**BENDIGO TEAM CHINA VIDEO TRANSCRIPT**

**Narrator**

Bendigo Team China Schools is an alliance of Bendigo primary and secondary schools that have combined resources to forge whole-school partnerships with our Sister Schools in the city of Suzhou, in Jiangsu province, China.

We live in regional Victoria but understand our students are being educated in the Asian Century. As a team of schools, we strive to build upon the global perspectives and Asia literacy of all our school community members.

The Sister Schools journey for Bendigo Team China Schools began like the casting of a pebble into a pond. The ripples continue to expand.

**Heather Odgers, Principal, Kangaroo Flat Primary School**

In 2010, the Suzhou Industrial Park Education Bureau approached the former Loddon Mallee Region with a view to setting up Sister School relationships. This was received positively by the Loddon Mallee Region and they provided some seed funding for delegations of Bendigo principals to visit Suzhou and to establish Sister School relationships.

**Narrator**

The Sister School experience, Home Stay Program and the opportunity to make friends with Chinese students has generated considerable demand and enthusiasm for learning Chinese Mandarin amongst students, parents and staff.

**Kain McCabe, Student, Kangaroo Flat Primary School**

Over the past three years I have had three Chinese students stay with me and my family. Learning Mandarin has helped me stay in touch with my Chinese friends; we have been using email and Skype.

**Sue Martin, Parent, Kangaroo Flat Primary School**

The Home Stay Program was a very positive experience. We even went to China last year to visit our Chinese students and their families. The school’s Mandarin program meant my son could communicate with the Chinese people that we met. Even when we were lost, my son was able to ask for directions in Mandarin.

**Narrator**

This demand for Mandarin language has been met through a unique partnering by Team China Schools with the Confucius Classroom at Bendigo Senior Secondary College.

**Juncai Lin, Confucius Classroom Coordinator, Bendigo Senior Secondary College**

The Confucius Classroom is managed by Bendigo Senior Secondary College with the support of its Chinese partner school, Dongzhua Middle School, and is jointly funded by Hanban – a Chinese government organization. Team China schools have combined funds to employ high quality teachers who are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, and other assistant teachers from China through Bendigo Senior Secondary College. These teachers conduct Mandarin classes across Team China schools.

**Narrator**

The Sister School relationship, student and staff exchanges, and taking part in the joint Department of Education and Asia Education Foundation’s Leading 21st Century Schools Project, are all building the intercultural understanding and Asia literacy of teachers and principals.

**Hayley Kirk, Classroom Teacher, White Hills PS**

I support our Mandarin teacher in language classes and follow up on lessons. Part of my role is to organize online lessons and shared projects with our Sister School. To further support our program, I attend community Mandarin classes at the Confucius Classroom to learn the language and customs.

**Narrator**

The initiative has generated demand for high quality and sustained curriculum development in both Mandarin and Asia literacy.

**Linda Lyons, Assistant Principal, Bendigo Senior Secondary College**

Bendigo Senior Secondary College was successful in an application for funding for a curriculum development project through the Loddon Mallee Region. Our project has been to develop an engaging digital learning curriculum in Mandarin for the learners in Bendigo. Our initial stages saw us purchase some support through the Chinese Teachers Training Centre to enable us to start that scoping and sequencing project. By the end of our work we will have an engaging curriculum which is fully documented and used across Bendigo to ensure that all learners have access to a high quality Mandarin curriculum to support their learning through Prep to the end of senior school. A very exciting program for the Bendigo region!

**Narrator**

A unified team of principals, School Councils and school communities ensure the initiative is a high priority and supported by school budgets and policies.

**Heather Odgers, Principal, Kangaroo Flat Primary School**

The key successes of the Team China Project have namely been:

* the fact that we’ve hosted 178 Chinese students here in Bendigo for an eight week program
* the growth of the Team China Project with now fourteen schools involved
* we have a critical mass and a sustainable language program

A key highlight is the overseas learning experience where 57 students and 20 staff will be travelling to China later this year.

Local government is also a strong supporter of our project. The City of Greater Bendigo and our mayor welcome students and Chinese delegations in the city hall.

**Narrator**

By accessing the global interconnectedness of the Asian Century, Bendigo Team China students are not only citizens of regional Australia, but citizens of the world.

**Key Enabling Factors**

* Initial Loddon Mallee Region seeding grant for principals to travel to Suzhou to establish Sister School relationships.
* A unified team of principals, School Councils and parents ensuring it is a high priority and supported by school policy and budgets.
* Partnering with local government to provide a formal welcome to visiting students, teachers and principals from China, raising the perceived importance of the intercultural exchange.
* A critical mass of schools sharing the cost of employing high quality VIT-registered Mandarin teachers across the network.
* Strategically dividing and sharing tasks and responsibilities across our network members, ensuring achievability and sustainability.
* Loddon Mallee Region LOTE curriculum grant for the development of high quality Mandarin curriculum and consistent pedagogy delivery across member schools.