

Choice and Affordability Fund

2025 Annual Report – Independent Schools
Victoria



NGRB Ongoing Compliance Declaration

Section 92 of the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act) outlines the basic requirements for approval of a non-government representative body for a non-government school.

As such, the Department of Education is seeking confirmation that Independent Schools Victoria complies with the legislative requirements in relation to monitoring the body's compliance with the Act.

Confirmation you continue to meet basic requirements for approval

Body corporate

Independent Schools Victoria Limited is a not-for-profit entity registered with the Australia Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC).

ABN 44 711 074 857

Charity reporting is up to date.

Not-for-profit (NFP)

Independent Schools Victoria is a registered not for profit organization that complies with ACNC ongoing obligations to remain registered.

Financial viability

Independent Schools Victoria has income levels required to meet current and ongoing operation costs. Independent Schools Victoria has the management structure required to manage the ongoing operation costs of the current year and has strategic plans and budgets in place.

Audited Annual Financial Statements are lodged with ACNC annually, with the most recent annual report for December 2025, whereby ISV's auditors have provided an unmodified audit opinion.

Fit and proper person

Independent Schools Victoria employs staff with the relevant skills, knowledge, experience and expertise to support non-government schools in Victoria. All staff must hold a current working with children check. Staff and Directors also sign off on code of Conduct Policy and declare any Conflict of Interests.

NGRB Annual Report Sign Off

This annual report is submitted in fulfillment of the annual report requirements in sections 50, 51 and 52 of the CAF Guidelines.

**Name and Position of the person
signing off on behalf of the NGRB:** Rachel Holthouse – Chief Executive

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Holthouse', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Date: 20 July 2026

Summary of 2025

The focus of effort and resources for 2025 was to build the capacity of Independent schools through improved access to data, targeted professional learning and planning of systems that will prepare schools for sustainability (as reported in our 2026-2027 Work Plan). Some previously reported activities were concluded, several of which had been impacted by lengthy periods of lockdown during COVID. At the core of all centralised investments was a desire to prepare schools for a more complex and demanding future. Sources of complexity include changing expectations of parents and learners, demands on staff such as the rise of technology in and outside the classroom and responding to psycho-social challenges. Leading and running a school has also evolved and investments have been made to ensure these leaders have the knowledge, skills and tools to prepare their schools and communities for future sustainability. Schools participating in CAF programs completed project documentation, post project analysis and identification of learnings for future investments that will continue to deliver impact.

For the fifth consecutive year ISV worked with nominated Regional Transition Assistance (RTA) schools eligible to receive a direct allocation of transition funding to develop a Sustainability Plan. This provided a process and regular schedule for each school to consider its viability and business model into the future. This work continued in early 2025 and further enhanced our continuing understanding of individual school needs. This will be an ongoing activity for the duration of the CAF program.

ISV also assisted other Victorian Independent schools with direct allocation of funding. These are schools that either experienced reduced funding because of the move to the DMI funding methodology compared to the former SES funding methodology (transition schools) or are eligible under the former National Adjustment Assistance Fund (NAAF). Like RTA schools, transition and NAAF schools are required to submit to ISV an annual Sustainability Plan.

In 2025 one application was received for Special Circumstances funding. Schools were reminded of the application process in the event of an emergency. Application details remain on the ISV website.

All independent schools represented by the ISV Non-Government Representative Body continued to have the opportunity to access program activities supported by Choice and Affordability Funding (CAF). Schools participating in initiatives created with the support of CAF funding are included in this report.

Risk Management

Risk	How the risk will be managed
Availability/ability of school personnel to attend and participate in workshops, review prototypes and test solutions in their own environment.	Other forms of input will be available; Sustainability Plan input; questionnaires.
Participation in initiatives/uptake of programs lower than forecast.	Multi delivery options will be offered; virtual attendance, assistance with travel costs for remote and regional schools.
Pace of change surpasses project objectives.	Annual reviews of each initiative will be built into individual project plans to evaluate status, current relevance and ensure expenditure is on track and will be expended by the end of 2029. This process will inform decisions on stopping, continuing or adjusting programs that will be reported in our annual reports. ISV will work closely with the Australian Government Department of Education should the need for any Variance of Agreement become necessary.

ISV has undergone a significant period of organisational transformation following the appointment of a new CEO in mid-2024. Since then, considerable effort has been invested in reviewing strategic priorities, strengthening governance and establishing a robust delivery framework to support the effective implementation of CAF program.

As reflected in the financial results, CAF expenditure increased in 2025 compared to previous years, and the 2026–2027 work program has been intentionally designed to accelerate program delivery. This work plan has been developed following extensive planning and incorporates a significant pipeline of initiatives that will be delivered over the remaining funding period.

Importantly, the forecast expenditure is not driven by a substantial increase in centralised administration. ISV expects to distribute approximately \$49.9 million over the remaining funding period, with more than 50% of this distributed expenditure planned for 2026 and 2027.

Centralised expenditure is expected to remain relatively stable at approximately \$7.0–7.4 million per annum, demonstrating that the increased expenditure is primarily directed towards distribution to schools.

The Project Management Office (PMO) has been established as a governance and delivery assurance function. Its role is not to increase program expenditure, but to strengthen oversight through coordinated planning, monitoring, reporting and risk management across both centrally delivered initiatives and distributed grants. The PMO has implemented regular reporting and performance monitoring processes to track expenditure against budget, monitor delivery milestones, identify emerging risks early, and support timely corrective action where required.

ISV is committed to ensuring that all CAF funding is fully utilised by 2029. To support this, enhanced governance, reporting and monitoring arrangements have already been implemented to provide greater oversight of expenditure against approved work plans and funding timelines. The Project Management Office now coordinates regular reporting and performance reviews, enabling expenditure, program delivery and emerging risks to be actively monitored, with corrective actions implemented where required. These strengthened governance and assurance processes provide confidence that all allocated CAF funding will be effectively delivered and fully expended within the prescribed funding period.

Activity Report

Activity/Initiative Priority	Name
	A – Choice and Affordability B – Transition Assistance C – Special Circumstances Funding D – Strengthening outcomes for schools and educationally disadvantaged schools and students E – Student wellbeing and support

Activity Description – Safeguarding Your School’s Future (Formerly Data Informed Assessments for School Sustainability)

As described in our Summary this year focused on deep analysis of commissioned research and intelligence gathered directly from schools to better understand macro and micro demands and their implications for the future sustainability of schools. Work commenced to plan for new and innovative solutions that would help schools navigate the near term and beyond (as reported in our 2026-2027 Work Plan).

ISV invested heavily in consulting directly and more regularly with schools to ensure insights were overlaid on the former Data Informed Assessments for School Sustainability. This work was carried out by experienced educators, researchers and former school leaders able to disseminate data and ensure schools were able to build their capacity and make data-informed decisions. This was intended to lay the foundation for a new approach to supporting schools to provide easier access to insights relating to key areas of concern for future data collection and research.

It revealed that schools were dealing with myriad challenges and forced to understand and respond to the compounding impacts of changes to funding, economic conditions, educational practice and demographics. The extensive consultation and deep listening with schools were focused on but not be limited to:

- Financial/economic performance: this included understanding changes to the cost base and rising costs related to salaries, facilities and provision of services
- Educational performance: schools are constantly challenged to understand and respond to new respond in the classroom. ISV was able to disseminate some of its own data – including benchmarked data from its LEAD suite of surveys – to help inform school practice
- Funding and forecasting: school budgeting remains critical to ensure resources are prioritised
- Social, demographic and cultural factors: schools continue to crave access to data that helps them plan for future enrolments and student needs
- Student, parent and community engagement

- Employment and salary data: ISV provides regular updates to schools about employment and salary changes which are used by schools in a number of ways. This includes providing benchmark data to schools on what their peers are paying for different roles.
- Wellbeing and support including empathy and respectful relationships. This continues to be a major focus area for schools
- Social Media and Digital Wellbeing: a number of schools have trialled innovative approaches to technology use including bans to use of devices in schools. ISV helped to disseminate evidence and experiences from these trials to help other schools make informed decisions
- Artificial Intelligence literacy: schools continue to grapple with the impact of AI and assessment, workforce and eSafety. ISV introduced schools to different expert perspectives – including through its inaugural Principals Conference – on topics as diverse as AI governance and AI literacy. The data governance workshops at the Principals Conference were the highest rated and most attended of any workshop at the Conference. CAF funds were used to encourage regional participation in this important initiative.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Comprehensive engagement with schools on issues causing high stress including those that directly impacted student outcomes.	High levels of engagement by schools in quantitative and qualitative data gathering and dissemination (e.g. 100 schools attended the Principals Conference including a high proportion of regional schools)
Identification of data that could be transitioned to the new digital support platform(s).	Better understanding of data flows in and out of schools and areas for improvement
Assessment of different strategies/taxonomies for organising school data in ways that allow trends to be identified and as a basis for determining what schools might need.	
Mapped back-end processes to systems that schools rely on for operations, teaching and compliance issues as part of the planning for major investments in 2026-27.	

Activity Description – Employment Relations Service Provision

This project aims to supplement the resources and support that the Employment Relations Team already provides to Member schools in managing workplace change. It is proposed that ISV continues to provide a more comprehensive advisory service that can assist and guide schools on the approaches and requirements associated with restructuring, prior to commencing, rather than after business decisions have been made. The aim is to ensure that schools can obtain support on the range of options and approaches, to ensure a more comprehensive and planned approach to reviewing services. Wherever possible the aim is to achieve the required goals without the need for redundancies. Should redundancies be necessary, schools will be well equipped to follow best practices.

In April 2025, the Employment Relations Team provided an ER Essentials session for new Business Managers in the Independent sector outlining the general employment obligations and entitlements; an update on recent key legislative changes including right to disconnect, definition of casual employment and criminal wage theft; salary benchmarking; enterprise agreement bargaining; and how to undertake major workforce change.

A major ER briefing was organised and run by ISV with 100 independent schools in attendance. The sessions, including follow up communications and updates, focused on sharing industry best practice from external bargaining experts and dissemination of case studies from across the sector. Interest in ER was heightened towards the end of 2025 as more schools commenced work on enterprise bargaining agreements. This activity excluded hundreds of interactions with individual schools on bargaining / general employment queries which have also informed the CAF 2026-2027 workplan.

During 2025, the Employment Relations Team reviewed documentation relating to the key legislative changes to ensure that Member Schools had access to current and contemporaneous resources to support their processes.

Throughout 2025, the Employment Relations Team also disseminated data and information to Aspiring Principals (49 participants), the new Principals Network and the Special Assistance Schools network on general employment obligations and entitlements, as well as the recent legislative changes and handling of major workplace change.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Dissemination of expert legal and bargaining advice to the sector.	Schools more aware of their obligations and risks.
Upskilling and imparting knowledge to key members of the executive regarding their obligations and the importance of managing these issues both from a fiscal and moral perspective. Where appropriate, greater involvement in strategic discussions with schools.	Schools better equipped to make decisions about employment and bargaining strategy. Increased confidence. Positive feedback from participants that they felt confident to engage in such processes and were acutely aware of further assistance that could be sought when necessary.

Activity Expenditure

	Centralised (Reporting Year Only)	Distributed (Reporting Year Only)
Expenditure	\$852,913.51	\$0

Activity Report

Activity/Initiative Priority	Name
	A – Choice and Affordability B – Transition Assistance C – Special Circumstances Funding D – Strengthening outcomes for schools and educationally disadvantaged schools and students E – Student wellbeing and support

Activity Description – Transition Assistance for Former National Adjustment Assistance Fund

ISV provided distributed funding transition assistance to schools that would have been eligible under the former National Adjustment Assistance Fund (NAAF). These schools were required to submit a Sustainability Plan in 2025.

While each school received a direct grant, they were able to use the CAF funds to access specialised assistance programs, projects and tools delivered by ISV or by other organisations. Plans aligned with the CAF funding priorities, including how the plan:

- benefits students and the school community
- demonstrates effectiveness and efficiency for taxpayer funding.
- helps the school to transition by 2029 to its new funding entitlement under the DMI.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Schools expended funding to deliver a positive impact on; • Students • Their school community • The transition to the Direct Measure of Income Model including sustainability	Each identified school is working with ISV to implement and review their Sustainability Plan annually. The plans indicate that schools will remain financially viable.
A Sustainability Plan for each identified school and support for these schools through the transition process.	Grant allocations distributed to eligible schools within 20 business days of Sustainability Plan being received/accepted.

Schools Supported

AGEID	School Name
2428	Brighton Grammar School
4217	Firbank Grammar School
2176	Ivanhoe Grammar School
828	Kilvington Grammar School
837	Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School
29056	Melbourne Grammar School
857	Mentone Grammar School
860	Methodist Ladies' College
872	Mount Scopus Memorial College
912	Penleigh & Essendon Grammar School
1113	St Leonard's College

Activity Description – Transition Assistance to Nominated Regional Assistance Schools

ISV provided distributed transition assistance to nominated Regional Transition Assistance (RTA) schools. These schools were required to submit a Sustainability Plan in 2025.

The RTA funding was used by schools to assist with the transition to a new funding entitlement under Direct Measure of Income (DMI). ISV has been working with each school to develop and implement their Sustainability Plan. While each school received a direct grant, they were able to access specialised assistance programs, projects and tools delivered by ISV or by other organisations. Plans aligned with the CAF funding priorities, including how the plan:

- benefits students and the school community
- demonstrates effectiveness and efficiency for taxpayer funding.
- helps the school to transition by 2029 to its new funding entitlement under the DMI.

These schools were also able to access other ISV initiatives supported by the Choice and Affordability (CAF). The development and implementation of these initiatives will be supported by centralised expenditure of the CAF. These initiatives are explained in other parts of this report.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Schools expended funding on activities that delivered a positive impact on; • Learning and student experience • The school community • The transition to the Direct Measure of Income Model A Sustainability Plan for each identified school and support for these schools through the transition process	Each identified school is working with ISV to implement their Sustainability Plan, and the plans indicate that schools will remain financially viable. Grant allocations distributed to eligible schools within 20 business days of Sustainability Plan being received/accepted.

Schools Supported

AGEID	School Name
16082	Bacchus Marsh Grammar
16351	Ballarat Clarendon College
16352	Ballarat Grammar
16354	Braemar College
17709	Geelong Baptist College
16353	Gippsland Grammar
14225	Girton Grammar School
16355	Goulburn Valley Grammar School
15826	Kardinia International College
15836	Newhaven College
4012	St Paul's Anglican Grammar School
16712	The Hamilton and Alexandra College

Activity Description – Transition Assistance for Other Schools

ISV provided distributed transition assistance to other schools that experienced reduced funding because of the move to the DMI funding methodology compared to the former SES funding methodology. These schools were required to submit a Sustainability Plan in 2025.

While each school received a direct grant, they were able to use the CAF funds to access specialised assistance programs, projects and tools delivered by ISV or by other organisations. Plans aligned with the CAF funding priorities, including how the plan:

- benefits students and the school community
- demonstrates effectiveness and efficiency for taxpayer funding.
- helps the school to transition by 2029 to its new funding entitlement under the DMI.

These schools were also able to access other ISV initiatives supported by the CAF. The development and implementation of these initiatives will be supported by centralised expenditure of the CAF.

These initiatives are explained in other parts of this report.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Schools expended funding to deliver a positive impact on: • The school community • The transition to the Direct Measure of Income Model	Each identified school is working with ISV to implement their Sustainability Plan, and the plans indicate that schools will remain financially viable.
A Sustainability Plan for each identified school and support for these schools through the transition process	Grant allocations distributed to eligible schools within 20 business days of Sustainability Plan being received/accepted.

Schools Supported

AGEID	School Name
16324	Aitken College
15834	Bayview College
3419	Beaconhills College
2482	Billanook College
758	Carey Baptist Grammar School

15837	Casey Grammar School
29729	Cornish College
2179	Eltham College
4219	Flinders Christian Community College
29065	Geelong Grammar School
13297	Haileybury
821	Ivanhoe Girl's Grammar School
1281	Melbourne Girls' Grammar School
856	Mentone Girls' Grammar School
17293	OneSchool Global
5517	Overnewton Anglican Community College
17252	Peninsula Grammar
1126	St Margaret's School
1183	St Michael's Grammar School
1275	Strathcona Baptist Girls' Grammar School
17867	The Geelong College
1286	Toorak College
1288	Trinity Grammar School
15317	Trinity Lutheran College
16713	Westbourne Grammar School
28672	Woodleigh School

Activity Expenditure

	Centralised (Reporting Year Only)	Distributed (Reporting Year Only)
Expenditure	\$176,064.44	\$6,074,832.19

Activity Report

Activity/Initiative Priority	Name
	A – Choice and Affordability
	B – Transition Assistance
	C – Special Circumstances Funding
	D – Strengthening outcomes for schools and educationally disadvantaged schools and students
	E – Student wellbeing and support

Activity Description – Special Circumstances Funding

This project provides access to funding support where schools and their students are affected by special circumstances and in areas affected by pandemics, drought or other natural disasters.

In 2025 one application was received for this funding. This application came from a school that was granted Special Circumstances Funding in 2024 due to an unexpected and significant loss in enrolments in a single year level after two students were involved in a serious incident.

Rather than providing a single payment to the school up front, ISV indicated that we would provide a decreasing amount of funding each year in 2024, 2025 and 2026, subject to the annual provision by the school of evidence of on-going progress and need. The school will not be eligible to receive any funding support for this event beyond 2026.

In the school's report to ISV, the school's Recovery Plan includes:

- implementing trauma support for the school community,
- improving internal processes to ensure greater retention of enrolments,
- undertaking a range of marketing and procedural activities to drive increased enrolments, and
- reducing operating costs.

In 2025 the school provided an update on their progress and a second application to continue their recovery program and was successful in their submission.

An application form and assessment rubric remain available to all Victorian Independent schools in the event of need to make a future application. Full details and application forms are published on the ISV web site.

ISV also contacts schools where we are aware that they have experienced incidents that may prove to be eligible for Special Circumstances funding.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
School experienced ongoing support from ISV following hardship faced in immediate aftermath of unexpected event.	Progress report provided by school justified support for follow up activities and a second round of support.
On-going application process established for future applications by schools. Schools advised of this process.	Application process readily available and understood by schools in case of need.

Risk	How the risk will be managed
Risk that schools receive Special Circumstances funding support do not require external assistance. Risk that demands for Special Circumstances funding does not match the funding available, either because of many applications, or a lack of need from schools. Schools use funding for ineligible purposes (including capital). Schools are unaware of Special Circumstances applications.	The financial impact of their special circumstances is an explicit element of the application and assessment rubric. ISV has developed contingency plans to ensure that we can, as far as possible, respond to need as it arises. ISV will assess all applications to ensure that all aspects are eligible for funding support and continue to remind schools of the eligibility criteria. In addition to the original advice to schools about the funding, ISV has placed the application form on our website. We will also continue to pro-actively contact schools where we hear of events that may render them eligible to access support.
The process for schools to access funding is slow and cumbersome.	ISV has designed the application process explicitly with this in mind. We will also assess metrics of how long it takes schools to complete the online process.
Ineligible schools may apply for funding through ISV.	As this risk has occurred in the past, ISV will ensure that future communications will specify clearly that Catholic schools that are members of ISV are not eligible to access CAF funding through ISV.

Activity Expenditure

	Centralised (Reporting Year Only)	Distributed (Reporting Year Only)
Expenditure	\$0	\$274,584.00

Activity Report

Activity/Initiative	Name
Priority	A – Choice and Affordability
	B – Transition Assistance
	C – Special Circumstances Funding
	D – Strengthening outcomes for schools and educationally disadvantaged schools and students
	E – Student wellbeing and support

Activity Description – Leading Learning that Matters

This project continued in 2025 to build on the notion that Principalship requires knowledge, courage and wisdom across a range of disciplines – from governance, compliance and risk, learning and wellbeing, to data analysis, literacy and procurement. As part of ISV’s commitment to supporting the development of leadership capacity within our Member Schools, two programs were designed and run.

The first targeting recently appointed leaders who were invited to join a New Principals Network, developed in partnership with current and recently retired school leaders and respected education professionals. Key objectives of the networking opportunity included:

- Advancing leadership development
- Expanding networks and sharing ideas about their school context
- Exploring current trends and challenges for school improvement
- Building wellbeing and resilience for leaders and their staff
- Developing an ongoing and supportive relationship with ISV. ISV has been running leadership development programs for new Principals for 19 years.

The New Principals Network sessions were conducted in person and as a series on online webinars.

The second program, the Aspiring Principals Program – developed in partnership with the Independent Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA) – aimed to develop the next generation of independent school Principals.

This program is designed to familiarise and equip aspiring educational leaders with the skills, capabilities and attributes required of independent school Principals. It combines in-person training and online masterclasses to cover a wide range of issues including school governance, leadership, financial management, strategic planning, HR and legal matters.

This practical program provided an opportunity for those considering Principalship to:

- Receive expert input from external education providers and current Principals
- Undertake a behavioural self-assessment using the DiSC® (Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Conscientiousness) model
- Lead a school-based change initiative using in-course resources and provocations to amplify their impact

- Learn coaching methodology and modelling to lead through a strategic change initiative
- Engage in Q&A sessions with current Principals and business managers.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Provision of increased support for aspiring and new Principals to better lead their schools.	Strong enrolments in the program. Active engagement by participants as captured by event feedback. Improved capacity and confidence of new Principals to lead their schools. Awareness and appreciation of the demands of being a Principal for those considering the role.
Positive impact on learner's preparedness to be a Principal	Strong qualitative feedback from participants. Strong advocacy by the learning cohorts to other potential participants. Anecdotal feedback from school leaders in participants schools.

Schools Supported – New Principals Network

School Name
Bacchus Marsh Grammar
Christian College Geelong
Creek Street Christian College
EdSpace
Gippsland Grammar
Julia Gillard Community College
Learning Co-operative Primary School
Mentone Girls' Grammar School
Mernda Hills Christian College
Mt Hira College
My College
Peninsula Grammar
PRACE College
Preshil
Ruyton Girls' School
Sholem Aleichem College
Sophia Mundi Steiner School

The Avenue School
Trinity Lutheran College
Waverley Christian College

Schools Supported – Aspiring Principals Program

School Name
Alice Miller School
Bacchus Marsh Grammar
Berry Street School
Billanook College
Camberwell Girls Grammar School
Carey Baptist Grammar School
Cire Community School
Deutsche Schule Melbourne
Donvale Christian College
ECG Secondary College
Fahan School
Flinders Christian Community College
Geelong Grammar School
Geelong Lutheran College
Gippsland Grammar
Good Shepherd Lutheran Primary School
Hester Hornbrook Academy
Islamic College of Melbourne
Ivanhoe Grammar School
Kardinia International College
Korowa Anglican Girls' School
Lauriston Girls School
Lighthouse Christian College
Melbourne Grammar School
Melton Christian College
Northside Christian College
OakTree College
Overnewton Anglican Community College
Peninsula Grammar
Plenty River College
Presbyterian Ladies' College
Preshil - The Margaret Lyttle Memorial School
Red Rock Christian College
River Nile School
Ruyton Girls' School

St Bede's College
St Catherine's School
St John's College Preston
St Michael's Grammar School
Star of the Sea College
The Geelong College
Toorak College
Trinity Grammar School, Kew
Waverley Christian College
Waverley College
Wenona
Wesley College Melbourne
Westbourne Grammar School - Williamstown
Yarra Valley Grammar

Activity Description – National Certification for Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers

Re-enforced by our research, targeted professional learning opportunities to empower senior leaders and teachers to develop the necessary capabilities to scale transitional change and to support the national priority of supporting long term school sustainability has become paramount. Our resources are therefore directed to the program that offers intensive professional learning opportunities, the National Certification for Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers (HALT). Exemplary teachers and educational leaders apply to participate in targeted professional learning that will enable them to have a positive impact on their colleagues' practice, staff and student wellbeing, enrolments and the perception of the school in the broader community. Through building teacher practice and personal growth by providing opportunities for colleagues to collaborate and share ideas, analyse data and prepare teaching and learning programs, applicants who complete the program can have a significant impact on school performance.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) oversees HALT nationally with the Independent Schools Victoria Certifying Authority (ISVCA) the authority for Victorian Independent Schools. The ISV Project Team implements the program for the ISVCA. Applicants progress through two assessment stages: Stages 1 and 2. When both stages are completed, the project team recommends applicants to the ISVCA for certification.

National certification enables educators to remain in the classroom if they desire and can also be the catalyst for career progression. Their impact on student outcomes and their colleagues' practice can be significant. For example, they lead, support, and assist colleagues in professional learning, they work with colleagues to analyse student data, and they work directly with students while modelling their practice for colleagues which has a positive impact on outcomes for both students and staff.

When certified, HALTs, together with school leaders, can opt to complete Assessor training and qualify to assess future applicants' submissions, thus providing further opportunities for professional learning. This can help build expertise within their school's middle and senior leadership teams.

The certification process focusses heavily on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) that state explicitly what constitutes high-quality, effective teaching in the 21st- century. For the ISVCA to approve certification, applicants must provide evidence to demonstrate they can meet a minimum of 50% of the Descriptors of each Standard at either the Highly Accomplished or Lead level. Evidence required for the ISV process includes annotated videos of classroom practice, Referee statements, teaching programs, minutes of meetings, email exchanges, recordings of meetings or coaching sessions and pre and post assessment data.

Following acceptance into the twelve-month program, the 2025 cohort of commenced with an Introductory Webinar in March. Their application process included professional conversations with their Principal and their two other nominated Referees who were required to be in middle or senior leadership roles and familiar with their classroom practice. Candidates were also to have had a discussion with their Classroom Observer who would conduct two direct observations of their classroom practice and then submit a Classroom Observation Report on the specified template developed by the ISV Project Team.

The one-hour Introductory Webinar facilitated by the Project Lead, with assistance from the Project Team, provided candidates with information and opportunities for discussion around the benefits of national certification, the process and timelines, and expectations of candidates at a national and jurisdiction level.

To become nationally certified, candidates are required to provide evidence from their practice to demonstrate they can fully meet more than 50% per cent of the Focus Area Descriptors (FAD) in each of the seven APST. The process is completed in two phases with different types of evidence submitted for Stage 1 and Stage 2.

For Stage 1, candidates submitted two videos of classroom practice accompanied by their individual annotations linked to the APST, the Classroom Observer's Report and three Referee Reports validating their practice. A series of online training sessions facilitated by the Project Team helped ensure each of these tasks were completed professionally and the reports were of high quality. A second online workshop for candidates ensured they were familiar with the Referees and Classroom Observers' roles and the expectations placed upon them.

Prior to the submission of Stage 2 evidence, candidates attended an in-person workshop during which they discussed their Assessors' Stage 1 feedback and learnt how to prepare and organise Evidence Sets. Each candidate had been informed of their individual requirements for completing the program and becoming nationally certified prior to the workshop.

In 2025, the Project Team also helped train its second cohort of Assessors: a combination of HALTs from 2022, 2023 and 2024 and school leaders (Principals and senior leaders). The training involved attendance at one full day in-person workshop, attendance at several online meetings, completion of the compulsory AITSL online Assessor Training modules and the assessing of one full cohort of HALT candidates. The ISV Project Team undertook the following roles and responsibilities when executing the program in 2025:

- Prepared resources and reporting templates
- Prepared and delivered candidates' in-person and online webinars and seminars
- Supported individual candidates via online meetings, phone calls and email communication
- Trained Assessors via a combination of in-person and online sessions

- Trained candidates' Classroom Observers and Referees
- Offered support to Assessors throughout the program.

Schools Supported

School Name (one or more HALT candidates)
Aitken College
Ballarat Grammar School
Camberwell Girls Grammar School
Cire Community School
Hume Anglican Grammar School
Ilim College
Kardinia International College
Korowa Anglican Girls School
Mohamed Muhammadiyah Australia College
Newhaven College
Sirius College
The Knox School
Westbourne Grammar School

School Name (Assessors)
Aitken College
Bayside Christian College
Christian College Geelong
Haileybury
Ivanhoe Grammar School
Tintern Grammar
Westbourne Grammar School

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
22 teachers participated in the program 8 accessors trained Internal and external (national) recognition of teachers deemed to be operating at a Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher (HALT) level. Opportunities for career progression for exemplary teachers keen to remain in the classroom. A positive impact on staff and student outcomes and in turn, the perception of the school in the broader community, leading to enrolment stability and growth and long-term financial stability of the school.	Increased number of HALTs from Victorian Independent Schools listed on the National HALT Network, collaborating with other HALTs from around the country and attending the annual HALT Summit. Increased number of teachers accepting leadership roles in addition to their teaching responsibilities; leading, assisting, supporting, and working with colleagues. Data, including LEAD (e.g. staff and student satisfaction/wellbeing, staff retention, Year 12 Exit), VCE and NAPLAN, reflects improved school performance.

Activity Description – Governance, Compliance and Employment Relations Training

Two online learning courses remain available. The first course is designed primarily for teaching staff who want to develop greater awareness of occupational health and safety. It is a foundational or beginner's course, aimed at providing an overview of the core legal concepts and skills required when it comes to managing occupational health and safety in the independent school sector.

The second course is designed for staff who have responsibility for, and experience in, managing occupational health and safety. This is an advanced course, targeting school business managers, risk and compliance managers, property managers and members of the school leadership team. This course provides detailed information about managing occupational health and safety and risk management. Both courses are online and can be completed by users at their own pace.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Increased awareness, knowledge and confidence in this specialised topic area gained through training materials in key areas of reform (i.e., governance, compliance and employment relations).	2 participants in beginner's course. 11 participants in advanced course. Enrolments in the online learning modules on occupational health and safety. Positive feedback from participants via surveys. Increased enrolments at ISV learning events on related occupational health and safety topics.

Activity Expenditure

	Centralised (Reporting Year Only)	Distributed (Reporting Year Only)
Expenditure	\$149,825.48	\$0

Activity Report

Activity/Initiative Priority	Name
	A – Choice and Affordability
	B – Transition Assistance
	C – Special Circumstances Funding
	D – Strengthening outcomes for schools and educationally disadvantaged schools and students
	E – Student wellbeing and support

Activity Description – Transformative Repair

During 2025, ISV reviewed the existing work being done in schools who had previously adopted the Transformative Repair (TR) framework and materials to guide work across the curriculum and to support broader school priorities. This review was underpinned by attention to the following indicators to determine next steps:

- Check levels of engagement
- Assess impacts
- Scaling up participation

To attain relevant feedback and data, Dr Flossie Chua and Anne Smith visited schools in May 2025 to meet with Principals, leadership team members and teachers to explore connection points for TR within school communities and any perceived impacts. To capture relevant experiences at each school, surveys were conducted with key stakeholders and teaching staff who had taken carriage of the project delivery.

At each school visit, further updates and supports were provided to enable future growth and development through use of TR within community for a range of diverse purposes and priorities. Levels of engagement at each school varied greatly depending on several factors including:

- Type of implementation looking at whether TR was adopted as a program for staff and/or students
- Curriculum connectivity - was it integrated into a single disciplinary area or delivered to address broad concepts such as wellbeing and critical thinking?
- School size and staffing limitations

As all school representatives identified the potential of TR as a vehicle for inclusive and positive change for the future, the need for further specific data gathering from each location would support a more detailed picture of impacts in school communities during the 2025 period, however, the attached anecdotal feedback provided further insights.

As the cumulative interest and impacts of TR continue to receive commitment of time and resources within member schools for ISV, the latter part of 2025 was spent exploring the potential of scaling up the program to enable greater access within the ISV member school networks. This led to the

planning of Transformative Repair teacher network group which would enable existing schools with more developed TR programs to mentor newcomers to the methodology and framework. In September 2025, planning document was finalised.

An invitation to become TR Mentors for a new intake group for the project was sent to the following schools:

- Bialik College
- Carey Baptist Grammar School
- The Knox School
- Ivanhoe Girls Grammar School
- Ilim College
- Lowther Hall Anglican Girls Grammar
- Hume Anglican Grammar School

To guide further engagement with Transformative Repair, discussion on connecting with the Small Schools and SAS groups was identified as having potential benefits for these communities. A further staff workshop was delivered in December 2025 for the Sidrah Gardens School to introduce TR to this community.

Outcomes Achieved

Outcomes	Indicators of success
Evidence of buy in to the program and its methodology and framework	Demonstrated commitment of time and resources within member schools was observed and positive anecdotal feedback received. Schools currently using Transformative Repair as a program displayed a strong degree of interest in continuation using tools and framework with student programs Early expression of interest by teachers in the Network proposal demonstrated a commitment to TR as a methodology for positive change within their own schools. Teachers invited to participate in the program as mentors for new schools indicated an openness to offer this support based on scheduling. When exploring contact points within each school community for TR, the Arts continued to provide strong linkages with the further potential to build wellbeing identified as its most substantial benefit.

Activity Description – Wayfinder program

The Wayfinder Program was offered to schools in 2025. However, ISV subsequently decided to discontinue the provision of CAF funding to support the initiative. As only a small number of schools participated with ISV in 2025, the program did not proceed as planned, and no CAF funding was expended through the 2025 budget.

Activity Expenditure

	Centralised (Reporting Year Only)	Distributed (Reporting Year Only)
Expenditure	\$780,429.82	\$0