

Languages Strategy: Presentation on Monday 8th February 2010

We recommend a simple vision statement for Languages Education:

All Victorian students will receive a quality languages education delivered by a high quality workforce.

p5	IDEAS	Selection of AGTV strategies
<p>Policy - Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success of any learning program will depend largely on the quality of the teacher, and in the case of languages, is often dependent on the support of the school principal. • Languages education is richer than a focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing as reflected in the broader document itself. Intercultural skills are developed through the four macro skills, providing access to a deeper understanding of our own and other cultures. • There is no accountability and no consequences if schools don't provide quality language programs, despite the fact it is DEECD policy to do so with SRP funding. • The current and potential contribution of the SLAs has been largely ignored in document. SLAs are not a business or a community group, but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria must build on its leadership role in languages education in Australia with a clear vision statement and long-term commitment to a diverse range of languages. • Review Assessment P-10: Value skills in languages using or adapting the international assessment measure – the European Framework for Languages (A1 to C2) • PD to manage diversity • The focus of Primary language programs should be on literacy to lay the foundation for further language learning in Secondary school, regardless of whether the same language is offered. • Mossgiel Park PS offers an hour of German a week for all students focused on literacy. The teacher is also the literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to national and state forums within AGTV Networks and beyond • Promote DEECD policy to our members in implementing language programs • Develop programs, projects and initiatives in line with DEECD directions to promote the teaching and learning of German. • Identify innovative teachers and effective Programs. <p>For example: Jane Grenfell at Mossgiel Park PS has an effective language program with 1-hour a week with every class. Tina Wilkinson (formerly at PLC, now at CLC Eltham) is an inspirational German teacher leading the way in effective use of ICT tools to engage students in the Middle Years, including exploring an innovative program for Year 9 students in 2010. Belinda Flint at Bendigo South East College is a young inspired teacher leading the Calder Network and has trialled an excellent transition program between Spring Gully Primary and the secondary schools and she has been asked</p>

<p>like-minded teacher professionals committed to promoting the teaching and learning of their language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategies outlined in the document are a mish-mash of ideas skirting around the issue and are sometimes contradictory and/or unrealistic. • Regional network plans: Studying the same language from Primary to Secondary is not as important as studying a language from Year 7 to 10. Experience in a variety of languages needs to be viewed as a bonus, especially if there is a quality language program in a different language to that offered in the Primary school. • The language teachers and SLAs should be directly consulted in the development of any proposed regional or state language plan. • Students choose a school for more reasons than the language offered. • Accelerated learning programs are the exception not the rule. • Bilingual programs not realistic in the short-term. • Differentiated programs are difficult to timetable. • Nominating a select group of languages prevents utilising the current expertise available and implies some languages and cultures 	<p>coach in the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spatzenschule</i> for German at Toorak PS is an example of how literacy in a first language is provided to promote the proven benefits of bilingualism. • Victorian government can provide balance to the current federal focus on Asian languages in supporting other languages. • Recruit language teachers from within Australia as role models of success in languages education. • Use existing quality global resources for ICT support for languages. • Collate data on retention rates for cohorts of students as a way to identify success. • Reduce funding if schools do not provide a quality language program. • Audit the language classes on census day. • Maintain and expand the Netbook program to provide access to ICT. • Explore elements of VIT registration for language teachers as a way of influencing training programs at tertiary institutions. 	<p>to present at the National Conference for teachers of German in July in Melbourne.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGTV ran a PD on VET Certificate II in 2008 and a teacher from Marist Sion from our Gippsland Network has acted on the PD and advice and is implementing a VET Certificate II in Year 10 under the auspices of RMIT in 2010. • Source, share and promote ideas and opportunities for teaching and learning from beyond Victoria and Australia through our Network of Australian Teachers of German (NATG) and partnerships with the Goethe-Institut and Austrian ministry of education (BM:UKK), Bavarian Youth Ring Student Exchange, the Society of Australian – German Student Exchange (SAGSE) and others. <p>Comments: Our relationship with RPOs has been inconsistent and is an area of concern for many of our Network Leaders, including the AGTV being acknowledged for their work in the regions.</p> <p>Our strength is accessing the knowledge and expertise within and across government, independent and Catholic Primary and Secondary schools in country and metropolitan Victoria to promote the teaching and learning of German.</p>
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<p>are more important than others, which conflicts with valuing all cultures represented in our community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural and metropolitan schools share the same concerns, as evidenced by feedback from our Networks in Victoria and beyond. • Sharing teachers across schools is an unfair expectation of teachers and is often unmanageable for both schools and teachers. If students are asked to travel, their learning time is compromised. • VSL fulfils an important role in language provision, but works mainly for highly motivated students willing to give up Saturday mornings. • The role of the RPO is not clear to language teachers, there are inconsistencies across regions, and some languages are neglected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the language assistant program. • Involve language teachers in developing programs in other learning areas to implement the Education for Global and Multicultural Citizenship policy. • Provide more people in the central LOTE Department to reflect the commitment of the government to implementing any language strategy. <p>Question Is VCAA in the process of reviewing VCE and are they intending to involve the SLAs?</p>	
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<p>Principals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the Melbourne Declaration includes languages education. • Publicly value language program and teachers • Support language teachers to access in-country experience • Support teacher in accessing programs for language students beyond the classroom • Understand that disengagement in the middle years is a whole school problem requiring a whole school solution and support of all learning domains. • Understand the role of languages in promoting literacy and numeracy • Fund small VCE language classes to provide a pathway for students. • Provide equal access to ICT for language teachers and students • Electives send the message that languages are not part of a quality education. • Provide a specific language room to immerse students in the language and culture. • Language teachers are teachers first, and their contribution is providing access to languages and cultures through the specific language they teach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See 'Ideas for Principals' • Regional Managers could link the provision of VCE language programs to the performance pay of Principals. • Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat to promote how languages support literacy and numeracy outcomes as described in the Literacy and Numeracy support documents. • Encourage language teachers to apply for in-country scholarships • Maintain the primary focus of BER Language Centres on the learning of languages. • If a large secondary college cannot offer languages at VCE, then targeted support must be provided to rectify this gap. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write letters to Principals thanking them for their support and alerting to the success of students and/or teachers in AGTV related matters, including highlighting the support of DEECD contributing funding for AGTV projects • Invite Principals to the State Final of the AGTV Years 5 to 9 Poetry Competitions • Network Leaders are encouraged to invite Principals to their activities. • Provide advice and moral support to teachers when Principals say there is 'no money for LOTE'. • Invited Russell Elliott (formerly Principal North Geelong SC) to speak at our weekend State Conference Dinner in 2009 to have a member of the Principal class acknowledge the contribution of German teachers to their schools and the AGTV.

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<p>Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convince Principals, Leadership Teams, Careers Teachers and wider school community of the value of learning languages, especially Principals given their power to influence the school community. • Promote the value of membership and participation in Single Language Associations as a way of improving teacher capacity in their specific language, and enhancing their teaching and learning programs. • Recruiting teachers from within Australia as role models for learning languages • Young teachers are not prepared to keep teaching languages where languages are not valued and if you have to fight for the existence of the language program year after year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Paid internship/studentships</u> for Diploma/Bachelor of Education students: They are given a reduced allotment in a school over two years with a paid (?) supervisor from the school as well as study days to attend training institution and ongoing PD, with increasing responsibilities over time. The training teacher is required to teach in a school for a minimum of 3 years after becoming fully qualified. (This provides sufficient time to develop skills and decide if they are suited to teaching) • <u>VET Certificates in Years 9 and 10</u>: to encourage studying a language until the end of the compulsory years and leaving the option open for VCE • Strong language policy and accountability process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a registered exchange organisation coordinating the BJR Reciprocal Student Exchange Program between Victoria and the State of Bavaria, which has enabled 1100+ students from Victoria to participate in a 10-week reciprocal exchange program since 1988. NB: The increased costs incurred since the shift of registration to VQRA must be passed on to families, as we operate on a cost-recovery basis. This is regrettable given that the Bavarian State Government fund state government personnel to organise their worldwide exchange programs. • Manage two websites (AGTV and Germanlinx) and are currently developing a single site for teachers and students. • Use DEECD funds to organise the Student Forum at the German Day Out for Secondary students in Melbourne, an idea originally conceived by DEECD years ago. Speakers are invited to talk about how they are using German in life beyond school, as well as students who are benefiting now from German e.g. participating in one of 60+ partner-school exchange programs. We subsidise country students to attend. The German Day Out has now been adopted by the Goethe-Institut as a national project. • Sponsor the prizes for the Victorian

		<p>winner of the Goethe-Institut School Film Festival. This was initiated in Victoria and is now a national competition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor a SAGSE scholarship since 1979, many recipients of whom have become German teachers. Most have made significant contributions to the teaching and learning of German. <p>NB: SAGSE enlists the support of companies and businesses to sponsor scholarships and expect this to have an impact on the support of German in schools. In some cases, the Principals from across sectors do not appreciate the significance of SAGSE's work in providing such a prestigious opportunity for Year 11 and 12 students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a state wide poetry competition since 1994 for Years 5 to 9 with Network finals culminating in a State Final at the Austrian Club in Heidelberg. • Develop promotional materials and resources for a variety of purposes. • Send out E-Newsletters to our Network Leaders for electronic distribution to their networks with ideas to promote the teaching and learning of German, including PD, student activities, global ICT resources. • Supported the development of language trails and resources.
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<p>Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the expertise and passion of volunteer professionals providing professional support for languages through SLAs • Promote shared learning goals for languages amongst language teachers that recognise the right of all students to languages education. • Provide PD on the using ICT as a tool to enhance learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific PD to support language teachers to embrace current learning theories and teaching practices such as the e5 program to improve teacher capacity. • Increase funding to SLAs to deliver professional services to enhance curriculum programs. • Develop outreach programs utilising the expertise of retired language teachers and teachers on leave, organised through SLAs who access experts from across systems. • Provide PD to manage diversity in the classroom using a wide variety of strategies and tools e.g. ICT • Liaise with SLAs to identify teachers skilled in specific areas and best practice. • Creative teachers benefit from inspiration from one-off PDs offered by SLAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish SZENE, a national journal for teachers of German. • Organise and share funding of a weekend state conference for teachers in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut. • Run central PDs for Early, Middle and Later Years with experienced and passionate presenters identified through the AGTV networks, including teachers from other states and territories and other languages. • Facilitate collaborative relationships between German teachers within the twelve AGTV Networks across Victoria. We encourage networks to respond to local needs in providing professional development and student activities. • We produce and share curriculum materials.

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<p>Personal Relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the relationship/s of the language teacher with the students will encourage students to take the risk and commit to studying their LOTE until the end of Year 12, regardless of their level of ability. • Teacher is the most important factor in the success of any learning program • ICT is a tool and cannot replace personal relationships, need the teacher to tailor individual learning programs for students • Teacher of student best placed to identify learning needs of students • Passion of the teacher for the subject area will influence outcomes • AGTV develops personal and supportive relationships to promote sharing of expertise and resources across and within the twelve networks in Victoria. This includes teachers from primary and secondary, government and independent, country and metropolitan schools. • Disengagement of students is a whole school issue, particularly in the Middle Years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD to manage diversity in the language classroom • Ongoing PD on strategies and topics relevant to current cohort of language students to engage them in their learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run two PDs for Network Leaders to promote collaborative relationships across Networks to improve teaching practices, to develop strategic responses to issues raised, and to maintain a positive approach to language teaching. • Invited representatives from other states and territories in 2001 to promote the power of networking which led to the foundation of the NATG in 2002. • Continue to invite representatives from throughout Australia to present at or learn from our programs for teachers and students. • Encourage positive relationships between teachers across Primary and Secondary systems and sectors at Network meeting and centrally run PDs e.g. Middle Years and VCE PDs.

Sustainable workforce

We are concerned about the health and wellbeing of our members and of their ability to sustain their enthusiasm. Too many are feeling undervalued despite their best efforts to engage students. Older teachers are tired of fighting for languages year after year and the current generation of younger teachers are not prepared to work in an environment where they are not valued. Action needs to be taken now as there is a clear gap between the aspirations of government and the reality in schools.

The AGTV has provided moral and practical support for language teachers across systems. We are proud of our achievements which we believe are an example of best practice and look forward to supporting the Victorian government in implementing languages education and further conversations about the way forward. We are grateful for the funding the DEECD contribute to the AGTV and believe we provide value for money.

Single Language Association must be seen as an important source of support as they have been for decades. Don't ignore the knowledge and experience an SLA can offer as a partner in developing and implementing a Languages Education Strategy.

Compiled by:

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