PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS ARRANGEMENTS – INCLUDING VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Dear parents/carers,

This letter provides information about voluntary contributions you can make to support Colac Secondary College for 2027 and other payments you can choose to make.

Victorian government schools provide free instruction. This means all students have free access to all items, activities and services that schools use to deliver the curriculum, including reasonable adjustments to support students with disability.

Some families choose to make a voluntary financial contribution to support the school, and we are very grateful for this support. Making a voluntary contribution is your choice. There is no expectation or pressure for families to contribute.

Colac Secondary College offers a range of items and activities that are additional to the free instruction provided to all students at our school. Financial help is available for extra-curricular items and activities if you are experiencing financial hardship (see further details under Financial Help for Families in the attached information). For a confidential discussion about how to access the financial help available, please contact: Naomi Harris, 5231 5800, colac.sc@education.vic.gov.au

If you need an interpreter, please contact 03 9605 3053 and give our school's phone number 03 5231 9800. An interpreter can help you speak with us. This service is free. For more information, please see How to use an interpreter to contact your school.

For more information on the Department of Education's Parent Contributions policy please see the information attached. You can read the full policy at Parent Contributions: Policy | education.vic.gov.au.

Yours Sincerely,

Skye Bannan
Principal

Natasha Thompson
School Council President

COLAC SECONDARY COLLEGE
2027 PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS ARRANGEMENTS

Voluntary contributions

If you are the carer of a student in out-of-home care or hold a financially means-tested card (such as a healthcare card), please ignore the invitation to make voluntary contributions.

We encourage any family experiencing financial hardship to contact the school for information about the financial help available for extra-curricular activities like camps and excursions.

Voluntary contributions	**Suggested amount – parents can contribute more or less**	**Amount**
Voluntary contributions to enhance our school's range of programs, resources and environment.	$200	$[parent to complete]

Extra-curricular items and activities

Colac Secondary College offers a range of optional items and activities that are additional to the free instruction provided to all students at our school. Accessing these items and activities does require payment, but financial support is available (see further details under Financial Help for Families below).

Example extra-curricular items and activities include:

- optional activities, camps, excursions and programs
- class photos
- social events like formals.

We have provided confirmed or indicative costs of known extra-curricular items and activities below.

Payment for extra-curricular items and activities with a confirmed cost can be made now or later. Payments can also be made via instalment.

Please contact the school for advice on financial help available for extra-curricular items and activities.

Extra-curricular items and activities	**Indicative cost**	**Confirmed cost (where known)**	**Parent/carer to select**
Year 8 camp	**TBD**	**TBD**	
Adventure Park – End of year celebration	**$50**	**TBD**	
Optional: Interschool sporting events (where transport is involved)	**$20 per event**	**TBD**	
Optional: 2027 School Production	**$200**	**$200**	
Optional: Instrumental Music Tuition and Hire	**$200**	**$200**	
Optional: Victorian State Schools Spectacular (years 7-10)	**$190**	**TBD**	

Learning materials for students to own

Booklist items:

You can choose to buy learning materials for your child to individually use and own. These items can be bought from any supplier.

Colac Secondary College has an arrangement with the following supplier for the materials that you can buy: **Blane's Newsagency**

If you do not buy these items, your child will still be provided with what they need, however they may not be provided with these items to own, or keep, on an individual basis. If you wish to buy items through the supplier, a **recommended list will be provided and published on our website when finalised.**

If you would like to buy items to own that are not from this supplier, you can contact Assistant Principal – Ingrid Sjolund for information about editions of textbooks and/or calculator specifications that will be used.

Digital devices:

Colac Secondary College uses digital devices to support learning. You are able to buy a device for your child to own. If you do not buy a device, your child will be provided with access as they need for their learning, but it may not be one-to-one, to take home, or to keep.

You can find information about the digital devices our school recommends, including minimum device specifications, at Colac Secondary College - Laptop Portal

You can buy the digital device from Learning With Technologies - Laptop Portal ranging from $967.00 - $1760.00. You can also buy a device meeting these specifications from any other retailer.

Financial help for families

Colac Secondary College understands families can experience financial difficulty. Help is available, including:

- **Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund** – this program provides funding for eligible students, including those in out of home care, and holders of eligible financially means-tested cards (such as health care cards), to attend activities like camps, sporting activities, excursions and incursions that are offered on a user-pays basis.
- **Affordable School Uniforms -** delivered by State Schools Relief, this program helps cover costs such as school uniforms, shoes, and other essential school items where families are experiencing financial hardship or short-term crisis.
- **Payment plans for Extra-Curricular Items and Activities** – Families can arrange payment plans for optional camps, excursions and other extra-curricular activities.
- **Additional financial assistance** – Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact the College to discuss available support options confidentially.

Applications for support from the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and State Schools Relief are submitted by the school - please contact us to discuss these and other financial help.

For a confidential discussion about how to access financial help, please contact:

Lyn Watts

Ph: 03 5231 9800 | Email: colac.sc@education.vic.gov.au

Payment methods

- **Compass Online Payments –** Payments can be made through the Compass Parent Portal (recommended method).
- **Direct Deposit –** Payments can be made into the College's bank account (BSB 063 510 | Account: 1030 2816). Please email colac.sc@education.vic.gov.au with the payment amount, student name and payment purpose so funds can be allocated correctly.
- **EFTPOS –** Payments can be made in person at the College or over the phone.
- **BPAY –** Please contact the College at colac.sc@education.vic.gov.au to request your personalised BPAY payment details.
- **Centrepay –** Families receiving eligible Centrelink payments can arrange regular deductions through Services Australia for eligible school-related expenses. Please contact the College Finance Team for assistance with setting up Centrepay payments. Centrepay deductions are voluntary and can be changed or cancelled.

If you want to make voluntary contributions throughout the year, you can:

- decide when to make each contribution
- choose the amount of each contribution.

If you would like to pay for extra-curricular items and activities through instalments, please use the following payment plan/s:

Payment plans for extra-curricular items and activities can be arranged by contacting the College Finance Team.

Families can make payments in instalments using Compass, direct deposit, BPAY, EFTPOS or Centrepay (where eligible).

Payment arrangements will be determined based on the activity, applicable payment deadlines and individual family circumstances.

For assistance with setting up a payment plan, please contact the College at colac.sc@education.vic.gov.au or phone 03 5231 9800.

Refunds

Parent requests for refunds are subject to the discretion of the school and made on a case-by-case basis.

Refunds will be provided where the school deems it is reasonable and fair to do so, taking into consideration whether a cost has been incurred, the Department of Education's Parent Contributions policy and guidance, Financial Help for Families policy, and any other relevant information.

Parent Contributions policy

Information for families

FREE INSTRUCTION

Schools give students free instruction in the curriculum. This includes:

- Free access to all items, activities and services that schools use to deliver the curriculum, including reasonable adjustments to support students with disability.
- The Victorian Curriculum F-10, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) including the VCE Vocational Major, and the Victorian Pathways Certificate.
- Free access to all subjects, including elective subjects.
- Free access to select-entry and accelerated programs.

FAMILIES CAN CHOOSE TO CONTRIBUTE

Schools can invite 2 types of voluntary contributions:

Voluntary contributions	Tax deductible contributions
Used towards enhanced educational programs and school environment, and additional resources and opportunities offered by schools	Used towards building and/or library fund (for those schools who have such funds)

Schools must advise the carers of students in out-of-home care and parents and carers who hold a financially means-tested card (such as a healthcare card) that the invitation to make voluntary contributions does not apply to them.

In addition, schools can invite parents and carers to pay for optional:

- Extra-curricular items and activities that go beyond the curriculum - for example, school photos, some excursions and some camps.
- Learning materials for students to individually use and own - for example, textbooks, stationery, and in secondary schools only, digital devices. If these items are not bought or provided from home, schools will provide students with free access to what they need for curriculum delivery.

FINANCIAL HELP FOR FAMILIES

Each school has a contact person who can discuss with parents and carers the financial supports that are available.

Schools must publish their Parent Contributions arrangements on their school website, along with a link to the department's Parent Contributions policy.