



Languages – expanding your world

Plan to implement *The Victorian Government's Vision for Languages Education* 2013–2025

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‘A language has the ability to transform your life...’

Executive summary

In Victoria, we are committed to making our education system one of the best in the world.

When we look at the systems in the global top tier, we see great results in literacy and numeracy, but we also see many students fluent in more than one language.

Sadly, this is not the case in Victoria.

Between 1999 and 2010, primary-level participation in languages fell from 88.7 per cent to 69.4 per cent, with 397 schools discontinuing their programs.

The time has arrived to revive languages education in Victoria and drive our system into the top tier.

It's time to give all Victorian young people a real chance to learn an additional language and become genuine citizens of the world.

Languages – expanding your world is our plan to make this happen.

The plan includes the following targets

By 2015	100% of government schools providing a Foundation (Prep) level languages program
By 2025	100% of government schools providing a languages program and awarding the new Certificate of Language Proficiency at Year 10
By 2025	25% of all students in government and non-government schools include a language in addition to English in their senior secondary program of study

This means that children who are three years old today will go on to learn a language right through primary school and in secondary school to at least Year 10.

By the time they turn 15 in 2025, these young people will have received 11 years of high quality, continuous languages education. One in four will continue studying languages at senior secondary level.

Like their peers in the top education systems around the globe, Victorian students will be on track to be fluent in an additional language – and ready to seize the world of opportunities that this brings.

To get them there, we have devised three strategies which together build demand for languages, improve access to programs, and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Each strategy lists what we are already doing, and what we will do in the immediate future, to reach our targets. Here are some of the key initiatives.

Building demand

- We have already supported 80 government and non-government schools to start new languages programs in 2013 through our \$1 million Languages Start-up Grants program.
- We will establish a team of languages ambassadors who will promote the professional and personal benefits of languages.

Developing and expanding the workforce

- We are already increasing the number of qualified languages teachers in Victoria through our \$6 million scholarship program. Approximately 210 scholarships will be offered over three years, with 55 already awarded.
- We will facilitate up to 400 language teacher exchanges, and support schools to sponsor overseas language assistants and teachers to fill teacher shortages.

Strengthening delivery, resources and partnerships

- We are already supporting schools, particularly in regional Victoria, to work in clusters to share resources and deliver programs through cutting-edge technology, such as video conferencing.
- We will invest \$13 million to send 1,500 students to China on study programs aimed at enhancing proficiency in Mandarin and cultural understanding of our key trading partner.

As you will see, this plan is vital for Victoria's future and will bring Victorian education closer to the global top tier.

Languages – expanding your world

Languages give learners the world by opening their minds to other cultures and opening doors to new possibilities. Languages take learners on a journey that improves the way they communicate, interact with others and engage with learning – and with life – at home and beyond.

The acquisition of an additional language and associated intercultural skills is key to how children and young people at preschool and at school develop, both intellectually and emotionally, but it also gives them greater confidence and choice when it comes to future study and work. Languages prepare Victorians to be responsible and engaged members of our multicultural community, and to look outward as active and informed citizens of the world.

In Victoria we proudly have the highest participation rate in languages education of any state or territory in Australia with a diverse range of languages, including Aboriginal languages and Auslan, taught in our schools. We have well-established complementary providers, such as the Victorian School of Languages and community languages schools, and long-standing partnerships with professional associations, cultural institutions, foreign governments, early childhood, tertiary and non-government school sectors.

Yet the potential of languages education in Victoria is not being met. Over the last decade, languages education has been in decline. For example, at the primary school level – one of the most crucial stages of language acquisition – participation rates fell from 88.7 to 69.4 per cent between 1999 and 2010 with 397 government primary schools discontinuing their languages programs.

In 2011, the Victorian Government set out to revitalise the way languages are valued and taught in Victoria's schools and educational settings. Its *Vision for Languages Education* articulates why languages are vital, and why they need to be part of every young person's education journey.

The benefits of languages education to learners, the community and the Victorian economy were summarised as follows:



Languages education offers significant benefits for Victorian students, their families and communities. At school, it helps our children and young people to develop their first language literacy, problem-solving, intercultural and communication skills, and it equips them for a wide range of careers. More broadly, it contributes to social cohesion, underpins Victoria's increasingly globalised and export-oriented economy and enables speakers of the languages to maintain or reclaim their languages.

The Hon. Martin Dixon MP, Minister for Education, further articulated this vision in the landmark lecture *Victoria as a Learning Community* in November 2011.

In an increasingly globalised world it is imperative young people are equipped to compete in a global economy and participate in a global society. This will require not only knowledge of other languages but also the skills to excel in a highly connected world.

The vision centres on an ambitious goal – for the learning program in all Victorian government schools at every year level, from Prep (Foundation) to Year 10, to include the study of a language in addition to English by 2025, starting with Prep in 2015.

Languages are already compulsory in Victorian government and non-government schools, but the vision seeks to ensure that at every year level students are actually learning a language, not merely having the option to do so. High quality, continuous languages education from Foundation stage (Prep to Year 3) to Pathways stage (Years 9 to 10) will act as a strong basis to increase participation in language studies in Years 11 and 12, and beyond.

Like mathematics or English, languages education is core to the Victorian curriculum, and must be strengthened if our education system is to enter the global top tier. Consistent with the directions set out in the Government’s Towards Victoria as a Learning Community statement, schools will have considerable flexibility in determining how their languages program will be delivered. This document is the Victorian Government’s plan to realise this vision – and to ensure that all Victorian students benefit from the world of opportunities that languages learning brings.

Our targets for improvement

This plan will support us to achieve the following provision targets

By 2015	100% of government schools providing a Foundation (Prep) level languages program
By 2025	100% of government schools providing a languages program and awarding the new Certificate of Language Proficiency at Year 10
By 2025	25% of all students in government and non-government schools include a language in addition to English in their senior secondary program of study

This plan will support us to achieve the following proficiency targets

By 2025	60% of Year 6 students in government schools achieving a defined proficiency level in a language*
By 2025	40% of Year 10 students in government schools achieving a defined proficiency level in a language*

* Measured by new on-demand online assessment tools to be developed

Languages Teaching Scholarships



‘A language has the ability to transform your life; through enhanced opportunities for travel, career and relationships. I hope to [be] an engaging and inspiring language teacher, championing the transformative qualities of languages.

I started studying Japanese in Year 7, and haven’t stopped. When I undertook a high school exchange in Year 10, I was the first person ever in my entire family to travel overseas. I have now been on numerous trips, and convinced my family of the importance of interacting with the rest of the world. We have now hosted 12 exchange students, and our lives have been enriched, simply because I began studying a language. The experiences available to someone with an additional language are never ending, and I want to help make sure that my students are made aware of these incredible opportunities as well.’

Jessica, Languages Teaching Scholarship recipient 2013

Overview of the plan

This plan is the result of extensive consultation and reflects the ideas and experiences of a broad range of stakeholders including students, educators, parents, school councillors and school leaders from across the Victorian education landscape.

Consultation on the draft plan was undertaken from 4 June to 27 July 2012, and feedback was provided via focus groups, regional forums and roundtable discussions and an online survey. Feedback from the non-government school sector has ensured this document is relevant to languages education in Catholic and independent schools, as well as government schools.

Together with our partners in the non-government sector we developed an additional target – for 25 per cent of Years 11 and 12 students to study a language as part of their senior secondary program by 2025.

This is in addition to our target that the learning program in all Victorian government schools at every year level from Prep (Foundation) to Year 10, will include the study of a language in addition to English by 2025, starting with Prep in 2015.

Our provision and proficiency targets are ambitious, but with the right strategies in place they are achievable.

This plan comprises three interrelated strategies, with initiatives grouped under each, which together will build awareness about the value of languages, build demand, improve access to programs, and enhance the quality of languages teaching and learning in all settings.

The three strategies are:

- Building demand
- Developing and expanding the workforce
- Strengthening delivery, resources and partnerships.

Some of the initiatives outlined in this plan build on existing programs and initiatives, some are modernised versions of initiatives that have worked in the past, and others are new. This plan clearly illustrates the initiatives that are already up and running and foreshadows the initiatives in development, and key dates for their implementation.

The initiatives have been designed to support the use of the Australian Curriculum and AusVELS for languages and to ensure that Victorian schools provide quality languages learning to all students.

This plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to provide value to school communities, and supports the delivery of quality languages education to all students in a rapidly changing world.

The development of the vision and this plan are guided by four interrelated principles.

Participation	ensuring access to quality languages education for all students, regardless of age, background or socio-economic status, at all schools, regardless of size, sector or location.
Quality	underpinning provision by best-practice teaching, flexible delivery, effective use of online resources, real-world opportunities to use the language, sufficient time on task, consistent and comprehensive evaluation of programs, and appropriate monitoring and assessment of learner progress.
Diversity	enabling schools to work with their communities to select the languages they will provide and the way they will be delivered, to suit the contexts and needs of their communities and the resources they can access.
Collaboration	encouraging partnerships among settings and sectors, and with surrounding and feeder early childhood settings and schools, sister schools, foreign governments, businesses and community groups and other partners to support quality and continuity of languages learning, increased time on task and opportunities for real-world language use.



Our strengths and challenges

Victoria has a number of strengths which position us to emerge as a global leader in languages education.

We are one of the world's great multicultural societies. We speak more than 200 languages and over 40 per cent of us have at least one parent born overseas. We already have the highest participation rate in languages education in Australia and teach a diverse range of languages in our government and non-government schools and other education and training providers.

Our complementary providers, the Victorian School of Languages and community languages schools, provide distance education and out-of-hours classes in more than 50 languages to over 52,000 students, many of whom are studying their first language and exhibit great potential to be mentors and advocates for languages in their home schools. Bilingual programs are offered in 12 government schools and a number of non-government schools. Other schools provide a range of partial language immersion programs, including Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approaches in which subjects such as mathematics, science and history are taught in and through languages other than English.

Many early childhood providers in Victoria are also promoting bilingualism in their services by encouraging young children to develop literacy in their first languages alongside English.

In addition, in 2012 there were more than 560 government subsidised enrolments in languages study in VET and many more students enrolled in university language courses, which demonstrates an appetite for languages learning in the community.

Standards and protocols for the reclamation and teaching of Aboriginal languages and cultures in Victorian schools have been established. This represents a significant step forward in the revival and teaching of our first people's languages and cultures and will strengthen Aboriginal students' wellbeing and sense of identity.

In Victoria, we have a highly-committed network of languages educators, not to mention long-standing partnerships with professional associations, cultural institutions, and foreign governments. The spirit of cross-sectoral cooperation, as evidenced in the development and consultation on this plan, is also an asset. The work of our educators and partners over many decades has created a high quality professional learning culture, and a genuine capacity for advocacy and policy engagement which will no doubt contribute to advancing Victorian languages education into the global top tier.

To get there, our system must first face, and address, some significant challenges.

The number of schools, especially government primary schools, offering a languages program has declined over the last decade, as has the percentage of students learning a language. Of the schools that offer languages programs, the quality varies greatly. The time spent studying a language is directly linked to the level of proficiency achieved, but many schools do not provide sufficient time to enable students to develop proficiency in their chosen language. Schools can be reluctant to make the necessary investments at the expense of other learning areas, and often cite the challenge of finding time in a 'crowded curriculum'. This is despite evidence that learning a second or third language enhances first language literacy; a fact that continues to be poorly understood.

Schools can also have difficulty meeting the diverse needs of learners, and do not always connect language learning to ‘real-life’ situations.

The lack of continuity is another significant challenge. When students change primary schools or move into secondary school, the same language is not always offered, meaning that prior language acquisition is often lost. This is also affected by staffing. When quality language teachers leave, they are not easily replaced. It is not uncommon for teachers unqualified to teach languages to provide languages education in schools. The general shortage of qualified languages teachers is a major obstacle to providing languages learning to all students at all levels, especially in regional and rural areas.

Together, these challenges contribute to disaffection with languages education in the community. There is a general lack of awareness about the value of languages learning, particularly at the secondary level where the vocational benefits of languages are not fully understood. The negative experiences of parents, teachers and even principals have tarnished the image of languages programs in some schools. This in turn affects the morale of language teachers who sometimes work under pressures other teachers may not experience. As Professor Joe Lo Bianco notes:

‘It is a frequently heard lament of the language teacher that they are not just teacher but also subject advocate, called upon continually to defend the integrity and presence of Indonesian or German in this or that school against complaints about the crowded curriculum, lack of student interest and a host of other pressures’.

We have also failed to capitalise on the skills of the thousands of first language speakers in Victoria. The potential of these students to mentor and support second language learners has not been realised, nor have we nurtured them to consider the very real vocational pathways available to bilingual and multilingual Victorians. The need to address this is particularly important when we consider Victoria’s economic ties with countries in our region, such as China, India, Indonesia and Japan, and our concurrent need for more Victorians to be proficient in these languages, the importance of which is highlighted in the Commonwealth Government’s White Paper – Australia in the Asian Century.

Addressing these interrelated challenges demands a new multifaceted approach founded on the four principles of participation, quality, diversity and collaboration.

Languages Start-up Grants



‘The Tallangatta Cluster, which includes 10 schools from just outside Wodonga right up to Corryong and Walwa in north-east Victoria, has a long history of working together.

In September 2012, 14 school leaders and teachers from the cluster undertook a study tour to Indonesia as part of our involvement in the Internationalising Education Program.

We are now working together to strengthen the provision of languages education in the remote and rural schools within our cluster. While we have some pockets of Indonesian provision, some small schools are not providing a language at all, largely because of issues relating to securing a qualified languages teacher.

As a cluster, we plan to address this through a blended learning approach that will allow us to share our Indonesian curriculum across all cluster schools. The Languages Start-up Grant has provided us with funding to support the language learning outcomes we would like to achieve for all students across all our schools.’

Bernie Boulton, Principal,
Kiewa Valley Primary School, Cluster leader

A new approach

According to Australian and international experts in languages education¹ the conditions for effective languages learning comprise:

- sufficient exposure to high quality materials in the target language and culture
- sufficient opportunities for practising the target language in real-life situations
- high quality, personalised feedback, and
- sustained motivation reinforced by progress towards language proficiency.

Meeting these conditions in the context of the challenges outlined above cannot be achieved by replicating the traditional models of languages education. Our partners must acknowledge that change requires us to build on – but move on from – the approaches of the past. It demands a new approach characterised by flexible delivery, personalised learning and collaboration.



¹ Professor Yong Zhao

Schools can renew languages education, improve their programs and better engage students by:

- increasing the time students spend learning the language and improving how the time is used
- establishing partnerships/clusters with other schools and providers to pool resources, share expertise, and where possible, ensure continuity of provision
- adopting differentiated teaching and learning approaches that personalise learning to the background, interests, strengths and proficiency levels of learners
- encouraging learner autonomy and progress through scaffolding and self-paced learning tools
- leveraging Information Communication Technology (ICT) by combining face-to-face, online and mobile learning to make languages learning more engaging, authentic and available 24/7, and to connect language learners to native speakers in the local community and overseas
- providing more authentic content and contexts through bilingual, immersion and CLIL approaches, and ICT
- engaging speakers of languages in school communities, including parents and students, in partner institutions and across the world to enrich programs and connect content to real-life situations
- supporting students to learn community languages through complementary providers and providing opportunities for students to learn these languages as part of their mainstream school languages program, and have their learning recognised and reported on.

The initiatives outlined below under the three interrelated strategies are designed to maximise the resources and opportunities available to schools to ensure they can enrich and revitalise their languages programs, and deliver the quality of languages education the Victorian community is entitled to.

Strategy 1: Building demand

Strengthening languages education first requires Victorians to value it. This strategy is designed to effectively communicate why languages education is vital to our children's future and that of our state.

Research has shown that if parents better understand the personal, pedagogical and vocational benefits of languages, demand will grow, and increased participation rates will follow.

This strategy encourages principals, educators, school councils and boards and other stakeholders to buy in, and advocate for languages in their school communities. It will equip them with the right communication tools and relevant, up-to-date data and research to make the case for languages. Communications will also target and encourage students to continue learning a language beyond the Pathways stage.

The strategy includes a mix of supports and incentives aimed at building demand for languages from parents, students, schools and the business community.

What we are already doing

- A communications strategy has been prepared, drawing on recent market research, to identify short and long-term opportunities to raise awareness about languages education and promote initiatives under this plan. This combines tailored messages for key target audiences, a general public information campaign, and communications around individual initiatives as announced and implemented.
- Consistent annual data on languages provision is now being collected across all sectors and can be used to track the impact of the plan over time. This data will tell us about:
 - the number of schools teaching languages and the languages they teach
 - the year levels taught and year levels at which languages study is compulsory
 - the number of students learning languages
 - teacher qualifications.
- Additional funding for languages education is now indicated in each government school's Student Resource Package (SRP), increasing transparency and accountability around languages funding.

- The reading of books in other languages as part of the *Premiers' Reading Challenge* was heavily promoted in schools and early childhood settings in media advertising in 2012 and 2013 and will continue to be encouraged into the future.
- A *Guide to starting a languages program* has been prepared for schools, and a more comprehensive "A school's guide to quality languages programs" is being developed. These guidelines include vital information on staffing languages programs, including the recruitment and retention of quality staff and strategies to establish kindergarten to primary to secondary languages pathways. The guidelines also cover how to develop a policy and sustainable support for languages programs, how to select languages or change languages, how to engage language learners, and how to capitalise on the skill of native speakers in school and early childhood communities.
- In 2012 Languages Start-up Grants totalling \$1 million were provided to approximately 80 individual or clusters of government and Catholic schools without a languages program to support them to introduce a program at the beginning of the 2013 school year.
- The impact of the grants will be evaluated in 2013 with a focus on sustaining new programs and informing future initiatives.



What we will do next

- Introduce from 2014, a Languages Ambassadors Team of high profile multilingual professionals to promote the vocational and other benefits of languages.
- Introduce a new Certificate of Language Proficiency for students who complete Year 10 language study – to be available for students by December 2014.
- Collaborate with industry peak bodies, including the Business Council of Australia and the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI), to promote the critical importance of languages in future workplaces for students, teachers and the wider community.
- Continue to promote the Premiers' Reading Challenge to the early childhood sector and schools, including age-appropriate books in languages other than English.
- Explore options for collecting annual data on languages teaching in early years programs by including languages teaching in kindergarten data collection by December 2014.
- Support schools, principals and school councils and boards to develop community engagement strategies, including targeted messages, to promote the value of languages learning by December 2013, with strategies published online by February 2014.
- Establish an annual Ministers' awards program and presentation ceremony for the best community engagement strategies posted online, commencing in 2014.
- Identify good practice in early years programs, including in the community languages sector, which support cultural inclusion and first language development, and publish online by December 2013 to encourage more settings to implement similar programs.
- Work with the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI) to develop awareness in school communities of opportunities for learning Aboriginal languages.



- Collect testimonials from students who have learned a language in mainstream schools, the Victorian School of Languages or community languages schools, and publish online by December 2013. This reflects the fact that a powerful means of building support for languages learning is students learning from, and being inspired by, other students who have had successful experiences with languages learning, using a language in-country, or pursuing languages beyond school.
- Collect testimonials from teachers and principals who have been motivated to strengthen their languages provision, through experiences such as in-country study programs and scholarship programs, and publish online by December 2013.
- Provide information sessions on this plan to undergraduate languages students by October 2013, emphasising the employment opportunities that come from languages, including careers in teaching.
- Update and consolidate all links to, and information on, languages resources for early childhood professionals, school leaders, teachers, parents and students on the new Department website in 2013.

Strategy 2: Developing and expanding the workforce

Languages educators are the key drivers behind this plan. Languages educators, including early childhood professionals, teachers, paraprofessionals and language assistants, are the people in our school and early childhood communities who advocate for languages, develop and deliver the programs, and inspire learners to see where languages can take them.

To meet our vision for languages education, we must not only attract more people with language skills to languages teaching, we must ensure that all educators are supported in their work through ongoing and meaningful professional development. This strategy focuses on both broadening and strengthening the languages workforce and implementing initiatives to train, attract, retain and retrain languages teachers.

What we are already doing

- The \$6 million Languages Teaching Scholarship program was introduced in 2012 to increase the number of qualified languages teachers available to Victorian schools. Approximately 210 scholarships will be offered over three years to undergraduates, aspiring and qualified teachers with languages skills who wish to become qualified languages teachers. In 2012, 55 scholarships were awarded. Further scholarships will be awarded in 2013 and 2014. The program will be evaluated over four years to determine its impact on the number of qualified languages teachers entering and remaining in the workforce.
- Languages and Schools Experience developed in partnership with the University of Melbourne, places tertiary students studying languages or with first language skills, in schools as languages assistants to provide additional support to students. The program also exposes undergraduates to teaching, encouraging them to consider it as a career. The program was trialled in 20 schools in 2012, and has been extended in 2013.
- The new Certificate IV in Community Languages Teaching is available to managers, administrators and teachers/instructors working in the community languages sector. The course will professionalise the community languages workforce and increase educators' career prospects.
- A review of the Department's Languages Assistants Program, specifically Chinese, French, German and Japanese assistants, in 2012 has informed new approaches that will maximise the availability and use of languages assistants in Victorian schools. A report on the feasibility of using instructors from community languages schools and other paraprofessionals as languages assistants in mainstream schools will be completed by December 2013.



- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) credit-bearing courses have been delivered by the University of Melbourne to approximately 90 currently employed teachers from all sectors since 2011 and further courses are being offered in 2013. This training helps educators teach subjects such as mathematics, science and history in and through the chosen language. CLIL workshops have also been provided for principals in 2012 to support schools choosing to implement a CLIL approach.
- The Department continues to fund the Modern Language Teachers' Association of Victoria and single language associations to provide professional development, curriculum advice and other activities and support to their members.

What we will do next

- Work with foreign government representatives to facilitate up to 400 language teacher exchanges, and support schools to sponsor overseas language assistants and qualified overseas languages teachers to fill identified shortages of qualified languages teachers for specific languages.
- Significantly develop "in-country" study opportunities for Victorian teachers and maximise take up of the different professional opportunities that are currently available.
- Provide a Leading Languages Module through the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership to assist teachers and leaders to create and sustain the organisational conditions that are necessary to support exemplary language and literacy practice in their schools.

- Undertake negotiations for Community Languages Australia to be accredited as a Registered Training Organisation by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and begin delivery of the new Certificate IV course to its workforce from February 2014.
- Develop a suite of language maintenance and refresher programs utilising partner organisations, including foreign governments, cultural bodies and language teacher associations to support languages teachers to upgrade/refresh their languages skills and attract Victorians with language education qualifications back to languages education.
- Undertake a workforce analysis in 2013 to determine the number of languages teachers we require to implement our languages education commitment. This analysis will be based on the most commonly taught languages in mainstream schools.
- Provide professional development and coaching modules for languages teachers and assistants, including in early childhood settings, in blended learning using Web 2.0 and web/video conferencing in 2013.
- Inform teacher training institutions of the strategies, resources and supports for languages learning in schools and early childhood settings to enable them to incorporate this material as appropriate in their teaching programs in 2014.
- Work in partnership with universities to strengthen languages education, particularly universities that have established relationships with education providers overseas, to maximise opportunities for teacher and student exchange in a range of countries. The Victorian Skills Gateway will also enable students to access information regarding languages courses from Victorian training providers.
- Identify and promote opportunities for languages teachers, including Aboriginal languages teachers, to undertake language maintenance courses, including internationally recognised courses.

Languages and Schools Experience



'I am a 3rd year Arts and Diploma of Languages student at the University of Melbourne. On a whim, I decided to do a first year French subject and absolutely loved it! I went on exchange to Lyon in the second half of last year and will finish my French diploma at the end of this year. When I returned from France, I really wanted to maintain and use my French so I decided to enrol in the Languages and Schools Experience subject.

My school placement at Norwood Secondary College this semester was incredible. I had the opportunity to work with passionate and experienced teachers, who assisted me in developing practical teaching skills. This subject has definitely piqued my interest in education, and I am looking into doing the Masters of Education in 2014. I will apply for a Languages Teaching Scholarship.

The scholarship is a great incentive to encourage language teaching and further develop language programs in schools.'

Elise, Languages and Schools Experience student, 2012

Strategy 3: Strengthening delivery, resources and partnerships

To achieve our vision, we need to be smarter about how we teach languages, and we need to work together. We need to find ways to extend and enrich languages learning, to make it more engaging for young minds and more relevant for the real world. This strategy focuses on supporting schools to develop partnerships, to share resources and teachers, and to increase the quality and quantity of languages learning through flexible and blended approaches using ICT.

The strategy looks at how we can both support and capitalise on our complementary providers, and better connect our early learning settings and training providers with languages education.

It is about connecting learners with first language speakers in the community and abroad, and drawing on these connections to highlight the many social, cultural and vocational benefits that can come from learning an additional language.

It is also about empowering learners to own their languages learning, to strive for continuous improvement, and to identify and capitalise on the many enriching opportunities that increased proficiency brings.

What we are already doing

- The Innovative Languages Provision in Clusters (ILPIC) initiative funded 14 clusters comprising 102 primary and secondary schools to trial locally-developed strategies to strengthen collaboration and continuity of languages education across groups of schools in 2012. The trial focussed on blended learning and flexible methods of delivery, and case studies will be disseminated to inform other clusters of the strategies by July 2013.
 - A Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) trial has been conducted in four government and two non-government schools in 2012. Developed in partnership with the University of Melbourne, the trial identified effective approaches to implement CLIL in a range of schools and sectors. Case studies will be available to support school communities better understand the benefits of CLIL in 2013.
 - In 2012, a Woiwurrung language program was trialled at Thornbury Primary School and in 2013, Swan Hill Primary School will introduce a Wemba Wemba language program with the support of a Languages Start-Up grant. These and other Aboriginal languages programs are implemented in collaboration with local communities, VAEAI and VACL. These organisations are also working with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) and the
- Department to develop language resources to support the introduction of further Aboriginal languages in Victorian schools.
 - Modules of work for History and Science using the CLIL approach to teach Chinese and Italian at the primary level have been developed, and are available online to teachers from all sectors. Further modules will be developed in other languages and at the secondary level.
 - Three schools received school specialisation grants in 2012 to strengthen their languages programs. Gladstone Park Secondary College specialises in Italian, Neerim District Secondary College and Brunswick Secondary College specialise in Chinese. Brunswick uses CLIL and ICT to support non-background speakers of Chinese to continue their studies to senior secondary level.
 - A Rental Agreement Framework to support community languages schools to access mainstream government and non-government school facilities at fair and reasonable rent was finalised in 2012. Professional development and information sessions will be provided in 2013 to support community languages schools to negotiate rental agreements with mainstream schools.
 - *Guidelines to Support Assessment of Digital Language Resources FUSE ID: S7W79R* were developed in 2012 to assist schools to make informed decisions when considering interactive online languages resources for use in the classroom. The guidelines include an evaluation of commercially available resources in Chinese, Italian, French, Japanese, German and Indonesian, but are also applicable to all languages.





- *Overseas Learning Experiences for Students, A Resource for Schools* has been developed to assist schools to offer overseas in-country immersion experiences for Pathways stage (Year 10) students.
- The Sister Schools Cross Sectoral Online Resource Kit is being developed to assist schools to establish and enhance sister school relationships. The resource will include best practice examples showcasing the benefits of sister school programs. In 2012, Sister School Lighthouse Grants were provided to 10 schools to strengthen existing sister school relationships. Further grants will be provided to schools in 2013 and 2014.
- The *VCAA/DEECD Resource Booklet – Learning English as an Additional Language in the Early Years* (birth to six years) was developed to promote English as an additional language and bilingualism in early childhood settings.

Content and Language Integrated Learning



Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an approach to languages education that immerses students in the target language by using it to teach other subjects, such as mathematics, science or history. Both the language and the subject content are taught at the same time.

CLIL has been widely used in Europe since the 1990s and schools and languages teachers are now exploring its potential in Victoria.

In 2011, teachers from Gladstone Park Secondary College undertook a postgraduate certificate in CLIL at the University of Melbourne and trialled the approach to teach Italian and humanities to Year 8 students. In 2012, two classes of Year 9 students spent 30 per cent of class time learning through the CLIL methodology, and the approach will be expanded to six classes in 2013. Schools across Victoria will also have the opportunity to learn from Gladstone Park's experience in CLIL, through their participation in the 2012 research trial conducted by the University of Melbourne in partnership with DEECD.

'When you learn a foreign language you learn best when you're in a foreign country. So essentially, that's what we do with CLIL lessons – we simply teach new content through another language.'

Max Tosi, Italian and Humanities teacher
Gladstone Park Secondary College

What we will do next

- Invest \$13m for up to 1500 students to undertake extended study in China to enhance students' linguistic proficiency and knowledge in China.
- Develop new online/on-demand language assessments to enable teachers to monitor students' language proficiency and progress by December 2014. These tools will allow Victorian teachers and parents to consistently identify student progress in languages – giving Victorian classrooms a unique capacity in Australia.
- Work with relevant stakeholders including the VCAA, the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) and VET and higher education providers to identify and implement additional incentives to encourage students to continue languages in their senior secondary years and beyond. This could include:
 - introducing a Certificate III in Applied Language as a scored VCE VET program
 - introducing a new bilingual ATAR bonus for students who complete two first languages in VCE (Mandarin/English in the first instance)
 - developing and introducing new VCE Higher Education language studies criteria for enrolment in differentiated language courses and/or other incentives through tertiary entrance ranking bonuses for students to study languages at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels.These incentives and others will be considered in an options paper to be developed during 2013.
- Conduct a pilot program in 2013 with Community Languages Australia and four mainstream schools to explore ways of supporting students learning their first language through a community languages school to continue their language study during school hours and to have that language recognised by their mainstream school and recorded on their student profile and school reports. The findings of the trial will be available to all schools by the beginning of 2014.
- Support schools and VET providers to work together to develop vocationally-focused languages courses to increase senior secondary enrolments in languages and encourage students to see the vocational benefits of languages learning. Examples of successful courses will be disseminated to schools and sectors from December 2014.
- Conduct a review of bilingual programs in 2013 to determine options for new bilingual programs, including extending delivery into secondary schools.
- Identify high quality, freely available language-specific resources appropriate for school use and place online by December 2013.
- Develop templates to support government and non-government schools to audit their current languages provision against the expectations of this plan, and to identify gaps in provision. The templates will be trialled in a group of schools and will then be available for schools to use as appropriate by December 2013.
- Work with the Modern Language Teachers' Association of Victoria, language-specific subject associations, foreign governments and cultural institutions to provide language maintenance courses for teachers, and language-specific immersion camps for students of the most common languages in 2013.
- Undertake an analysis of the current role of the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) and develop options on the potential future role of the VSL to support the Government's languages education commitment by December 2013.
- Make the online Years 7 and 8 Chinese (Mandarin) distance education courses developed by the VSL available to all schools from 2014 for Year 7 and 2015 for Year 8.
- Work with the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc to further expand the teaching of Aboriginal languages in schools.
- Identify and document sister school relationships involving community languages schools and the Victorian School of Languages, and publish best practice case studies by December 2014.
- Develop a business case around transforming the Department's existing 'Languages Online' website into a cutting-edge cross-sectoral, Web 2.0 community for languages by December 2014.
- Conduct annual environmental scans of new technology, sources of language learning input, approaches to second language learning in other jurisdictions and countries to ensure this plan remains relevant to the global context in which it operates. The first scan will take place in 2015–2016, and this plan will be updated accordingly.

Chinese at Brunswick Secondary College



Brunswick Secondary College is a hub for languages learning in Melbourne's multicultural inner north. Students have the opportunity to learn Italian and Chinese (Mandarin) from Year 7 through to VCE.

In 2012, the college received a school specialisation grant to strengthen its Mandarin program, and to encourage students from non-Chinese backgrounds to advance their Mandarin studies to senior school and beyond. This grant, which will be used over three years, will also strengthen understanding of Chinese culture among young people and their families in the Brunswick and Coburg communities.

Jiwei Xu teaches Mandarin at Brunswick Secondary College. In 2012 he undertook a postgraduate certificate in CLIL at the University of Melbourne, and even hosted volunteer students from the Languages and Schools Experience subject.



'The CLIL course was a valuable experience. It really opened my mind and revealed possibilities to engage our students better. While the script required at secondary level is very challenging for implementing CLIL, I am looking into how to modify the text and tasks as well as scaffold students to support them to learn both the content and the target language. It is also very nice to share ideas and expertise with other enthusiastic language teachers.

Having the tertiary student volunteers in the classroom means the students are able to receive far more individual and small-group assistance. Because the range of student experience and skill in Chinese varies greatly from beginner to advanced native speaker, it helps me to target the learning activities to better meet the needs of the students. They are also fabulous role models for our students. Just like them, they are working hard to learn another language and all the challenges and excitement that can bring.'

Jiwei Xu, Chinese Teacher, Brunswick Secondary College
