



Making a difference
in the lives of
Victorian students

**STATE
SCHOOLS'
RELIEF**



2021

ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 91 Years of Service

SSR



State Schools' Relief is a not-for-profit organisation that improves the lives of tens of thousands of disadvantaged Victorian students each year.

Our simple and practical service ensures that all students can attend school in warmth and comfort with a greater sense of belonging and improved self-esteem, which in turn assists students to engage in their learning and strengthen their educational outcomes

Issues such as poverty, neglect, unemployment, health issues/ illness, financial hardship, bereavement, domestic violence, homelessness, and natural disasters continue to affect many Victorian families. SSR provides government school students with new uniform items, footwear and other essential educational resources. We work side by side with all Victorian primary, secondary, specialist and language schools to ensure that any students facing hardship have the necessary items they require for school.

Our Values

Unity

Working together to support every young person.



Equality

Supporting equal life chances and access to opportunity for all young people.

Dignity

Making sure that every young person is able to participate with the same pride and dignity as their peers.

Belonging

Fostering young people's sense of participation, inclusion and belonging to their school community.

Ambassador's Message

“ **The support State Schools' Relief provides is key and I am so very proud of the important work that continues to be done to support Victorian families.** ”

There's no question that this pandemic has been a very real challenge for so many Victorian families and students. This is why it's more important than ever that we focus our efforts on making sure no one Victorian child is left behind.

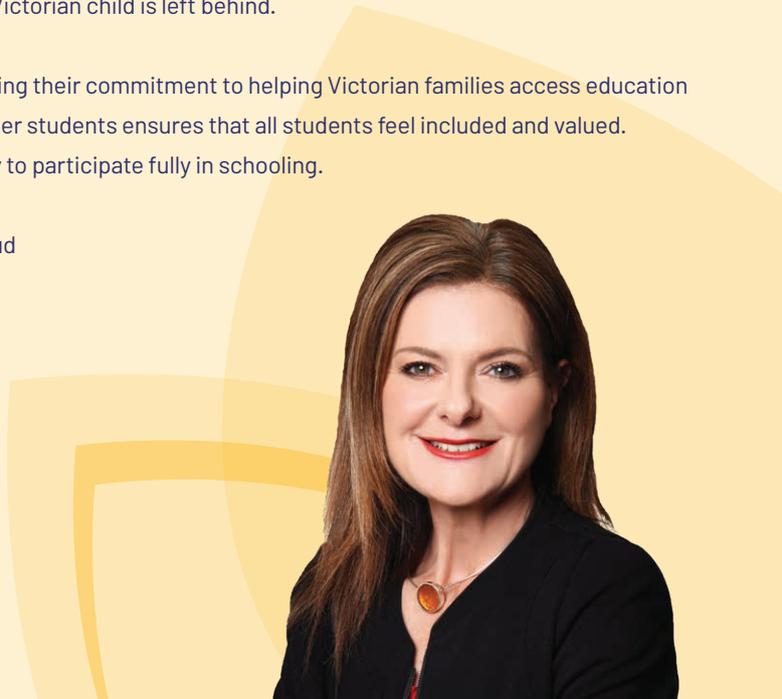
The Andrews Labor Government and State Schools' Relief are continuing their commitment to helping Victorian families access education without barriers. Having the same uniform and quality footwear as other students ensures that all students feel included and valued. It provides everyone, whatever their background, with the opportunity to participate fully in schooling.

The support State Schools' Relief provides is key and I am so very proud of the important work that continues to be done to support Victorian families - so we can give every child the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Sonya Kilkenny MP

State Member for Carrum

State Schools' Relief Ambassador



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President's Report

It has now been my privilege to be the chair of the State Schools' Relief Board for almost a decade.

In that time the organisation has grown from one that had an annual turnover of around \$500,000, which assisted 5,000 disadvantaged students attending Victorian government schools, to one that now has an annual revenue of nearly \$10 million and most importantly assists more than 70,000 disadvantaged government school students with a range of resources to enable each of these students to participate in their schooling.

With such significant growth our organisation has been required to implement many changes; we have streamlined our processes in our own distribution warehouse, further established our Student's Choice label and have an enhanced staff structure which includes management, warehousing, finance, Glasses for Kids and application functions, operating out of two sites in Dandenong South and Bentleigh.

The Board of SSR has also invested in a state-of-the-art accounting and inventory system which provides point in time information on all aspects of our operation. During this time the Board has also looked to strengthen its governance policies and procedures, particularly around risk management and financial sustainability.

All of this has been challenging and exciting as SSR grew, developed, and matured to meet the requirements of our significantly enhanced funding from the state government. However, as challenging as this period of change has been, it does not compare to the challenges SSR has had in dealing with the COVID-19 global pandemic, where our model of assisting kids to participate in schools has been turned on its head.

For the past 18 months our challenge has been how we assist disadvantaged kids participate in their education when they are learning at home, not at school. As well as supplying

clothes and shoes, we are now supplying laptops, internet dongles, headphones, home study furniture and hand sanitiser to enable students to participate in their education whilst at home.

The Board, like many organisations, has also become adept at having Board and committee meetings on Zoom, and in the future, it is likely that our meetings will be a hybrid model of Zoom and face to face. However, despite the changes in our operating model our focus continues to be on how we diversify our fundraising and continually improve our services.

The Board has continued to actively pursue new initiatives and in January 2021 held a strategic planning day to debate and determine our future path. Part of the decision making at this day was the decision to hold a Board governance review. This has now been completed and the Board is in discussion about the implementation of its recommendations, which has continuous improvement at the fore to meet the challenges of a changing environment.

Our CEO, Sue Karzis, has now been with SSR for over three years and during that time has worked proactively with the Board and staff to achieve our strategic objectives and drive vision and innovation throughout the organisation. Sue has built strong relationships with our key stakeholders and has been able to ensure that SSR is well known and respected by our key stakeholders and the wider community.

The management structure of SSR has been enhanced by the recent appointment of a Chief Operating Officer, a move designed to give the CEO more time to focus on business development, fundraising and stakeholder relations. SSR is a sum of its parts and the key component of this is our staff who have worked tirelessly in often difficult circumstances to ensure that disadvantaged kids and their parents continued to receive our support during the pandemic.

The Department of Education is our major valued stakeholder, and without their support we would not be able to provide the depth and range of assistance that we do. Thanks also to ASCA (Australian Schools Canteen Association) and Bank First who have been long term supporters of SSR.



We have also received significant support from philanthropic organisations, namely Gandel Philanthropy, The Bennelong Foundation and Equity Trustees who have contributed to projects such as iPads for nonverbal students in specialist schools and assisted in the purchase of laptops for students in need.

SSR is particularly proud of our Glasses for Kids program which is funded by the state government. Although the program has had a stop start year, it has made a significant difference in the lives of many children with sight issues.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their contribution to the work of SSR. The work of Board subcommittees including Audit, Risk & Finance, Social Enterprise, Rules and Remuneration has contributed much to our deliberations. A particular thanks go to Sue Mann, Sean Collier, Tony Ross and Christine Stewart for chairing these committees.

During the year we welcomed Sean Collier as a new Board member and farewellled Kaye Wheatley-Brown. Thank you to Kaye for her contribution. On a very sad note, our long-standing Board member, President, and life member Ralph Francione passed away in January of this year. Ralph's contribution to the work of SSR is unsurpassed, our condolences to his wife Diane and his family. He is sadly missed at SSR.

Despite an ever-changing environment, our focus at SSR remains on financial sustainability, enhanced service delivery and expansion to ensure that we continue to meet our core objective of enabling disadvantaged government schools students to participate in education.

Barry Smith

President

“

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Social Enterprise

In 2015, SSR made a conscious decision to develop a social enterprise to deliver surpluses which could contribute towards our social purpose.

For SSR, our mission for the last 91 years has been to support Victorian state school students by removing barriers to education. Building upon our knowledge and experience of school uniform supply, our own label, Student's Choice was developed. The idea was to provide schools with our own branded items, which in turn would allow many more students to access assistance.

Building upon this foundation, SSR also began to offer uniform supply as an option to schools and we now have over 40 schools utilising our services.

Social enterprises exist to deliver a special social mission – our social mission to ensure that students can engage with education regardless of their circumstances has seen our applications for assistance rising exponentially. Hence, setting up a dynamic and innovative model was a logical step. The Student's Choice label also adds to the market competition and brings a new dimension to the uniform retail space. Schools which choose to have their uniforms supplied by SSR also know that they are contributing to an important social purpose and that every dollar is directed to students in need.

Workwear Our newest addition



In the past financial year, SSR has added workwear to its social enterprise model. Whilst primarily developed to fulfil the need for VCAL students, the value and quality of these products has seen the expansion of the supply of workwear items to a wide variety of businesses. SSR now supplies work boots, high vis polos, vests and cargo pants which comply with Australian standards for work sites and offer great value for money. In 2022, SSR will aim to further develop its market share in workwear as well as developing new niche products and services. In the next 3-5 years it is anticipated that our social enterprise will contribute significantly to SSR's operating costs.

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Our social mission is to ensure that students can engage with education regardless of their circumstances.

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“
Schools which choose to have their uniforms supplied by SSR also know that they are contributing to an important social purpose and that **every dollar is directed to students in need.**
”



Student's Choice

Our own brand of uniforms and shoes

A successful method of reducing the cost of our service is the supply of 'our own' brand of uniforms and school shoes. By working closely with schools to provide our Student's Choice uniform items and shoes where possible, it means that high-quality clothing is supplied which closely resembles the branded items largely used by other students.

There are many benefits to this. It ensures the items received by students are free of charge, there's no additional financial contribution required, and crucially, it enables more students to benefit from our support.



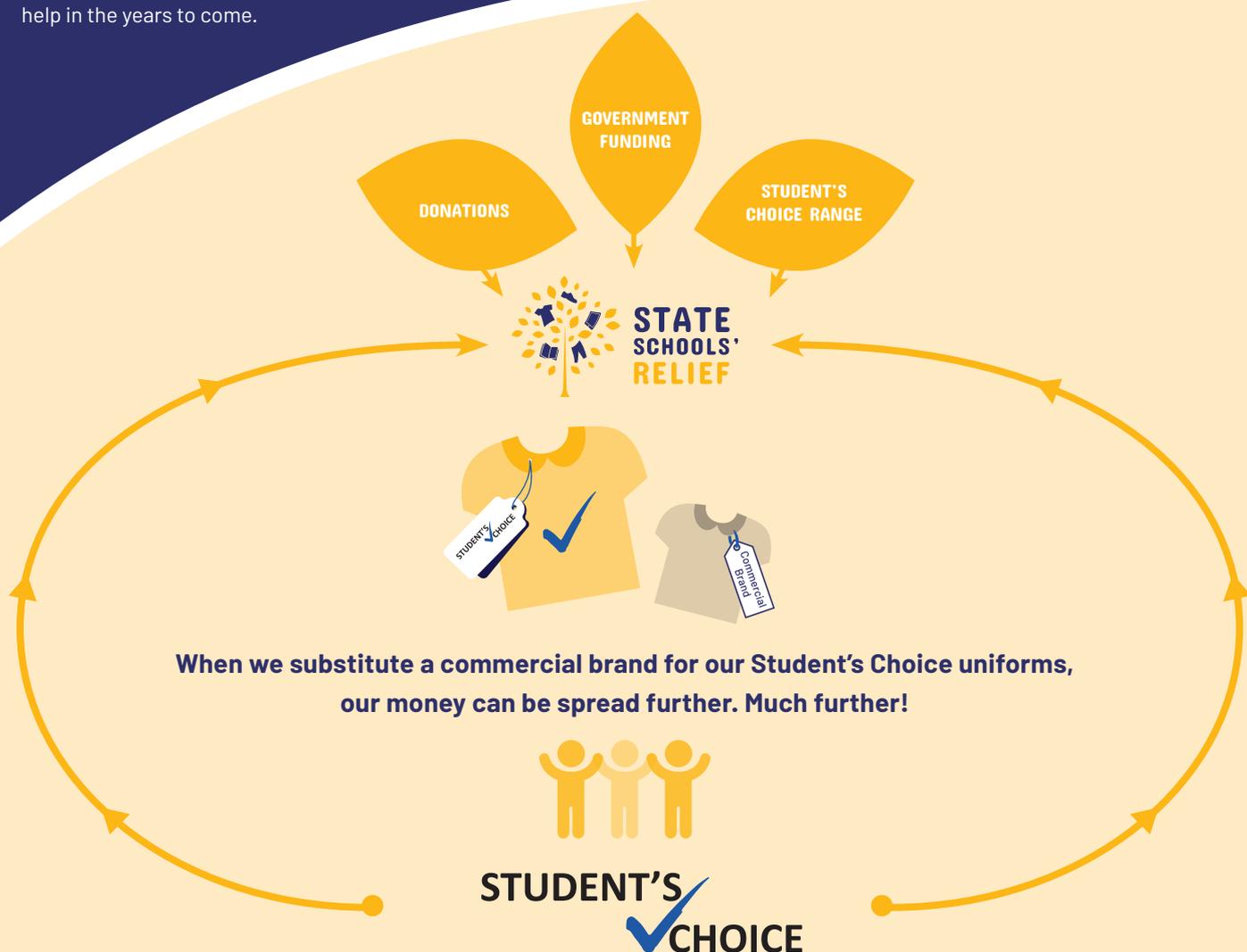
Why choose Student's Choice?

The Student's Choice range is a social enterprise that allows us to continue the work that we do. All money earned from the sale of our Student's Choice label goes straight back into a Victorian student's education.

- The Student's Choice uniform range exists to make sure that every young person can participate with the same pride and dignity as their peers
- For the cost of clothing one child in commercially branded items, we can clothe three kids in Student's Choice.
- The Student's Choice brand also contributes to SSR's sustainability, positioning our organisation to support every child and young person that needs our help in the years to come.

When you purchase uniform and workwear items from SSR, you're assisting us to continue in our mission of ensuring that Victorian state school students can fully engage in their learning and strengthen their educational outcomes.

100% of the profits from the sales of these ranges are returned to the organisation to further benefit disadvantaged students.



CEO Report

2020/21 was another extraordinary year for SSR and almost every other not for profit organisation in Victoria. Despite the challenges of operating during a pandemic with students in extended periods of remote learning, SSR was able to pivot to support the most vulnerable students in state schools.

The SSR values of unity, equality, dignity and belonging came to the fore during this unprecedented period and these same values guided our focus for the year.

Given that students didn't require uniforms, but there was a need for internet and devices to engage with remote learning, the path forward was obvious.

The organisation pivoted once again, to be able to deliver the support that was required.

For students with multiple siblings, all trying to study in small places, headphones proved to be very popular and SSR distributed 3,448 to students all over Victoria. Stationery packs were also sought after, with 4,622 applications received across both primary and secondary schools.

The Access 1,000 project was implemented during this time, with the aim of delivering 1,000 devices to students in need. This financial year SSR was able to provide 316 devices and 132 internet dongles, and to date, SSR has provided a more than 2,800 devices and 4,500 dongles, all gratefully received by students in both regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne.

The support of philanthropy was vital to progressing this project. Gandel Philanthropy, a major supporter of SSR, provided funding for remote learning, as did Equity Trustees and the Bannellong Foundation. This year, we continue with this project, noting that many families impacted by COVID-19 will struggle to afford the costs of schooling. We are working with many philanthropic

organisations and foundations to be able to support both LGAs across the state so that students in need can attend school equipped with the necessary tools to engage with their learning.

In March, with the continued support of Gandel Philanthropy and Bankfirst, we were able to provide 416 iPads for non-verbal students in specialist schools throughout Victoria. This truly transformational program provides iPads to students whose families/carers cannot afford to purchase these outright, and they are used with various text to speech communication apps which allow non-verbal students to communicate and engage with much greater agency. This project is pivotal in ensuring that non-verbal students from challenging backgrounds have the same opportunities for engagement as other students and the iPad remains with them beyond schooling, for use in everyday life.

Our Glasses for Kids program, whilst interrupted by COVID-19, remains an important program for removing barriers to educational engagement. The program was suspended for Terms 2 & 3 but resumed in Term 4 of 2020. The impact remains significant, with over 3,000 vision screenings and over 700 pairs of glasses delivered to students in need. Thank you to the Department of Education for their unwavering support of this program, and to the team at School Operations and Statewide Services Division. This partnership is vital in ensuring that students with vision impairments are not left behind and it is a program of which I and the Board are immensely proud.

SSR has a proud history of assisting Victorian students. We could not do this important work without the ongoing support received from the state government. There is no other organisation like SSR in any other state or territory, and the assistance provided to over 72,000 students this past year is vital and transformational.

“

The staff at SSR have risen to the challenge of pivoting our model of support with enthusiasm and dedication and I would like to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their continued efforts over the last 12 months.

”

Other key supporters include Gandel Philanthropy, Bankfirst, Equity Trustees, Perpetual, ASCA, ANZUK and the Bennelong Foundation. The in-kind support provided by Holding Redlich, Optus, JB Hi-fi and OneSight has also greatly assisted SSR to fulfil its mission.

The staff at SSR have risen to the challenge of pivoting our model of support with enthusiasm and dedication and I would like to thank all of our staff and volunteers for their continued efforts over the last 12 months.

Finally, I would like to thank the volunteer Board of SSR for their support as we successfully navigated a year of unprecedented challenges. I would also like to acknowledge the continued support of the President, Barry Smith, who has provided unwavering confidence in my leadership as the organisation goes from strength to strength.

Sue Karzis

Chief Executive Officer





A look back
in history

1965



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT - 1965.

1. STATISTICS.

To completely outfit a Primary School child costs the S.S.R.C. £20, a High School student, £25. For the 12 months period: 3rd term 1964, 1st & 2nd terms 1965, the total number of children helped was 1368 Primary, 318 Secondary - total 1686 - at a total cost of £12, 791.

2. REASONS FOR APPLICATIONS.

Unemployment.

Bushfires.

Children deserted by father or mother.

Children of widows.

Children of large families, where breadwinner is not earning sufficient to adequately feed and clothe them.

Breadwinner in gaol.

Alcoholism.

Lack of responsibility on part of the parents.

Prolonged illness of breadwinner.

3. APPLICATIONS.

The S.S.R.C. issues clothing only at the request of Heads of schools. Applications are dealt with immediately they are received. Often the children are wearing the clothing within 48 hours of having received it.

L. M. Haustorfer
EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

Miss L. M. Haustorfer
The Executive Officer

222.5.4.65

Sincere appreciation is often expressed even when not very much is received. In this case, the father of the family only works spasmodically, and the mother has to have psychiatric treatment at times. She received from us (through H.T.) a parcel of shoes and socks for her four children. In all, the value was \$11 wholesale price, yet it brought forth the following letter:

“

I wish to express my deepest appreciation for the wonderful gifts of quality shoes and socks which were forwarded to me by the Head Teacher for my four children. Words cannot fully convey to you my gratitude, but I assure you that your kindness and generosity to those in need will long be remembered.

Yours sincerely, Mrs. B.

”

372.14.5.65

One of the worst cases brought to our notice by the Head Teacher - the father was on an invalid pension and the family living in appalling circumstances. The five children had a long way to go to school. We gave them all a complete outfit of clothing, and the following letter was received from the mother:

“

Just a note of thanks for those lovely things you sent me and the lovely way you packed them. They were very nice and the children thought they were lovely. Thanking you once again.

Your sincerely, Mrs. T.

”

621.19.7.65

Yet another case which we felt deserved our immediate attention. The letter written by the Infant Mistress, which came with the Head Teachers application, reads:

“

I am writing on behalf of a family of five children attending this school. Their supply of winter clothing seems to be non-existent. The whole family creep to a school heater and try to get a little warmth as soon as they arrive at school each morning. They do not have even a warm pair of socks to wear, let alone any warm clothes. I know a little of the conditions they live under, and also know that at the moment, the mother is in hospital. If you could help us out with clothing, we would appreciate it very much.

”



1965

Facts & Figures



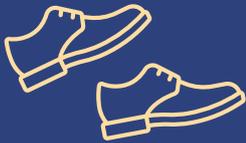
Participation in **education** is the main way out of poverty and this pathway must remain **open to every child**.



In 2020/2021, we assisted **72,346** disadvantaged Victorian state school students.



Shirts, tops, jackets and dresses make up more than **40,000 items**



We supplied over **27,000 pairs** of school shoes and work boots



Socks, briefs and singlets make up over **20,000 items**



85% of Victorian state schools were assisted in 2020/2021, **that's 1,315 schools!**

Utilisation of our services: 66 x P-12 schools, 928 x Primary schools, 242 x Secondary schools and 79 x Specialist/Language schools.

Average cost per application

\$93.12

Average cost per item

\$20.68

Fundraising

117 schools donated to SSR in 2020/2021, totalling **\$98,087**

Remote Learning

The continued lockdowns in Victoria resulted in lengthy periods of remote learning in the 2020/21 financial year. This phenomenon brought to the fore issues of access and equity and SSR was able to once again pivot and provide support which had not been a part of our support model pre-pandemic. The digital divide once again highlighted the additional barriers faced by Victorian state school student from challenging backgrounds and with the support of our philanthropic partners, SSR was once again able to provide tangible, and often vital support that determined whether students could engage with their education.

In 2020, SSR launched the Access 1000 Project, with the aim of providing 1000 learning devices and internet USBs to students who needed them during remote learning. SSR was able to supply 316 learning devices and 132 dongles this past year. In total since the pandemic began, the total number of devices provided to both primary and secondary schools throughout Victoria totals 2,750 whilst a total of 7,252 internet USBs were distributed to students in need.

Whilst learning devices and internet USBs were in high demand, SSR was also inundated with 3,448 applications for headphones, which proved to be vital for large households with many siblings studying in small spaces. Stationery packs were also very popular, with SSR supplying 4,622 in the last financial year alone. As remote learning is seemingly coming to an end SSR plans to continue to assist families struggling with schooling costs by providing laptops with funding from philanthropy and fundraising.



316

**Laptops &
Chromebooks**



132

**Internet
USB Dongles**



3,448

Headphones

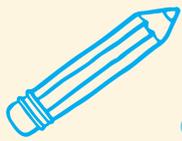


4,622

**Stationery
Packs**



I am in grade 6 at school.
I have just recently received a
chrome book from you and
I am so happy and so thankful
to you for this wonderful gift.
It makes my homework so
much easier thank you again.





State Schools' Relief iPad Program



In early 2019, State Schools' Relief launched a pilot program, **iPads for non-verbal students**. The program is aimed at assisting students experiencing significant communication barriers within their school environment and at home.

The cost of iPads is prohibitive for many families and carers. Eligible students struggling with the impact of material disadvantage are identified by teachers, allied health staff and principals in specialist schools.

Across Victoria there are more than 80 specialist schools. Many students within these schools are non-verbal. Traditionally, there hasn't been an adequate solution to assist these students communicate with their teachers, allied health workers, families, peers and the wider community. Technology now enables the use

of various apps to assist with language learning. Most importantly, iPads are a crucial tool in helping special needs students to break down barriers and improve their communication skills.

The second iteration of this life changing program was rolled out during Term 1, 2021 and all specialist schools were invited to apply for assistance on behalf of their non-verbal students.

Due to the generosity of our funding partners, Bank First and Gandel Philanthropy, we were able to provide 416 iPads to non-verbal students from 51 schools, across 41 LGAs*.



2021 saw us more than **double** the number of iPads provided to kids, and families, in need and we intend to increase our reach even further in 2022.

Giving kids a voice

NEWS

BY RUBY STALEY

NON-verbal students at the Ballarat Specialist School were presented with thirteen new iPads to assist with learning and communication last week.

The school received 19 gifted iPads last week as part of a program connecting non-verbal students with iPads to help their communication.



Happy Ballarat Specialist School pupil Jackson can't wait to use his new iPad to better communicate. Photo: CHIPPY RIVERA

State Schools' Relief and Philanthropy partners Bank of Victoria and Bank of Queensland are providing 350 new iPads across the state.

Ballarat Specialist School Principal Katrina Farrer said the iPads will be life-changing for the students.

"The iPads for non-verbal students program not only tackles the digital divide that can leave vulnerable children behind, it also supports vulnerable children, parents and students," he said.

NDIS planning will take too long so this would support them in getting it faster," she said.

"It's really important that we're getting new iPads as well because it means we can run the newest version of the communication apps."

The program is successful, continued to grow and almost doubled its reach in 2021. State Schools' Relief CEO Sue Karzis said providing non-verbal children with a tablet enables them to have their voices heard.

"We do a lot of government programs, some which are not that successful, but to raise awareness and even to raise awareness of even these kids outside of school," she said.

NEWS



HANDS ON... Verney Road School speech pathologist, Laura Coyne, takes student, Tiffany Coe, through the new iPad software which will give her a voice. Photo: Srujan Jones



BEARING CHARITY... State Schools Relief chief executive officer, Sue Karzis, delivered eight iPads to Shepparton's Verney Road School last Wednesday. Photo: Srujan Jones

Special students get help being heard

By Srujan Jones

COMMUNICATION has become a lot easier for eight non-verbal Verney Road School students after a donation of iPads from non-profit organisation State Schools Relief.

The iPads, which are eight of 350 being donated to non-verbal school children across the state, will be used with communication apps designed to give a voice to those who struggle with communication.

The apps, which use a visual representation of language, allow students to quickly and easily express themselves by selecting images of what they want to communicate, which the iPad expresses audibly.

Verney Road School speech pathologist, Laura Coyne, said the new technology would be useful for the students beyond the classroom.

"When the students develop that connection and that knowledge that this is their new voice, I think they'll be pretty stoked to use that voice output feature to speak without having to have someone relay that message for them," she said.

The distribution of iPads is into its second year after 191 iPads were provided to students in need across 29 specialist schools in 2019. The 2021 program is nearly double that.

State Schools Relief chief executive officer, Sue Karzis, said the feedback from 2019 was that students were thrilled to be able to use the technology.

"Being able to communicate with their parents, their siblings, their friends, it's life-changing for those children and young people," she said.

"We had a letter sent in by a parent who said that she'd heard her son express himself audibly for the first time asking for orange juice using the app, and that was really amazing. It's amazing what a difference technology can make."

Funding worth \$150,000 for the iPads come from Bank of Victoria in conjunction with Gandel Philanthropy.

Opening communication

Melton Specialist School students are having their voices heard thanks to the donation of almost 20 new iPads to the school.

The school received 19 gifted iPads last week as part of a program connecting non-verbal students with iPads to help their communication.

Speech pathologist Aleksa Bojarska said the iPads have been donated by State Schools Relief, a not-for-profit organisation supporting the needs of financially disadvantaged school students with educational resources.

"From our point of view we tend to rely on having different modes of communication available at the school, one being an iPad," she said.

"We look at it from the view that every child has the right to have a voice; this just makes the communication part more accessible for these children."

Ms Bojarska said the assistance is very much welcomed as it can be difficult to attract adequate funding to meet the needs of all students.

"It was actually a nice surprise for us to know that there are people out there who are willing to give when they have that ability to do so," she said.

State Schools Relief chief executive Sue Karzis said the idea first arose when she visited a specialist school and heard of the benefits iPads could bring to special needs students, particularly if they were non-verbal.



ANEEETA AND MATTHEW

Gandel Philanthropy and Bank First have come on board and are donating \$150,000 to the program for 2021.

"I decided that was something I thought we could fundraise for and assist with, we ran our first program in 2019 and were able to fund 190 iPads," Ms Karzis said. "This year we are actually supplying 350 iPads as we've received more funding."

Gandel Philanthropy chief executive Voltra Drakovic said it is important to address barriers to education for students with specific needs.

Benjamin Miller said that a great deal of their high-priority students would receive iPads.

"With some of the students...

New tech gives kids a voice

BY JONATHAN MAGRATH

STUDENTS at Bendigo Special Development School now have access to better learning and communicating.

On Tuesday, 22 iPads were delivered to the school by State Schools Relief, as a part of a program that's seen hundreds of non-verbal students receive the devices across the state.

Junior school coordinator Davina McCurdy said the iPads will help remove barriers for many children.

"They're an amazing way for students to be able to access learning opportunities," she said.

"It provides a lot of flexibility in activities that we can offer them, but more importantly it provides them a voice."

Programs installed on the iPads at the special development school include interactive stories and games and the tech also allows children to express emotions.

"It gives them an opportunity to communicate with us using different media forms, whether it's a communication app or it's a communication app where they're using pictures to request an item," Ms McCurdy said.

"It also reduces the reliance on fine motor muscles so students can have more access for writing activities for reading books where they can actually turn the page."

This year, State Schools Relief were able to deliver 350 iPads thanks to funding from philanthropist partners Bank First and Gandel Philanthropy.

CEO of State Schools Relief Sue Karzis said they began the program after seeing first-hand how the devices can help children.

"In 2019 I visited a specialist school and I had no idea that there were a number of students that couldn't communicate, because their parents and families couldn't afford an iPad," she said.

"We rolled out 191 iPads in 2019, last year we couldn't do it and this year we've done over 350 so the need is huge, and it just gives students a voice that's life-changing."

State Schools Relief hope to continue the program next year, with a goal of delivering more than 400 iPads in Victoria.

"It's really about explaining to people about what this means and how students would be able to communicate and it's just because that \$600 that makes all the difference," Ms Karzis said.



More accessibility: Bendigo Special Development School student Jack is happy to have his own iPad to help him communicate. Photo: JONATHAN MAGRATH

*An LGA is a Local Government Area. In the state of Victoria there are 79 local government areas (LGAs). Also referred to as municipalities. Victorian LGAs are classified as cities (34), shires (38), rural cities (6) and boroughs (1).



The Glasses for Kids Program has been an important addition to the transformational support offered by State Schools' Relief. The partnership between SSR and DET is one which has allowed for significant impact in reducing barriers to educational engagement.

Between 2020 - 2023, State Schools' Relief will visit 340 mainstream and specialist schools in the most disadvantaged areas of Victoria and target more than 40,000 students in Prep to grade 3 age groups for vision screening. Based on the previous rates for program participation and provision of glasses, it is anticipated that over 60% of targeted students will participate in the second iteration of this program.

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions implemented by the Victorian government, service delivery of the program ceased in Term 2 and 3 of 2020. Glasses for Kids recommenced in Term 4 and continued throughout Term 1 and 2 of 2021. Despite the barriers the program faced from the impact of COVID-19, we have managed to positively impact the lives of thousands of students.

Program Outcomes

75 Participating schools
(26 metro and 49 regional)

3,306 Consent forms received
(55.5% of targeted students)

3,056 Vision screenings were provided
(92.44% of consent forms received)

1,280 Comprehensive eye tests were conducted
(41.88% of students screened)

716 Pairs of glasses were prescribed
(55.94% of students tested)

303 Referrals were written
(23.67% of students screened)



Luke Dalton, Principal of Nyah District Primary School shared his thoughts about the impact of the program, "Nyah District Primary School appreciates the help and support of staff from State Schools' Relief and Blue Star Eyecare. Staff and students thank you for your visit, the wonderful work you did with our students and the information you have shared with families on their children's eye health. Keep up the amazing work!"



Number of schools visited per region and Local Government Area

North Western Victoria

Central Goldfields	1
Hume	2
Moreland	1

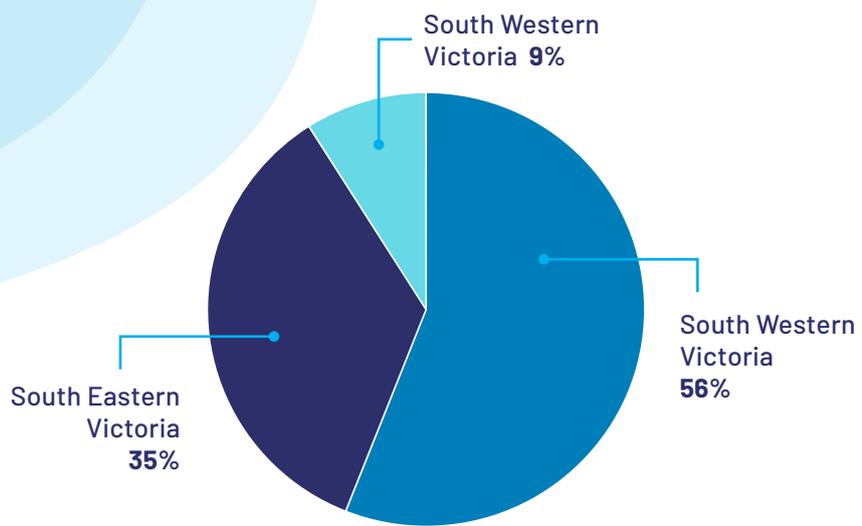
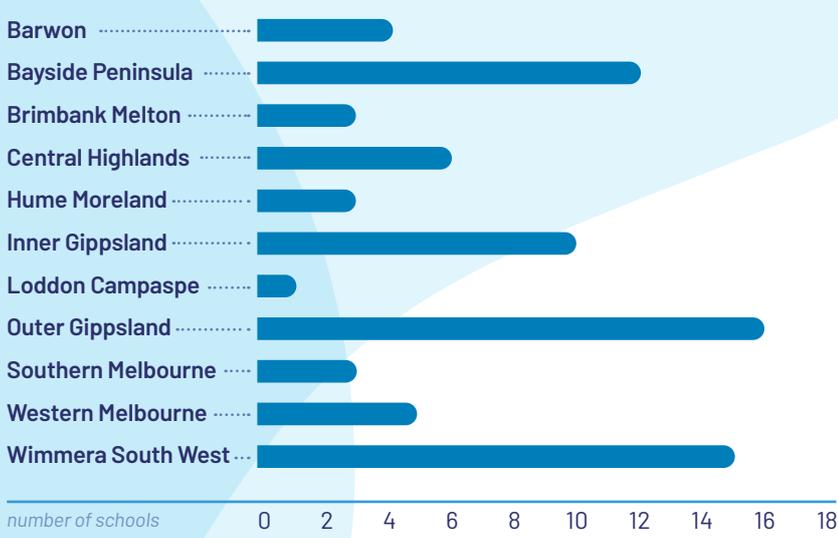
South Eastern Victoria

Bass Coast	1
Baw Baw	4
Casey	2
East Gippsland	8
Frankston	6
Frankston East	1
Greater Dandenong	1
Kingston	1
Latrobe	4
Mornington Peninsula	4
South Gippsland	1
Wellington	8

South Western Victoria

Ballarat	2
Brimbank	1
Colac Otway	2
Corangamite	2
Glenelg	2
Golden Plains	1
Hepburn	2
Hindmarsh	1
Hobsons Bay	1
Maribyrnong	1
Melbourne	1
Melton	1
Moonee Valley	1
Moorabool	1
Northern Grampians	4
Warrnambool	1
Wyndham	1
Yarriambiack	4

Number of schools visited per area



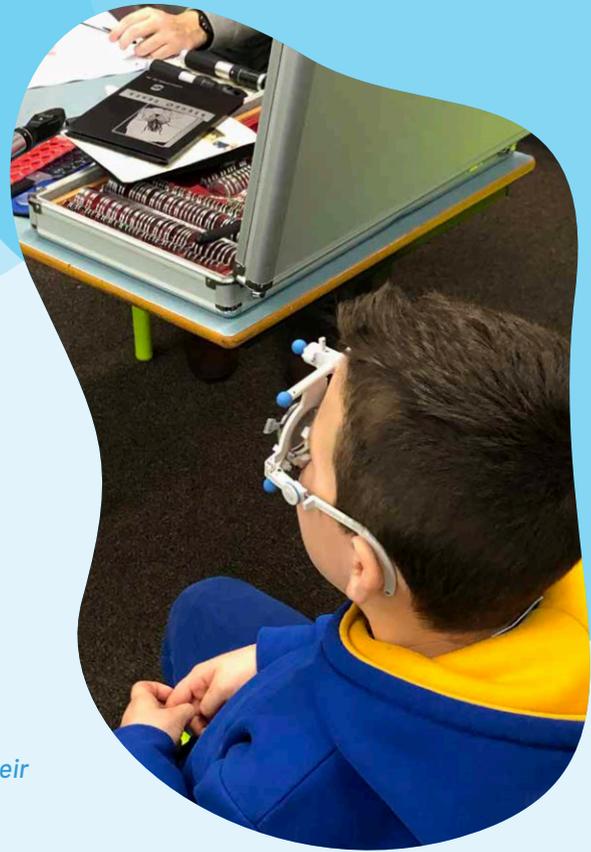


Here's what some of the principals, wellbeing staff and business managers had to say about the Glasses for Kids program...

- “ I think that this initiative is wonderful in that it helps students who wouldn't otherwise be given the opportunity to have their eyes assessed and furthermore, provides them with a set of glasses, if required. It alleviates relying on the parents to take students to complete the tests whereas if we can provide this service in school, helps all parties involved. ”
- “ The program has had an important impact on those students requiring glasses. I wish to compliment the team who attended the screening at our school as they were very kind and patient with the children and staff alike and an asset to the program. In particular the members from Glasses for Kids team whom I had nothing but a positive experience before, during and after the process of our screening. Many thanks on behalf of the school community. ”
- “ Our student is reading aloud more confidently and fluently than ever before with a heightened sense of self-efficacy which has impacted all learning areas. Thank you! Cannot wait to link in again with this amazing initiative. ”



“ All our students have been on site for the whole lock down. 90% of the students have been more than happy to wear their glasses and the results are truly amazing. We wish more families would have taken up the offer. ”



“ The staff are grateful that the program was available to our students. It was a surprise that some students needed glasses, even to their parents. Since having a pair of glasses a couple of students are now finishing set tasks. It was a relief that some students were tested and given a pair of glasses, as some parents can be encouraged to have their child’s eyes tested to no avail. ”

“ The staff were very professional, the children that they saw benefited greatly by having their eyes tested. The frames offered were great quality and i was surprised by the colour choice. We would have this program back at our school in a heartbeat. I do not work in the classroom with the students so cannot comment on behaviour or learning outcomes but I do know the kids were super excited to receive their glasses. ”

“ This has been hugely beneficial to our students, particularly because they are deaf, they heavily rely on their sight for communication in sign language. It was wonderful to see the students receiving their glasses for the first time and the excitement they displayed when being able to see correctly for the first time. We are hugely grateful for this program and hope that it continues in the future as it has had a big impact on our participating students, and we were very impressed with the staff that came to our school to assess the children as the students responded well to them. ”

“ We are very thankful for the new glasses as the child that received them would not have been able to afford glasses otherwise and it has made a difference to her reading and engagement in class. ”



Myki Program

In 2019, State Schools' Relief launched a pilot program, 'Your Key' Student Access Initiative, aimed at assisting students experiencing a significant barrier to education – the ability to safely travel to and from school with a valid myki card.

The 'Your Key' Student Access Initiative was delivered in two parts. Students each received a concession myki card, with a \$97 balance. Once card balances were low, students and staff completed a survey to assess the educational and wellbeing outcomes prior to authorising two \$100 top up applications. A final evaluation will take place at the conclusion of the program.

With the support of Equity Trustees this new program was implemented, with the aim of tackling one of the root causes of inequity and delivering a clear and positive community benefit.



Program Impact

With the generous support of our major funding partner Equity Trustees, and The William Angliss Charitable Fund, the 'Your Key' Student Access Initiative impacted 180 schools and provided 1,208 myki cards to students in need. The main requests for travel assistance cited financial hardship as well as travel distance, family violence, homelessness, illness and /or death in the family.



Of the 1,208 students who received myki cards



954

(that's 79%) were in metropolitan Melbourne

&

254

(that's 21%) were in regional Victoria

Due to COVID-19, coupled with remote learning, the myki top-up program was extended into 2021 to further support vulnerable students who remained onsite throughout Victoria's lockdowns.

164

students received a first top up worth \$100

67

students received both a first and second top up worth \$200

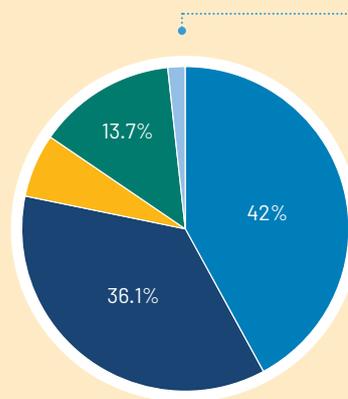


Education & Wellbeing Outcomes

Students and staff were asked to complete a survey prior to each top up, that allowed us to examine the effectiveness of the program in terms of the impact it had on the usage, education and wellbeing outcomes for the children and young people who received the myki cards.

Of the **410** surveys received by students, **277** said that their attendance improved, **231** indicated that their engagement in class improved and **310** students were less stressed about attending as they had the ability to safely travel to and from school after being provided with a myki card.

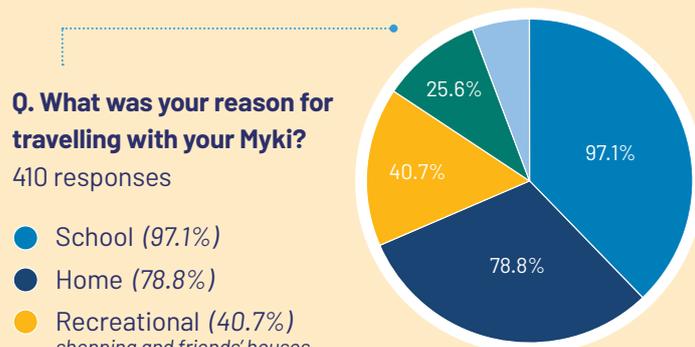
442 staff completed the surveys in support of their students receiving top ups to continue using public transport to get to and from school. **70%** noticed that attendance in class had increased and **80%** acknowledged that stress levels of their students were significantly reduced as at least one barrier to education had been removed.



Q. How often do you use your Myki?

410 responses

- Daily (42%)
- 4 - 6 days a week (36.1%)
- 1 - 3 days a week (6.3%)
- As needed (13.7%)
- Weekly (1.7%)



Q. What was your reason for travelling with your Myki?

410 responses

- School (97.1%)
- Home (78.8%)
- Recreational (40.7%)
shopping and friends' houses
- Extra-curricular activities (25.6%)
sport, music lessons and tuition
- Work (14.6%)

Student Stories

Following are some of the stories we received from schools that requested a myki card on behalf of their students...



"Student's mother is a single parent with significant mental health issues. Student often acts as a care giver for her mother. Student and her mother are unable to afford their own place and have therefore had to move in with a friend in Mount Martha. Student had been absent several times over the past 3 weeks due to being unable to afford public transport from Mount Martha to school in Hallam."

"Student who is living with her 23-year-old brother and is receiving youth allowance. She has been doing a VET course at TAFE and a work placement as part of her VCAL program and required a MYKI for travel expenses."

"Student has been living out of home (kicked out) since early 2019. She was receiving independent rate Centrelink payments however these were cut off in December 2019. She is in the process of getting these back again and has submitted a current claim. She struggles week to week with finances but has benefited from the myki card to help her get to and from school. She is currently studying year 11 VCAL at Kurnai College and aside from travelling to and from school, she also has VET and work placement."

"Student left her family home in Geelong due to abuse from her father. She is now living in Melbourne and is an Independent Student. She is travelling 2 hours to and from school daily on public transport. She is so determined to complete Yr 12 at Matthew Flinders as this has been her dream and then to look at a career in nursing. She is receiving no financial support from her family as they have disowned her due to cultural reasons. She is working two shifts at the local Coles and is investigating some support through Centrelink. We, here at school, admire the student for her sheer determination through adversity, hence looking at support too from SSR regarding a MYKI card."

Our Board Members



The direction and strategy of State Schools' Relief is overseen by a Board of Directors.



Barry Smith, President

B.A., Dip. Ed, GAICD. Elected member.

Barry has had a varied career as a teacher, teacher union official, government adviser and business owner.



Christine Stewart, Vice President

B.A., Dip. Ed. Represents Australian Education Union (Secondary).

Christine was a secondary teacher for over 20 years, including roles as Student Welfare Coordinator. Christine also held the role of deputy secretary at the AEU for 12 years and served as a director of VicSuper for over 10 years.



Barbara Laidlaw

M.E.P.A, B.Ed(Arts/Lib secondary), A.L.A.A. Represents the Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals (VASSP).

Barbara is Principal of Mullauna College Mitcham, and has had diverse career opportunities across 11 rural and metropolitan secondary colleges with enrolments of between 280 and 1550 students. Barbara is also a General Representative on the State Committee for VASSP.



Cheryle Osborne

PhD, MEPA, MEPI, B Ed Dip. Teach (Primary) Represents the Victorian Principals Association (VPA)

Cheryle has more than 35 years' experience in Victorian government schools and is currently Principal of Apsendale Gardens Primary School. Cheryle has been a member of the VPA Board for the past 15 years.



Esther Wood

T.P.T.C.; B. Ed, Grad Dip. Special Education. Elected member.

Member of the of the Victorian Principals' Association for over 20 years, Board member of the VPA and member of Principal Class for 25 years. Recipient of Principal of the Year Award 2014, Medal of the Order of Australia 2015. Currently Principal of Burwood Heights Primary School and Kindergarten.



Jenny Ballard

Represents Parents Victoria.

Jenny joined the State Schools' Relief Board in June 2020. She currently serves as the Mount Erin College Board President. Jenny is also an Executive member of Parents Victoria. She has been an active participant in her children's educational journeys for many years and is extremely passionate about family engagement in learning - and in establishing a strong, equitable, inclusive connection between students, families and schools.



John Hurley

B.A. Commerce, B. Ed, Certificate Counselling & Psychotherapy. Elected member.

Principal for 33 years in State Schools, working across 14 different schools and is currently the Principal of Thomas Mitchell Primary School in Endeavour Hills, a position he has held for over 30 years.



Maria Shearn

M. Student Welfare, Grad Dip. Multicultural Education, Dip. Ed. Represents Australian Education Union (Primary).

Maria has over 30 years' experience in Victorian Government schools and is currently the Principal at East Bentleigh Primary School. Maria has been an AEU member for 30 years and is passionate about inclusive education.



Robyn Wilson

D. Bus. Admin. Represents Business Managers Victoria.

Robyn has worked for over 20 years as a business manager.



Sean Collier

BBus, MBA, GAICD, FGIA. Elected member

Sean is a senior risk professional with 30+ years managing financial and non-financial risks.

Having worked as a senior manager for large financial services firms across Australia, Singapore and the Pacific, he has extensive experience in corporate governance, risk strategy, assurance, internal audit and regulatory compliance. Sean currently works as a risk management and compliance consultant covering both the private and public sectors.



Susan Mann

B.A., Dip. Ed., GAICD. Elected member.

Susan has 40 years involvement in education as a secondary teacher, teacher educator, policy analyst and senior administrator. She has been CEO of national non-for-profit education agencies, Curriculum Corporation and Education Services Australia. She currently chairs Innovation ANZ and the Copyright Advisory Group for Australian education.



Tony Ross

M. Ed. Admin, Dip. Ed. Elected member.

Tony has held many senior positions in education, is a Board member of Cardinia Environmental coalition, Vice President of Pakenham Living Learning Centre, Australian Committee President of Balay Children's Refuge in the Philippines and an Associate of Monash Faculty of Education.



Wilma Culton

B. Ed, M. Ed. Elected member.

Currently Principal of Serpell Primary School in Templestowe. Special interest in International Education, International Standards and Accreditation of Schools with a strong focus on development of students with a positive contribution as global citizens.

Member	Member Since	Status	Meetings Attended
Barry Smith	September 2011	Current	8 out of 8
Christine Stewart	February 2010	Current	8 out of 8
Barbara Laidlaw	April 2019	Current	8 out of 8
Cheryle Osborne	February 2016	Current	8 out of 8
Esther Wood	March 2009	Current	8 out of 8
Jenny Ballard	May 2020	Current	7 out of 8
John Hurley	August 2007	Current	8 out of 8
Kaye Wheatley-Brown	March 2020	Resigned Aug 2021	6 out of 8
Maria Shearn	March 2013	Current	8 out of 8
Robyn Wilson	April 2015	Current	8 out of 8
Sean Collier	December 2020	Current	5 out of 8*
Susan Mann	October 2017	Current	8 out of 8
Tony Ross	December 2011	Current	7 out of 8
Wilma Culton	November 2012	Current	8 out of 8

* Member joined during the 2020/21 year.

Financial Performance



The Financial Report has been audited by McPhail & Partners Pty Ltd who have advised the report is in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

If you would like to request a copy of the complete audited 2020/21 financial statement, please call 03 8769 8400 or email contact@ssr.net.au

Statement of Financial Position	2021	2020
Current Assets	\$	\$
Cash at Bank	3,823,513	1,884,123
Trade and other receivables	5,860	636,879
Inventories	704,260	778,319
Other Assets	-	54,864
Total Current Assets	4,533,633	3,354,185
Non-current Assets		
Financial Assets	15	15
Plant and Equipment	100,142	131,568
Intangible Assets	-	-
Right Use of Assets	66,252	23,050
Total non-current Assets	166,252	154,633
Total Assets	4,700,042	3,508,818
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	370,650	672,093
Lease Liability	41,739	23,712
Income in advance	-	-
Provision for Employee Entitlements	138,608	100,901
Total current liabilities	550,997	796,706
Non Current Liabilities		
Provision for Employee Entitlements	21,385	6,307
Lease Liability	25,185	-
Total non current liabilities	46,570	6,307
Total liabilities	597,567	803,013
Net Assets		
Retained earnings	4,102,475	2,705,805
Equity	4,102,475	2,705,805

Statement of Cash Flows	2021	2020
Cash flows from operating activities	\$	\$
Receipts from operations	9,999,922	9,081,297
Payments to suppliers and employees	-8,018,817	-9,805,968
Interest received	-	18,785
Net cash provided by operating activities	1,981,105	-705,886
Cash flows from investing activities		
Payment for property, plant and equipment	-	-
Payment for intangible assets	-	-
Net cash used in investing activities	-	-
Cash flows from Financing Activities		
Lease payments	-41,715	-40,100
Payment for intangible assets	-	-
Net cash flows from Financing Activities	-41,715	-40,100
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	1,939,390	-745,986
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	1,884,123	2,630,109
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	3,823,513	1,884,123



Statement of Profit & Loss	2021	2020
Revenue from continuing operations	\$	\$
Grants	8,406,257	8,327,109
Corporate Sponsorship	-	-
Finance Income	-	18,785
Fundraising - Contributions	-	314,970
Fundraising - Events	317,127	458,121
Fundraising - Gifts	254,276	329,992
In Kind Revenue	129,744	129,744
Other Income	115,153	62,500
Total Revenue	9,222,557	9,641,221
Less cost of Goods		
Calculators	-	-
Clothing and Footwear	4,393,656	2,925,161
Embroidery	-	65,636
Freight	196,492	186,413
iPads	-	-
MYKI Cards	38,066	117,481
Orders	242,080	\$3,623,927
Total Cost of Goods	4,870,294	6,918,618
Gross Profit / (Loss)	4,352,263	2,722,603
Less Expenses		
Administration	-587,887	-605,083
Consultancy Fees	-190,859	-110,904
Depreciation - Furniture & Fixtures	-9,149	-9,674
Depreciation - Motor Vehicles	-22,277	-22,277
Depreciation - ROU	-40,485	-39,515
Employee Benefits	-1,855,737	-1,767,512
Fundraising	-31,430	-35,226
In Kind Employee and Rental Costs	-129,744	-129,744
Maintenance/Repairs	-18,203	-11,633
Other Expenses	-69,822	-76,717
Philanthropic Grants	-	-1,000
Total Expenses	-2,955,593	-2,809,285
Surplus/(deficit) before tax	1,396,670	-86,682
Income tax Expense	-	-
Other Comprehensive Income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income	1,396,670	-86,682

Partnerships, Support and Fundraising

Individual donors, partner organisations, philanthropic foundations and schools across the state continue to help us support the needs of disadvantaged Victorian students by providing them with necessary footwear, clothing and other essential educational resources required for educational engagement and achievement.

State Schools' Relief is committed to breaking the link between disadvantage and achievement. Thanks to our generous supporters, we continue to provide Victorian state school students with the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Principal Partner



Corporate Partner



Supporters



Philanthropic Supporters

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- Equity Trustees
- Gandel Philanthropy
- Perpetual
- The William Angliss Charitable Fund

In Kind Supporters

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- Optus

Thank You

“ Thank you to our corporate partners, supporters and donors. ”



How you can help

The important work of State Schools' Relief requires your support. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.



Follow us online



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