

# Education State Submission

A student perspective on the future of education in Victoria.

***We can't call ourselves the education state if we aren't looking after the education and wellbeing of our students.***

15 year old student, The Mac.Robertson Girl's High School

## What's it all about?

In launching the Education State consultation in June 2015, the Andrews Labor Government asked all Victorians to have their say about the future of our education system. Capturing student voice is crucial in this project. Students are at the centre of education in schools. They have strong understandings and ideas about what works, and ways to improve learning and teaching. We see the consultation process as a critical opportunity to talk about the importance of student voice in education, and to provide practical and tangible examples.

### Who took part?

In an effort to capture the thoughts, feedback and ideas of Victorian students about the Education State, VicSRC sent out a survey to all member schools. The survey received a very strong response, from 352 students across 32 schools. These areas of focus align with the VicSRC policy statements developed over the last decade, as well as the areas of interest set by the 170 students who attended the VicSRC's 2015 Congress.

### What are the main concerns for students in Victoria?

Student responses revolved around four key areas:

- The school environment and student engagement
- The curriculum
- Funding and equality
- Wellbeing

## What can be done to make Victoria the Education State?

Victorian students have clear ideas about what school in the Education State should look and feel like. Highlighting and listening to student voice is critically important in achieving this, and students want the Education State to provide clear avenues for this to happen consistently across all schools. We took students' ideas and worked with members of the VicSRC student executive to come up with a range of recommendations to help the Department of Education with their work on creating the Education State.

**Recommendation #1** Ensure the Education State is committing to strengthening student voice in Victoria by including a student representative from VicSRC at the launch of the Education State reforms in September, as suggested by the Hon. Minister for Education, James Merlino, on 3rd July 2015.

**Recommendation #2** Facilitate the development of a state-wide coordinated framework for developing student voice and SRCs.

**Recommendation #3** Ensuring all students attend schools with equipment and facilities that meet a minimum standard of being professional, safe, modern and well maintained.

**Recommendation #4** Ensuring that a flexible curriculum is developed lead and informed by students.

**Recommendation #5** The education state should provide funding and equality through developing a needs based funding model that works to correct the inequalities experienced by students with disability or from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Recommendation #6** Increase support for the wellbeing and health needs of every Victorian student through more individualised support and increased investment in wellbeing services.

Thank you to all students who shared their ideas with us!

You can read more about these recommendations and findings in the full submission, which you can find at [www.vicsrc.org.au](http://www.vicsrc.org.au).

