



**SUBJECT: INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR VICTORIAN COMMUNITY  
LANGUAGES SCHOOLS**

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**PURPOSE**

1. To seek increased per capita funding for Victorian community languages schools and negotiate a systemic resolution to rental rates for use of mainstream school facilities.

**BACKGROUND**

2. Community Languages Schools are complementary providers of languages education to mainstream schools in Australia. Languages education is provided through mainstream schools, community languages schools and the Victorian Schools of Languages (VSL).
3. Their role is articulated in the National Languages Statement and National Languages Plan endorsed by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).
4. Schools receive funding through the Australian Government's School Language Program which distributes funding to State and Territory education jurisdictions. Some State and Territory Departments of Education provide additional funding. Parents supplement the running of schools by paying fees and conducting fund raising events to meet the additional costs of conducting classes.
5. Each State and Territory Department of Education regulates registration, accreditation and funding processes. School authorities must be a not for profit organization which is a legal entity, to be eligible for funding.
6. Victorian schools must undertake a formal accreditation process to be eligible for funding.
7. Community Languages Schools are major partners in Victoria's Education and Multicultural Affairs policies.
8. The Department of Education and Training (DE&T) has a strong and effective working relationship with the Ethnic Schools Association of Victoria (ESAV) and Community Languages Australia
9. 55 languages are offered through the community languages schools in Victoria. There are in excess of 200 school authorities in Victoria, 198 of these accredited. Some of the authority's area also accredited single subject providers of VCE LOTE.
10. **Funding**

In 2006 schools receive	\$100 per capita funding
Total Students Funded	(2006) – 33,030
Total Students Enrolled	(2006) – 33,884
<b>Total Grant (2006) -</b>	<b>\$3,236,940</b>

11. **Rental paid** by community languages schools to mainstream schools:  
Total Rental Paid (2006) – \$1,482,990.00  
Total Number of Rooms Used – 1,834
12. **Training, Professional development and Administrative Support funding**  
In 2005/2006 DE&T also provided
  - \$225 .000 for Credit Bearing Courses and Training
  - \$ 50 000 for Professional development
  - \$ 40 000 for Administrative services at the Languages Multicultural Education Resources Centre (LMERC)
13. DET has committed to funding these three elements at the same level for 2006/2007.
14. In the first half of 2006, 11 credit bearing training courses were offered with over 200 participants and in coming weeks 9 further courses will be delivered with over 200 participants.
15. 14 PD programs have been offered to date in 2006. Another 11 will be on offer. Over 500 individuals have participated and the total number by the end of 2006 will be in excess of 700.
16. Over 300 participants representing 40 language groups attended the 2006 State Community Languages Schools Conference held on July 1, 2006 [Program attached]
17. The Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) also provides funding support for schools to conduct local Professional Development sessions.

## ISSUES

18. The ESAV has advocated for increased funding and is seeking a \$40 per capita increase and also systemic resolution to the rental charges issue. Schools are paying unto 60% of their funding back to mainstream schools in rental costs.
19. The last Ethnic schools per capital funding increase were in 2001. \$10 was received at that time.
19. **The ESAV offers the following arguments for increases:**
  - Commitment level of school authorities have increased significantly as new requirements are introduced
  - Teacher work load has also increased significantly
  - There is shared agreement between DET, ESAV and Community Languages Australia that quality programs are most important. Currently a new Quality Assurance Framework is being introduced which will require increased accountability. The process will also demand high level of commitment from schools to develop a range of elements and dimensions to meet Key Result Areas (KRA) of the Framework. This framework will involve a high level of involvement at all levels and may form basis for new DET& Accreditation processes.

- Through the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) community languages schools teachers and instructors have had to attend training to better understand the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)
- Cost have increased by at least 20-25% over 4 years taking into account as the minimum CPI levels and other costs.
- Rental costs have increased significantly. Up to 60% of funding is paid in rental costs.
- Annual increases have not been forthcoming. The proposed increase would also cover most part of the next 24 – 36 months.

20. The **2007 and Beyond Community Languages Schools Strategic Plan** [attached] developed by the ESAV and Community Languages Australia provides a focused and committed attempt to ongoing improvements in the delivery of the State Government languages education and multicultural affairs policies by community languages schools.

The KRA and outcomes will be difficult you achieve without offering schools additional funding to plan, implement and evaluate proposed areas of activity.

21. Discussions have been held with:
- Minister Kosyk directly and her adviser John Dainutis,
  - John Dainutis and a senior adviser in the Minister's' Office who has been seconded from the Premier's office
  - Minister John Pandazopoulos' adviser Ozan,
  - Chair and deputy chair of the Victorian Multicultural Commission George Lekakis and Hakan Akyol in relation to negotiating and increases in funding.

Informal discussions have been held with The Hon John Pandazopoulos.

22. The predominant suggestion has been that an increase be included in the pre election commitments.

23. Discussion has also been held with representatives of the Department of Educational and Training:

- Tony, Cook, Carol Kelly, Wendy Morris.

DE&T argues that increases out of existing funding is not possible however if new funding were made available they could be distributed.

24. The Issue of rental costs has also been raised with the above-mentioned.

25. Discussion on these issues has also been held with:

- DET Western Metropolitan Regional Director Rob Blachford who has been extremely supportive and helpful in seeking a practical solution
- DET Eastern Metropolitan Regional Director r Jim Watters and his deputy Dean Mann who have also been very supportive

26. Some proposals that have been:
- Providing principals and schools a better understanding of the role of the community languages schools as complementary providers rather than opportunities for increasing School Council funds.
  - That a formula though global budget be introduced to compensate schools for opening their facilities to the broader community
  - That community languages schools be incorporated in this proposal and that only utility costs be paid by community languages schools authorities
  - It has been agreed it would be difficult to direct schools to offer facilities at no cost
27. The proposal of deducting funds from current per capita grants and paying rental costs directly from DET schools is unacceptable and would not a solution for the following reasons :
- Increased dissatisfaction from community languages sector as increased for funding are being negotiated
  - Offer no guarantee that mainstream schools, would adhere to a minimal rental charge as Councils re self governing on these issues

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

28. That \$40 per capita increase be provided from commencement of the 2007 schools year
29. That DE&T explore options to have community use of Government schools factored into global budgets.
30. That this amount be supplemented by community languages schools paying cost of utilities for use of mainstream schools premises
31. That these recommendations form part of the pre election commitments.