

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Emergency Services



Saturday, 3 November 2018

MORE SUPPORT FOR VICTORIA'S LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

More Victorian students will get the support they need to learn their mother tongue and connect with their heritage, thanks to a massive funding boost for community language schools under a re-elected Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Education James Merlino, today joined Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos and Member for Oakleigh Steve Dimopolous at Omiros College Community Language School to announce the \$7.5 million boost to community language schools.

Across the state, more than 5,600 students are enrolled at 35 community language schools that teach Greek – this funding boost will mean they're able to stay connected with their traditions.

In an Australian first, Labor will expand community language schools to early childhood and preschool-aged children – giving around 2,000 of our youngest Victorians access to the program.

Labor will also make sure that our language teachers get the support they need with a \$100,000 boost for professional development, training and administrative services for the program.

There are more than 160 accredited community language schools across Victoria who deliver language education in over 40 languages to 36,000 school-aged children across the state.

Community language schools offer programs outside mainstream school hours, like after hours or on weekends, and help students to remain connected to their culture and heritage.

Only Labor will back Victoria's proud multiculturalism, and only Labor will invest in our state's community language schools.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"We are the Multicultural State and we are the Education State, backing our community language schools just makes sense."

"This massive funding boost will make Victoria's community language schools program the best funded in the country."

Quote attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos

We know there are many benefits for children to learn their mother tongue from a young age. We're proud to enable more preschool children to learn a language at a community language school for the first time.

Quote attributable to Member for Oakleigh Steve Dimopolous

"We know that teaching kids their mother tongue is important to keep them connected to their heritage – and only Labor will make sure that can happen."

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