

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Press Release 976

**MATTHEW DONALD ANDREW BACH,
VICTORIAN OPPOSITION SHADOW MINISTER FOR EDUCATION**

Who is he and what does he stand for?

In recent days, the Fairfax Media has been giving the ideas and opinions Shadow Minister for Education Matthew Donald Andrew Bach a lot of oxygen in their publications.

Firsly, in [The Age of April 6, 2023](#) he wrote an article which commenced:

Ideology in the classroom is a divisive issue, both here in Australia and overseas. Those on the right often complain of left-wing dogma being pushed in schools.

I'll agree, in part. There is a problem with ideology in our classrooms: neoliberal ideology. The educational fad du jour is called Positive Education. As a former history teacher, allow me to give you a brief lesson.

Then, on the same day, April 6, 2023 Madeleine Heffernan reported :

Victoria should open up to 10 new select-entry state schools for high-achieving students in Melbourne's fast-growing outer northern suburbs and in regional centres Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat, the state opposition says.

The government has dismissed the idea, while educational experts say more funding for all state schools, especially those in the country, would make a bigger difference.

But opposition education spokesman Matt Bach said boosting the number of select-entry schools from four to 14 would help education-focused migrants and bridge the achievement gap between city and country students.

"We've had very significant population growth, and we know these schools are fabulous. And at the moment, for kids in the north [of Melbourne], and for kids in our regions, it's just not possible to get to a select-entry state school," he said.

DOGS wish to inform supporters of public schools, whatever their views on these particular issues, on the background of Matthew Donald Andrew Bach. He claims to have been a teacher in a former career, but his views appear to be reactionary and elitist.

Where did he teach and what is his background? Wikipedia is informative:

Matthew Donald Andrew Bach^[1] is an Australian politician, teacher and historian. He has been a [Liberal](#) Member of the [Victorian Parliament](#) since 2020, and is currently representing the [North-Eastern Metropolitan Region](#) in the [Legislative Council](#).

Bach is currently serving as the Shadow Minister for Education, Shadow Minister for Child Protection, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council.^[2]

Personal life

Bach was born in [Melbourne](#) in 1983 and spent the beginning of his life in the foster care system before his adoption.^[3] He attended [Melbourne Grammar School](#), graduating in 2001.

Bach attended the [University of Melbourne](#) and graduated with a [Bachelor of Arts](#). He also holds a Graduate Diploma of Teaching and Learning from [Charles Darwin University](#). In 2018, he was awarded a [PhD](#) in History from the University of Melbourne. Bach's research explored the existence of a criminal class in [Victorian London](#) and the effectiveness of measures to counter it.^[4] In 2020, Bach published a book based on his doctoral thesis.^[5]

After graduating, Bach worked as a schoolteacher in the [United Kingdom](#) and as a Ministerial Advisor to [Mary Wooldridge](#) when she was the Minister for Community Services, Mental Health, and Women's Affairs in the [Baillieu Government](#).^[6] Bach then served as a senior leader, staff board representative and teacher of History and Politics at [Carey Baptist Grammar School](#). He also served as the Deputy Principal and Head of the Senior School at [Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School](#), where he taught English and History.

Bach campaigned for the [Conservative Party](#) in the [2010 United Kingdom general election](#); in his candidacy for the Eastern Metropolitan Region, he cited his experience campaigning in the United Kingdom and his success in winning back seats from opposition while successfully campaigning in marginal seats as a strength in support of his candidacy.^[7]

Bach lives in Melbourne with his wife and two daughters.^[8]

Political career[\[edit\]](#)

Bach won the Liberal Party's nomination to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of [Mary Wooldridge](#), and was sworn in as Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region in March 2020.^[9] He served in the Shadow Cabinet under Liberal leaders [Michael O'Brien](#) and [Matthew Guy](#) across the Child Protection, Youth Justice, Youth Affairs, Higher Education, Early Childhood, and Attorney-General's portfolios.^[10] In the lead up to the [2022 election](#), Bach also served as the Shadow Minister for Transport Infrastructure and was a vocal opponent of the Andrews Government's [Suburban Rail Loop](#), citing inadequate planning and significant cost overruns.^[11]

Following a redistribution at the 2022 election, Bach was re-elected to Parliament as Member for North-Eastern Metropolitan Region. In December 2022, following the election of [John Pesutto](#) to the leadership of the Liberal Party, Bach was elected Deputy Leader of the Liberal

Party in the Legislative Council and was appointed as the Shadow Minister for Education and Shadow Minister for Child Protection.,^[12]

Bach regularly writes for [The Age](#), the [Herald Sun](#), and [Sky News](#).

So, there you have it. Although his beginnings are in shadow, his adoptive parents could send him to one of the most elite private schools and he has taught in that system. His educational ideas are meritocratic with emphasis on the wealthy, advantaged and able. If he separates out the elite children from the rest however, how does he propose to do this, and what does he intend for the vast majority of Victorian children. Are they to become ‘hewers of wood and hauliers of water?’- to quote Robert Menzies - or members of the unemployed?

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