



Some families are finding the cost of sending their children to school is increasingly unaffordable. The Greens want to help all students get to school and reduce financial stress for all Victorian families.

HELPING FAMILIES

Too many Victorian students and their families are experiencing transport disadvantage.

Transport disadvantage refers to any ongoing difficulties with accessing transport, including not being able to afford public transport costs and difficulties associated with accessing private transport, such as car maintenance, insurance, registration and other associated costs.ⁱ

We know that some students are missing school days because their families simply can't afford the travel costs.ⁱⁱ

The Greens will provide free public transport on school days for all primary and secondary students in Victoria on trains, trams and buses.

Families who are most likely to experience transport disadvantage include families with young children, people with disabilities, Aboriginal Victorians, families on low incomes, families living in public and social housing, families and students who are culturally and linguistically diverse, sole parents and young parents, and students and families living in the outer suburbs and in regional or remote areas.

One way to relieve these pressures on families is to provide free public transport to primary and secondary school students.

All Victorian state and federal parliamentarians can apply for free public transport in Victoria. We can afford to provide free public transport for all Victorian school students.

OUR PLAN

We know that families that are reliant on public transport are especially prone to transport disadvantage and the Greens believe the government should ease the increasing costs associated with education for such families.

Free public transport for all Victorian school students will also eliminate students receiving fines for not having sufficient funds on their MYKI cards, which will prevent these young people from being fined and then caught up the justice system, faced with fines that they probably can't pay.ⁱⁱⁱ

Student cards and school uniforms will be accepted as proof of entitlement to free student transport travel, eliminating the need for an extra cost of a Victorian Public Transport student concession card.

The Greens plan is to ensure:

- All Victorian school children can travel to and from school without having to pay any upfront costs;
- To relieve the financial pressure of those families experiencing transport disadvantage;
- To encourage Victorian school students to use public transport, develop independence and be more active by walking to and from public transport stops; and
- Reduce congestion on the roads.

HELPING ALL STUDENTS GET TO SCHOOL

THE GREENS PLAN FOR FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR ALL SCHOOL STUDENTS



IT'S ACHIEVABLE

Providing free public transport for all Victorian school students can easily be achieved.

The Northern Territory allows all students to travel free on school and public buses if the students are in school uniform or can supply their Student ID card.^{iv}

New South Wales offers limited free public transport for school students, depending on their age and the distance they travel to school. For years Prep to Grade 2 there are no minimum distance requirements. For Grades 3 to 6 (late primary school age) students need to be a walking distance of 2.3k or further to be eligible for free public transport. For secondary school students, Grades 7 to 12, students need to be a walking distance of 2.9k or further to be eligible for free public transport.^v

The Greens plan will allow for free public transport travel by all Victorian students across the state with no minimum distance limitations.

COST

Victorian children aged between five and 18 are currently eligible for discounted travel on public transport. The student concession pass ranges from \$215 for a half-year pass to \$594 for a yearly pass depending on location.

To access discounted travel, eligible children must hold a child myki card, Victorian Student Pass or Regional Student Pass. Students aged 17 and 18 must also carry government issued proof of age ID.^{vi}

By making public transport free for all Victorian primary and secondary students, the Greens plan will save families hundreds of dollars each year.

The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed our plan for provision of free student travel at \$244 million over the forward estimates.

The Greens policy platform will be fully costed.

Students aged between five and 18 years will still be able to travel for half fare on non-school days. Those aged 17 and 18 must carry government issued proof of age ID such as a passport, drivers licence, proof of age card, or proof of another concession entitlement, such as a PTV School Student ID or Health Care Card. Children aged 16 and under do not need to carry proof of age.^{vii}

ⁱ The relationship between transport and disadvantage in Australia, Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia, August 2011, Retrieved August 2018

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/relationship-between-transport-and-disadvantage-austr>

ⁱⁱ Fare Go: Myki, Transport Poverty and Access to Education in Melbourne's West, WEstjustice, March 2016, Retrieved August 2018 <http://vuir.vu.edu.au/31244/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Call for fairer public transport penalties system for secondary students, Law Institute Victoria, 22 March 2016

^{iv} Travel and Concession Cards, Lawstuff, Retrieved August 2018 http://www.lawstuff.org.au/nt_law/topics/travel-and-concession-cards

^v School Opal card, NSW Government, Retrieved August 2018 <https://www.opal.com.au/en/about-opal/opal-for-school-students/>

^{vi}

<https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/fares/concession/children/>

^{vii}

<https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/fares/concession/children/>