces with the expertise to support improved learning and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations learners across the early childhood, schools and tertiary education sectors, including children and young people with experience in out-of-home care, child protection and justice systems. This includes a strong focus on both First Nations staff and the broader workforce.

| Supporting Actions | | Guiding Principle |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | **Build capability across education settings for all staff**, including administrative, educators, teachers and senior leaders, by expanding best-practice guidance and cross-sector professional learning content that supports the achievement of Child Safe Standard 1 and other system priorities (including anti-racism, trauma-informed practice, disability inclusion, Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0). | → Self-determination<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 1.2 | **Develop First Nations workforce practice models** that include strong induction processes, defined practice activities, including coordination points with other internal and external workforces and alignment with existing networks, and targeted professional learning. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 1.3 | **Establish a structure to drive Marrung implementation at a school and service provider level** through provision of practice guidance to support continuous improvement and accountability. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 1.4 | **Grow and strengthen the First Nations workforce across early childhood education, schools and the Victorian VET system** through attraction, retention and empowerment, and clear leadership pathways and opportunities to ensure learning systems are inclusive and reflective of the Victorian community. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 1.5 | **Develop a First Nations engagement framework for educators** to provide clarity on principles, processes, referral pathways and expectations for partnering with First Nations communities and families, Traditional Owner groups, ACCOs and stakeholders to support early, respectful and meaningful engagement. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation |

## 2. First Nations Leadership and Partnership

Strengthen partnerships with First Nations families and communities to advance self-determination across early childhood, schools and tertiary education sectors, and ensure First Nations leadership guides policy, design and delivery.

| Supporting Actions | | Guiding Principle |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | **Support, strengthen and expand ACCO** service provision. | → Self-determination<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 2.2 | **Develop a First Nations data sovereignty and governance policy** to guide the collection, use, control, management and reporting of data, which will include returning knowledge to support community validation and discussion. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness<br>→ Self-determination |
| 2.3 | **Support existing education governance mechanisms** to incorporate a focus on improved learning and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations learners. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 2.4 | **Review and revise processes** to further develop streamlined, sustainable and flexible funding, contracting and reporting arrangements with ACCOs. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 2.5 | **Increase opportunities for First Nations voice in education** and training decision-making at a local, regional and state level. | → Self-determination<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |



## 3. First Nations Languages

Support First Nations communities to protect, reclaim and sustain languages in ways that are culturally safe and reflect community-defined priorities in recognition that languages play an important role in cultural affirmation.

| Supporting Actions | | Guiding Principle |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | **Actively promote the incorporation of First Nations languages** including through renaming of learning spaces, rooms, buildings, services and schools. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 3.2 | **In partnership with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations**, promote clear guidance for the development and implementation of First Nations languages programs. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 3.3 | **Celebrate learning settings that are teaching First Nations languages** through a communication campaign including good practice case studies to inform system scaling. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 3.4 | **Support First Nations languages delivery** through leveraging funding including existing programs. | → Self-determination |
| 3.5 | **Strengthen opportunities for First Nations people** to reclaim and reconnect with language, and provide opportunities to share language, including through expansion of the First Nations languages teacher workforce. | → Self-determination |
| 3.6 | **Support educators' understanding of Koorie English** including through targeted professional learning. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |



## 4. Curriculum and Teacher Practice

Strengthen and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives as integral, ongoing elements of teaching and learning across early childhood, schools and tertiary education settings. Educators will use culturally responsive and evidence-informed practices to ensure **what** is taught (curriculum and learning frameworks), and **how** (teacher practice) is respectful, and responsive to both First Nations and non-First Nations learners.

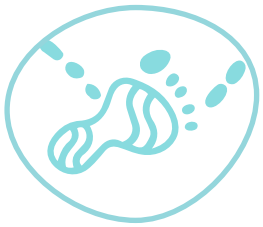
| Supporting Actions | | Guiding Principle |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 | **Support educators and teachers to incorporate First Nations knowledge** and expertise into their practice and content. This will include the provision of high-quality structured guidance and tailored courses co-designed with First Nations communities, and delivered by providers including the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership. | → Self-determination<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 4.2 | **Work with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) and the Victorian VET Educator Academy** to strengthen recognition of high-quality First Nations professional learning in the teacher registration and educator capability development process. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 4.3 | **Enhance targeted initiatives to support First Nations learners** to achieve their aspirations, with a strengthened focus on foundational skills (including Literacy and Numeracy) and high ability. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 4.4 | **Strengthen support for Initial Teacher Education providers** to deliver content consistent with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers — graduate level, that prepares graduates to be confident and culturally responsive in their practice. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 4.5 | **Work with VIT, Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority and the Victorian Council of Deans of Education** to strengthen approaches relating to relevant standards in the *AITSL Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures*. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 4.6 | **Strengthen school and service provider review and planning processes** to drive clear expectations, improve accountability and monitor impact including in relation to delivery of First Nations perspectives in curriculum and learner outcomes, as appropriate under existing regulatory and governance frameworks. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 4.7 | **Implement Statewide Treaty Reform: Inclusion of Truth-telling in the Victorian Curriculum 2.0**, to be co-designed between Gellung Warl, VAEAI, VCAA and the Department of Education, and including the Yoorrook Justice Commission Official Public Record as a resource, and monitoring and reporting mechanisms. | → Self-determination<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |



## 5. Learner Engagement, Participation and Voice

Education systems acknowledge, respect and actively support the diversity of First Nations learners that enable full participation, continuity of learning, links to community and family, and access to opportunities. The voices of First Nations learners are centred and meaningfully responded to, with genuine opportunities to shape educational experiences.

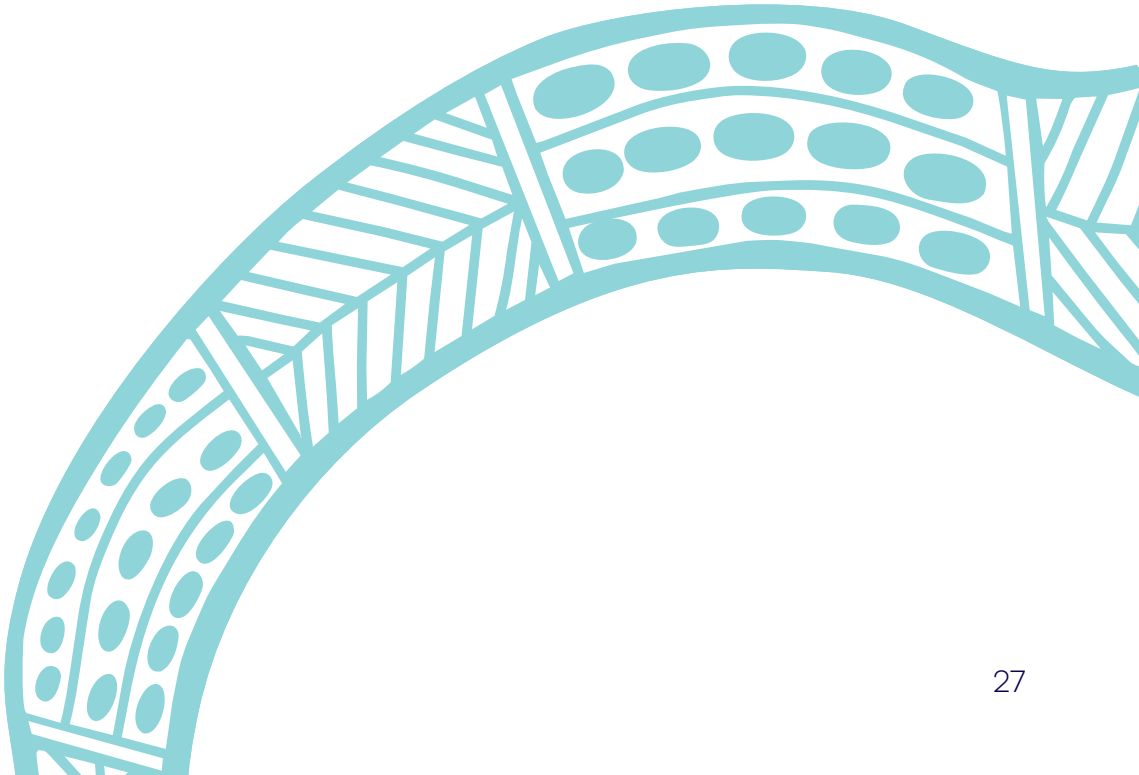
| Supporting Actions | | Guiding Principle |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | **Ensure First Nations learners are supported and connected to education and training systems**, including through strengthened processes to support individual learning and wellbeing, with active involvement from families, and targeted approaches for learners who are disengaged or at risk of disengagement. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 5.2 | **Empower and amplify the voice of First Nations learners and families** by enhancing opportunities for advocacy, leadership and co-design in education and training systems at a state and place-based level. | → Self-determination<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 5.3 | **Improve attendance, participation and sense of belonging** through community-defined strategies, informed by evidence and local context. | → Self-determination<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 5.4 | **Strengthen early intervention and re-engagement approaches** to ensure timely and appropriate supports for children, young people, adult learners and their families, including for children and young people at risk of or in contact with the child protection and justice systems, through cross-portfolio collaboration. | → Cultural Safety and Responsiveness<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation |
| 5.5 | **Strengthen approaches across education settings to identify,** respond to and address racism experienced by First Nations learners, including culturally safe supports, clear escalation pathways, restorative responses and accountability mechanisms. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |



## 6. Transitions and Pathways

First Nations learners receive culturally responsive, tailored support across all transitions — from early childhood and school to tertiary education and/or employment.

| Supporting Actions | Guiding Principle |
|---|---|
| 6.1 **Strengthen supports for First Nations learners across key transition points** through culturally responsive and coordinated planning and strengthened communication, learner experiences and resources. | → Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 6.2 **Improve access to and participation in diverse and high quality senior secondary and tertiary education, and career pathways**, including through strengthened collaboration with communities, employers and training providers. | → Self-determination<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |
| 6.3 **Strengthen family and carer engagement** and provide continuity of support through key transition points. | → Self-determination<br>→ Advancing Systemic Transformation<br>→ Cultural Safety and Responsiveness |



How we will deliver this work

# Implementation Approach

Implementation plans, developed after the release of 'Marrung 2026–2036', will act to translate actions into practical commitments by identifying specific initiatives from the Department of Education (DE), Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) and Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA). This will ensure strong alignment with the shared vision, guiding principles and key priorities.

Implementation plans will be co-designed with First Nations partners, informed by sector context and priorities, and closely monitored by their respective department or sector.

In particular, strong partnerships with community will underpin the development and implementation of these plans, ensuring they are informed by lived experience and community priorities.

Marrung Central Governance Committee (CGC) will approve implementation plans following endorsement through respective department or sector governance mechanisms. Plans will operate over a 3-year timeframe, and will feature annual reporting. This will maintain accountability, align with the review points for 'Marrung 2026–2036', and ensure that the plans remain responsive to emerging needs and changing context across the strategy's 10-year term.

How we will work together, track progress and stay accountable

# Governance and Monitoring

In implementing 'Marrung 2026–2036', governance and accountability measures will be strengthened with a focus on centring community voice, decision making and strong feedback mechanisms.

Key elements of governance include:

### Marrung Central Governance Committee:

Co-chaired by the President of VAEAI and the Secretary of DE. This committee will have decision-making authority and oversee implementation of actions over the life of the strategy.

### Marrung Regional Partnership Forums:

Co-chaired by a nominated LAECG Chairperson and DE Regional Director. The purpose of these forums is to provide strong regional leadership and oversight, ensuring implementation of Marrung drives improvement for place-based outcomes.

### Koorie Education Roundtables:

Chaired by a nominated local LAECG Chairperson within the Region. The purpose of the roundtables is to ensure what matters to local communities is captured and responded to. The roundtables will include broad community and sector representation.

### Marrung Ministerial Roundtable:

Co-chaired by the President of VAEAI and the Secretary of DE. The purpose of the Roundtable is to reflect annually on key achievements and emerging priorities and provide an opportunity for portfolio ministers to hear directly from community partners.

### Koorie Skills Coordination Forum:

Co-chaired by the General Manager, VAEAI, and the Deputy Secretary of the Skills and TAFE Group in the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions. The purpose of the forum, which is inclusive of Aboriginal Community Controlled Registered Training Organisations, is to progress and monitor relevant actions under 'Marrung 2026-2036' in the tertiary education sector, as well as support other initiatives relevant to First Nations self-determination and learning and employment outcomes.

### Marrung Project Board:

Co-chaired by VAEAI's Executive Manager, Programs and Policy and the Deputy Secretary of the First Nations Strategy, Policy and Programs Group in DE. The purpose of the Project Board is to monitor the status of actions in 'Marrung 2026-2036' and provide high level governance and accountability.

**Marrung Central Governance Committee**
Decision making body
**Membership:** Co-chaired by VAEAI President and DE Secretary.

Includes VACCA, VACCHO, VACSAL, Koorie Youth Council (KYC), Gellung Warl, VACYPA, Aboriginal Caucuses of AJF, Dhelk Dja and Yuma Yirramboi, DE and DJSIR Deputy Secretaries, ISV and VCEA representatives, DE Regional Directors, Executives from DH, DPC, DFFH and DJCS, School sector representatives, CEO VCAA, CEO ELAA, CEO MAV, Chairs of VTA and ACFE Board, CEO Victorian Skills Authority, Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, President of AEU, early childhood peak bodies.

**Purpose:** To oversee implementation of the strategic actions over the life of the strategy.

**Koorie Education Roundtables**
Chaired by VAEAI.

Includes LAECGs, First Nations community members, local First Nations organisations, broad sector representation.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the roundtables is to ensure what matters to local communities is captured and responded to.

**Marrung Regional Partnership Forums**
Co-chaired by LAECG Chair and DE Regional Director.

Includes VAEAI, LAECGs, regional ACCOs, KYC, Regional DE Executive Directors, Koorie Education Director, VCEA, ISV, TAFEs, ACFE, relevant councils and Early Years Managers.

**Note:** Inclusive of annual youth panel.

Purpose: The purpose of these forums is to provide strong regional leadership and oversight, ensuring implementation of Marrung drives improvement for place-based outcomes.

**Marrung Project Board**
Monitoring

Co-chaired by VAEAI and FNSPP Deputy Secretary.

Includes Executives from DE, DJSIR, ISV and VCEA.

Note: Inclusive of working groups.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Project Board is to monitor the status of actions in Marrung 2026–2036 and provide high level governance and accountability.

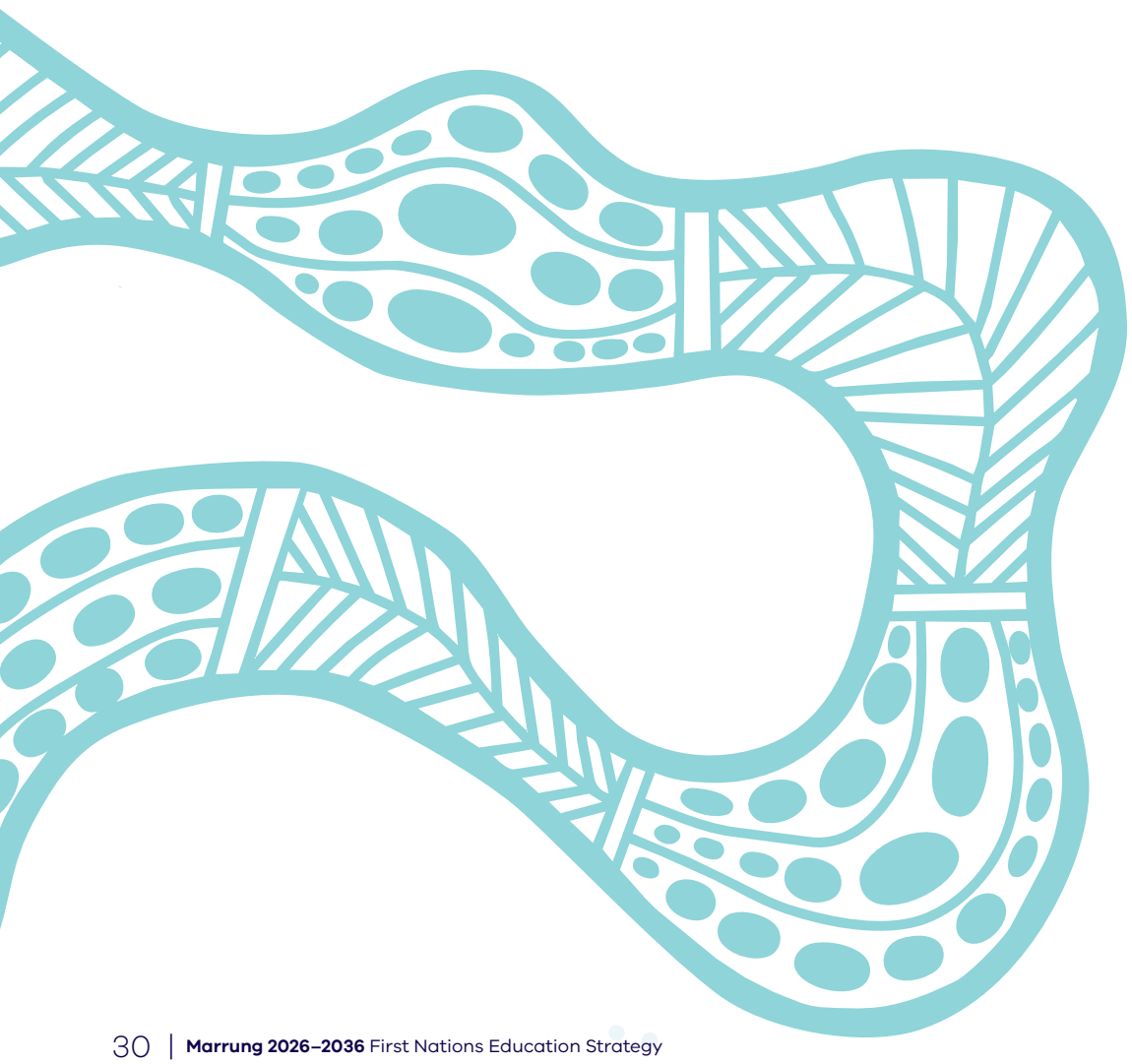
In addition to formal governance outlined above, each department or sector representative will develop an implementation plan to progress actions according to their specific context, supported by relevant governance mechanisms (for example Koorie Skills Co-ordination Forum, Marrung Area Implementation Teams, ISV and VCEA equivalent).

# ‘Marrung 2026–2036’ commits to working holistically

‘Marrung 2026–2036’ operates within the broader context of local, state and national reforms aimed at improving outcomes for First Nations peoples. This encompasses community-partnered initiatives addressing justice, disability inclusion, family violence and family wellbeing, all of which directly contribute to the success of First Nations learners.

To ensure these broader commitments are actively integrated into the work, Marrung’s central governance mechanisms will include representatives from key forums, including the Dhelk Dja Forum, the Aboriginal Children’s Forum, the Aboriginal Justice Forum, and Yuma Yirramboi. This representation will support stronger coordination and alignment across related reform efforts, including the development of cross-referral pathways where identified issues can be more appropriately addressed through collaboration with key forums and departments.

This approach recognises that many of the barriers experienced by First Nations learners intersect across education, health, wellbeing, child and family services, disability, housing and justice systems, and require coordinated responses across government. Additionally, to ensure coordinated action that responds to community priorities and strengthens alignment across government portfolios, governance will also include representation from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing; the Department of Justice and Community Safety; and the Department of Health.



# Outcomes Monitoring Framework

The outcomes monitoring framework for 'Marrung 2026–2036' will measure progress against key measures and targets. It will also include relational health measures and community-defined measures of success. 'Marrung 2026–2036' will assess strategy implementation and governance using the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Self-Determination Continuum.

## Outcomes Monitoring Framework

### Quantitative indicators

- Closing the Gap (CTG)
- Output Performance Measure (OPM)
- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VAAF) measures

### Community-defined measures of success

**Note:** Further measures to be developed collaboratively with community after launch.

### Relational Health Measures

- **Trust** (community perception of honesty and follow-through)
- **Reciprocity** (mutual benefit and respect in partnerships)
- **Cultural safety** (student and family experience)
- **Shared authority** (evidence of co-design and decision traceability)
- **Responsiveness** (timeliness of action on community advice)

### Self-Determination Continuum

Annual self-assessment by community Central Governance Committee members and community regional governance members.

### Ongoing Development and Refinement

**Note:** Two comprehensive reviews to be conducted over the 10-year life span of the strategy.

### Nginma Ngainga Wara

Statewide Treaty establishes Nginma Ngainga Wara as the independent accountability mechanism of Gellung Warl to monitor, evaluate and ensure accountability for the effectiveness of the Victorian Government in achieving better outcomes for First Peoples.

The outcomes monitoring framework for 'Marrung 2026–2036' is in place to inform continuous improvement throughout its implementation and will remain flexible to avoid duplication and ensure alignment with the work and functions of Nginma Ngainga Wara.

## New Relational Health Measures

Relational health measures will be developed and reported annually alongside existing measures and targets. These relational health measures are critical and will ensure a focus on strengthening relationships and relational accountability.

To advance systemic transformation, education systems require relational accountability, where sectors are answerable both upward to government and outward to First Nations communities. Relational health measures are core indicators of success — not optional commitments — and can help build trust and reciprocity.

## Community-defined Measures of Success

Community have made it clear that 'Marrung 2026–2036' needs to include success measures defined by community, focusing on aspiration and what community views as important.

Through extensive community feedback involving Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, ACCOs, Registered Aboriginal Parties, and community members across Victoria, the following key themes and messaging reflect what community have long been advocating for.



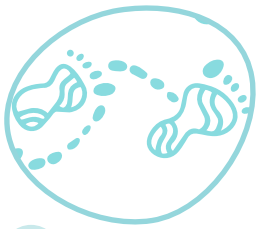
1

**Cultural safety, belonging and holistic definitions of success**



2

**Community ownership and governance**



3

**Anti-racism system accountability and culturally responsive teaching**

## 1 Cultural safety, belonging and holistic definitions of success

Education programs for First Nations learners are most effective when First Nations knowledge, language and perspectives are embedded as core elements of learning, not treated as additions. This includes Aboriginal language education, learning on Country, and curriculum co-designed with local First Nations communities.

Measures of engagement and achievement must move beyond narrow indicators such as standardised test scores to reflect a more holistic view of success. This includes learner wellbeing, cultural safety, belonging and identity. When identity, agency and relationships are embedded in the education system, stronger engagement and improved academic outcomes follow.

### Measures

1. Proportion of First Nations learners reporting feeling culturally safe and a sense of belonging in their school or adult learning environment, and families reporting their early childhood education service is culturally safe and their children feel a sense of belonging.
2. Number of education initiatives that are co-designed, community-led, or delivered in partnership with local First Nations community.
3. Proportion of learners who feel confident to identify as First Nations in their school or adult learning environment.

## 2 Community ownership and governance

Education outcomes for First Nations learners improve when local First Nations communities have real input into curriculum and learning frameworks, education priorities and governance. This includes community having confidence in the leadership, governance and daily management of educational services. Success is measured by community trust, engagement and long-term continuity (not just short-term academic gains).

### Measures

1. Percentage of First Nations families and carers reporting trust and confidence in education leadership.
2. Percentage of First Nations Marrung CGC community members reporting trust and confidence in governance and decision-making processes.
3. Number of LAECGs who report that local education settings meaningfully involve community in decision making.

## 3 Anti-racism system accountability and culturally responsive teaching

Education services must be culturally safe environments for First Nations learners, families and communities. Educators across systems need to demonstrate the skills required to identify racism and know how to deal with it. Educators need to have access to appropriate professional learning to address racism. There must be clear processes for dealing with racism at all levels.

Educators who build strong, respectful relationships with First Nations students, families and communities generally see better learner engagement and achievement. Success is seen through stronger participation, reduced disciplinary issues and improved learning outcomes. High-impact education systems invest heavily in teacher capability — with a focus on cultural competence and relational teaching and learning practice — in addition to content knowledge.

### Measures

1. Number of staff engaged in professional learning focusing on cultural safety and responsiveness, including Child Safe Standard 1.
2. Proportion of educators and teachers reporting improved understanding and appreciation of First Nations histories and perspectives after completing professional learning.

This initial tranche of community-defined measures of success represents the beginning of an ongoing process, not a final or fixed set of measures. Through community conversations and partnership, 'Marrung 2026–2036' will continue to refine and expand these measures. This approach recognises that success must remain responsive to the voices, priorities and aspirations of First Nations learners, families and communities.

# Measures and Targets

## Budget Paper 3 Output Performance Measures

### Kindergarten measures

- Aboriginal children funded to participate in kindergarten in the year before school
- Kindergarten participation rate for Aboriginal children in the year two years before school
- Kindergarten participation rate for Aboriginal children in the two years before school

### Attendance measures*

- Aboriginal student attendance rate, all schools, Years 1 to 6
- Aboriginal student attendance rate, all schools, Years 7 to 10

### NAPLAN measures*

- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 3 Numeracy
- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 3 Reading
- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Numeracy
- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 5 Reading
- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Numeracy
- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 7 Reading
- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Numeracy
- Percentage of Aboriginal students strong and exceeding in Year 9 Reading

**Note** that* denotes targets and measures that are applicable across the school education system, including VCEA and ISV.

## Closing the Gap Targets

### Outcome 3

*Children engaged in high-quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education*

a. By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in YBFS early childhood education to 95%.

b. By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending 480 hours of YBFS early childhood education to 80%.

### Outcome 4

*Children thriving*

By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) to 55%.*

### Outcome 5

*Student learning potential*

By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (age 20 to 24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96%.

### Outcome 6

*Further education pathways*

By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25 to 34 years who have completed a tertiary qualification (Certificate III and above) to 70%.

### Outcome 7

*Youth engagement*

By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (15 to 24 years) who are in employment, education or training to 67%.

## Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework Measures

### Goal 4
### Aboriginal children thrive in the early years

*Measure 4.1.1*

Number and proportion of eligible children enrolled in a funded 4-year old kindergarten program in the year before school

*Measure 4.1.2*

Number of children funded to participate in Early Start Kindergarten and 3-Year-Old Kindergarten

*Measure 4.1.3*

Proportion of children vulnerable on one or more domain(s) on the AEDC*

### Goal 5
### Aboriginal learners excel at school

*Measure 5.1.1*

Percentage of students scoring strong or exceeding — Reading and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in years 3, 5, 7 and 9*

*Measure 5.2.1*

Proportion of students who feel connected to their school

*Measure 5.2.2*

Student attendance rates at government schools

*Measure 5.2.3*

Number of Aboriginal people on school councils

*Measure 5.2.4*

Proportion of students who report bullying at school

*Measure 5.2.5*

Number and proportion of school based Aboriginal workers across all schools

*Measure 5.2.6*

Number of schools teaching an Aboriginal language

*Measure 5.2.7*

Number and proportion of government schools having undertaken CUST

### Goal 6
### Aboriginal learners are engaged at school

*Measure 6.1.1*

Proportion of young people aged 20 to 24 with Year 12 or equivalent

*Measure 6.1.2*

Apparent retention rates for students in years 10 to 12*

*Measure 6.1.3*

Number of Aboriginal students who complete the VCE including the VCE vocational major and who complete the Victorian Pathways Certificate*

### Goal 7
### Aboriginal learners achieve their full potential after school

*Measure 7.1.1*

Destination of Year 12 Completers*

*Measure 7.1.2*

Proportion of 17 to 24 year-old school leavers participating in full-time education and training, and or employment

*Measure 7.1.3*

Tertiary education participation and completion:

- *7.1.3a:* VET participation rate
- *7.1.3b:* university participation rate
- *7.1.3c:* VET course completion rate
- *7.1.3d:* university course completion rate

*Measure 7.1.4*

Proportion of 20 to 64-year-olds with qualifications at Certificate III level or above.

*Measure 7.1.5*

Proportion of 20 to 64-year-old government-funded and total VET graduates employed and/or in further study after training.

### First Nations Languages

- Number of First Nations Early Childhood language programs funded through Early Years Language Program
- Number of schools delivering a First Nations language as Language Other Than English
- Number of completions for Certificate II and III: Learning an Australian First Nations Language, and Certificate IV: Teaching an Australian First Nations Language
- Schools and early years services that the department funds the construction of, that are named in First Nations languages.

### Racism

- Number and proportion of First Nations students experiencing racism at their school in the past 12 months.

### Tertiary Measures

- Proportion of Victorian First Nations young people aged 15 to 24 who are engaged in employment, education or training.
- Proportion of people aged 25 to 34 who have Certificate III and higher
- Proportion of First Nations learners enrolled in tertiary education (AQF Certificate III and above)
- Proportion of First Nations VET completers who are satisfied with training
- Proportion of First Nations VET completers who are in employment after training
- The proportion of First Nations VET completers who achieved their main reason for training
- Completion rate for First Nations Apprentices
- Completion rate for First Nations VET learners (non-apprentices)
- Proportion of First Nations pre-accredited learners undertaking Learn Local training
- Proportion of First Nations pre-accredited learners who report they are satisfied with their Learn Local training.

## Ongoing development and refinement

Two comprehensive reviews will be conducted throughout the lifecycle of 'Marrung 2026–2036'.

### Scope

The scope of the reviews will be confirmed by the Marrung CGC and consider progress against key priorities as well as new policy developments.

### Method

It will be informed by the Campfire Conversation methodology, which was grounded in community lived experience, alongside quantitative data.

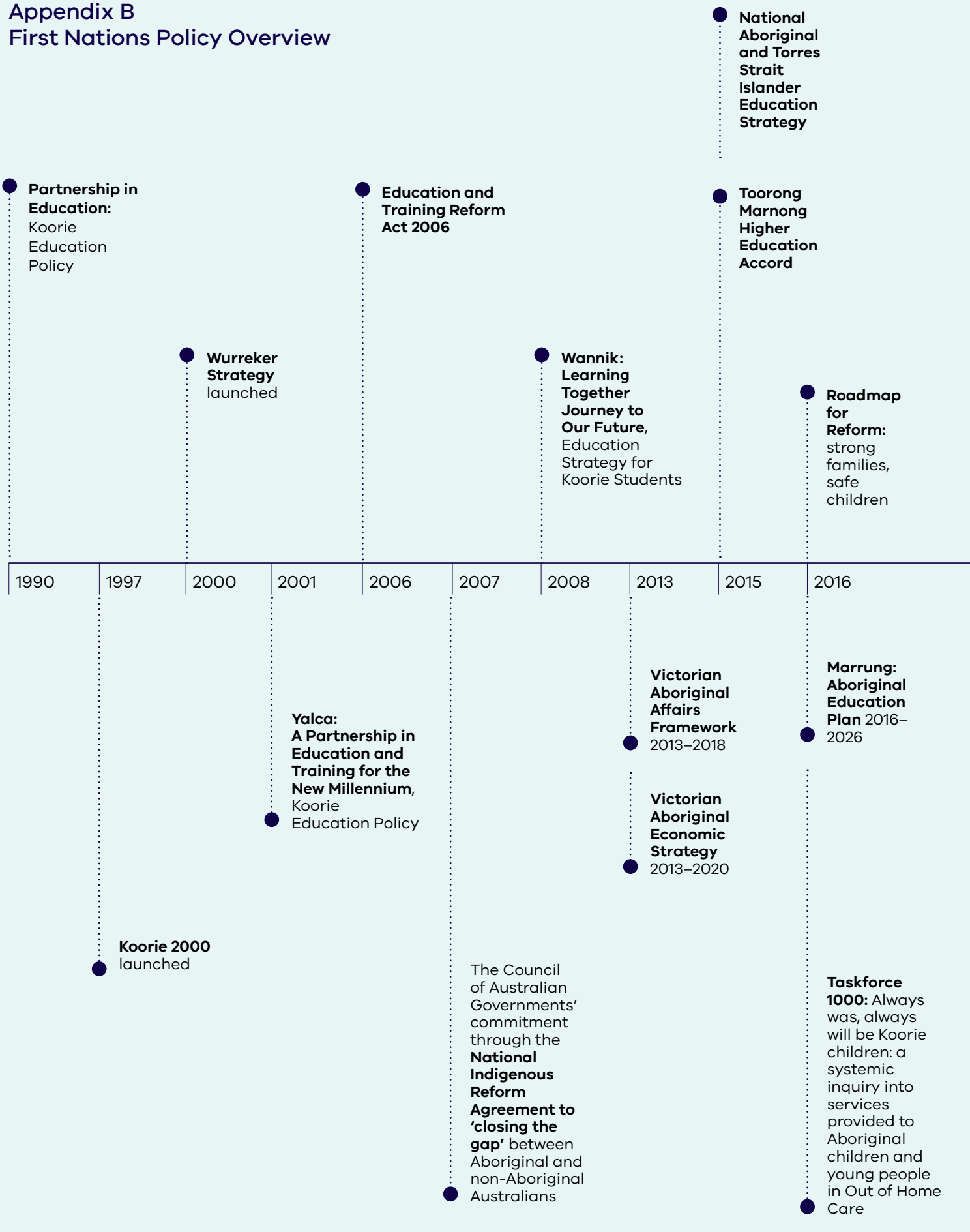
# Appendices

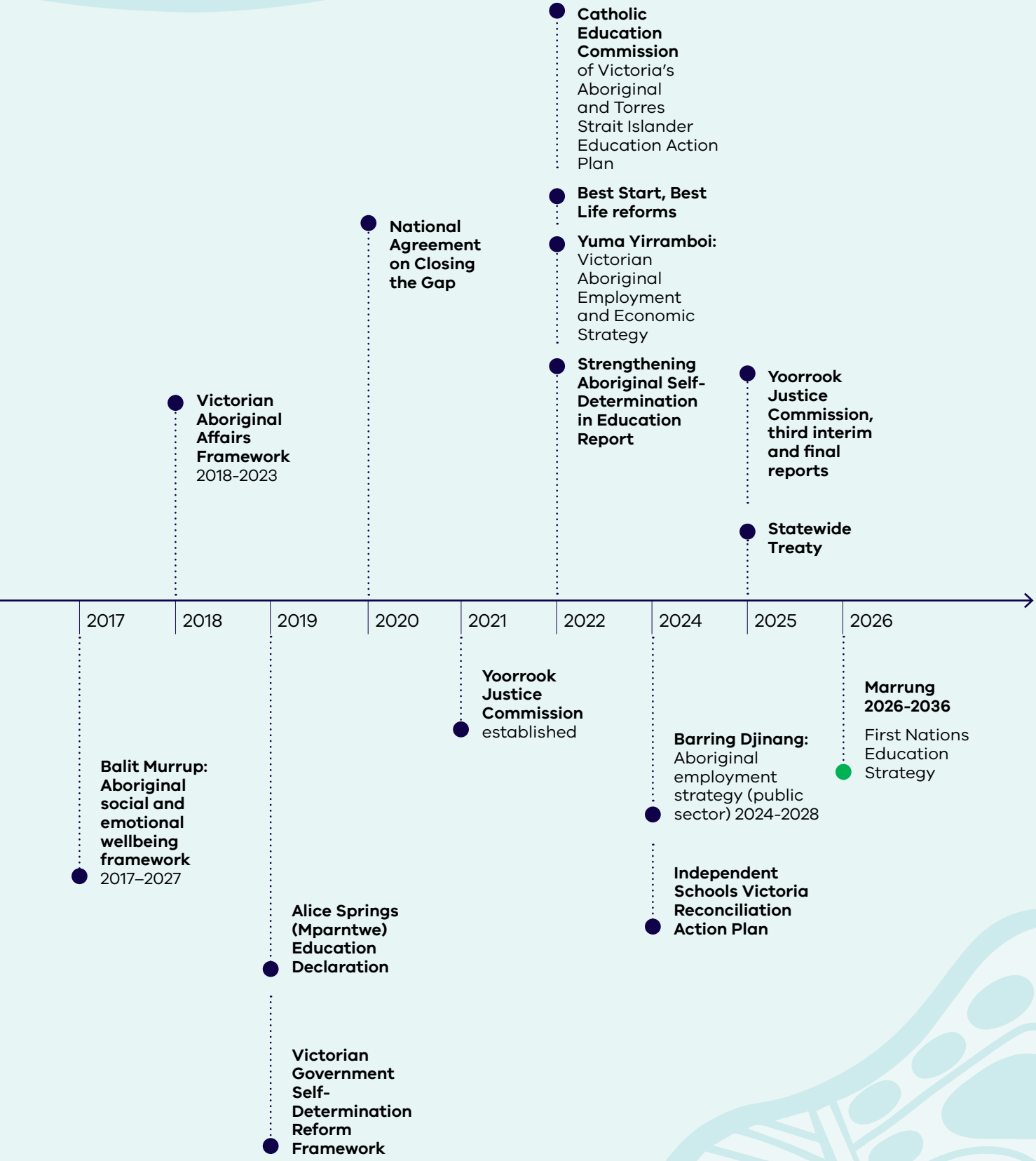
## Appendix A — Glossary

| Term | Meaning in this document |
|---|---|
| **Academic attainment** | Completing an accredited qualification earned through formal education. |
| **ACCO** | Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation |
| **ACECQA** | Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority |
| **AEDC** | Australian Early Development Census |
| **AEU** | Australian Education Union |
| **AITSL** | Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership |
| **APST** | Australian Professional Standards for Teachers |
| **CGC** | Marrung Central Governance Committee |
| **CUST** | Community Understanding and Safety Training program |
| **DE** | Department of Education, the Victorian Government agency responsible for education policy, funding, and system leadership across government schools and early childhood providers. |
| **DJSIR** | Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions |
| **ECE** | Early Childhood Education. In the context of Marrung, this encompasses 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten as well as Early Learning Victoria centres. |
| **ES** | Education Support |
| **ELAA** | Early Learning Association Australia |
| **Foundational Skills** | The 3 foundational skills are Digital Literacy, Literacy and Numeracy. They are fundamental to learning across the Victorian Curriculum because their development is crucial for students to build understanding of the key knowledge, skills and concepts in the learning areas and capabilities. Literacy and Numeracy are presented as progressions, while Digital Literacy skills are presented as a continuum. |
| **ITE** | Initial Teacher Education |
| **ISV** | Independent Schools Victoria |
| **KSCF** | Koorie Skills Coordination Forum |
| **KYC** | Koorie Youth Council |
| **LAECG** | Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group; LAECGs are constituent units of VAEAI and voluntary local Koorie community members who have an interest in, and commitment to, Koorie education and training, and bring knowledge and experience to Koorie education issues across all sectors. LAECGs sit at the heart of VAEAI's core governance structure — which remains in place today |
| **MAIT** | Marrung Area Implementation Teams |
| **Marrung 2016–2026** | 'Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026' |

| Term | Meaning in this document |
|---|---|
| **Marrung 2026–2036** | 'Marrung 2026–2036 First Nations Education Strategy' |
| **NAPLAN** | National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy |
| **PB** | Marrung Project Board |
| **RPF** | Marrung Regional Partnership Forum |
| **TAFE** | Technical and Further Education |
| **Tertiary education** | Victoria's tertiary education sector supports post-school education, providing foundation skills through Adult and Community Education (ACE); accredited vocational education and training and apprenticeships through TAFEs, Aboriginal Community Controlled Registered Training Organisations and other RTOs; and higher education through universities and TAFEs. |
| **Toorong Marnong** | A higher education accord developed in partnership with VAEAI to progress improved outcomes for First Nations students at Victorian Universities, delivered through the Toorong Marnong Higher Education Accord. |
| **VAAF** | Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018–2023 (extended to 2025) |
| **VACCA** | The Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency is Victoria's peak voice for First Nations children; a state-wide Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation providing services for children, young people, families and community members across Victoria. |
| **VACCHO** | Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation; the peak body for the health and wellbeing of Koorie people in Victoria. |
| **VACSAL** | Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd; VACSAL is a peak body in relation to community development as well as being a major service provider. |
| **VACYPA** | Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance |
| **VAEAI** | Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated; VAEAI is a peak body that represents the Koorie Community in relation to education and training policy development and strategic programming at the local, state and national levels. VAEAI was formerly known as the Victorian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. |
| **VCAA** | Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority |
| **VCEA** | Victorian Catholic Education Authority |
| **VCDE** | Victorian Council of Deans of Education |
| **VEYLDF** | Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework |
| **VET** | Vocational Education and Training |
| **VIT** | Victorian Institute of Teaching |
| **VPS** | Victorian Public Sector |
| **VTA** | Victorian TAFE Association |

## Appendix B
## First Nations Policy Overview




2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2024
2025
2026
Balit Murrup: Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing framework 2017–2027
Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023
Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration
Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework
National Agreement on Closing the Gap
Yoorrook Justice Commission established
Catholic Education Commission of Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan
Best Start, Best Life reforms
Yuma Yirramboi: Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Strategy
Strengthening Aboriginal Self-Determination in Education Report
Barring Djinang: Aboriginal employment strategy (public sector) 2024-2028
Independent Schools Victoria Reconciliation Action Plan
Yoorrook Justice Commission, third interim and final reports
Statewide Treaty
Marrung 2026-2036 First Nations Education Strategy



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