##### Smarter Schools National Partnerships

##### Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership

**Victoria**

##### Submissions to National Evidence Base

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**IMPORTANT NOTE: All fields or questions marked with an asterisk (\*) must be completed or the strategy cannot be submitted for assessment.**

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| Background information  |
| \*Submission TitleThe DEEWR Literacy and Numeracy Pilot in Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) School Communities 2009-10 |
| \*DescriptionPlease provide 2-3 sentences which capture the essence of your literacy/numeracy initiative.A multifaceted approach, identified from local reform experience, was used to improve students’ literacy and numeracy achievements in this initiative. The focus was on students from low SES school communities, and included low SES, Koorie (Victorian indigenous community), English as an Additional Language (EAL), new arrivals and refugee student cohorts. The initiative used a schools' cluster approach to school improvement and focussed on five areas of reform:• Leadership and whole school approaches• Investments in lifting teacher capacity• Effective use of student data• Student centred approaches and interventions• Use of broader community and parental engagement strategies. |
| \*State associated with the initiative. (place X against corresponding state) |
| Australian Capital Territory | [ ]  |
| New South Wales | [ ]  |
| Northern Territory | [ ]  |
| Queensland | [ ]  |
| South Australia | [ ]  |
| Tasmania | [ ]  |
| Victoria | [x]  |
| Western Australia | [ ]  |
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| Associated organisation  |
| Organisation Type (place X against corresponding groups) |
| School | [ ]  |
| Organisation | [x]  |
| Organisation name |
| Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) |
| Organisation contact details |
| \*Email: | N/A |
| \*Postal address: | GPO Box 4367 |
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| Related publicationsAssociated publication, strategy or commercial product details.  |
| Is there a particular publication, strategy or commercial product associated with, identified or cited as central to the initiative in this submission? |
| Yes | [x]  |
| No | [ ]  |
| If yes, please provide details. |
| Name or title of the publication or product: Designated web page for pilotThe owner’s name:      The owner’s phone:      The owner’s email:      The owner’s address:      Website details: http://www.education.vic.gov.a |

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| Description of initiative  |
| 1. \* Is this initiative aimed at school-aged children? (place X against corresponding groups)
 |
| Yes | [x]  |
| No | [ ]  |
| 1. \* Which skill(s) does the initiative target? (place X against corresponding skill)
 |
| Literacy | [ ]  |
| Numeracy | [ ]  |
| Literacy and Numeracy | [x]  |
| Other (please specify)       | [ ]  |
| 1. \* Indicate the target group for the project or initiative.

You may tick more than 1 option. (place X against corresponding groups) |
| Primary school students | [x]  |
| Secondary school students | [x]  |
| Special school students | [ ]  |
| Teachers of primary school students | [x]  |
| Teachers of secondary school students | [x]  |
| Teachers of special school students | [ ]  |
| Teacher educators | [ ]  |
| Principals of primary school students | [x]  |
| Principals of secondary school students | [x]  |
| Principals of special school students | [ ]  |
| Parents and caregivers of primary school students | [x]  |
| Parents and caregivers of secondary school students | [x]  |
| Parents and caregivers of special school students | [ ]  |
| Cluster of schools | [x]  |
| 1. \* What was the size of the target group?

Please indicate how many students, teachers or principals this initiative was delivered to.(Max 3,500 characters) |
| A total of 76 schools participated in the initiative including:• Seven secondary schools and 36 primary schools in the two rural regional clusters• Five secondary schools, two P-12 colleges and 26 primary schools in the two metropolitan clusters.A total of 34,267 students and 2,388 teachers participated, including:• 19,625 students and 1,548 teachers from the two metropolitan clusters.• 14,642 students and 840 teachers from the two regional clusters.  |
| 1. \* What year levels did the initiative target?

If the initiative targeted teachers or principals, indicate the year levels that best apply. (place X against corresponding groups) |
| Prep/Kindergarten/foundation | [x]  |
| Year 1 | [x]  |
| Year 2 | [x]  |
| Year 3 | [x]  |
| Year 4 | [x]  |
| Year 5 | [x]  |
| Year 6 | [x]  |
| Year 7 | [x]  |
| Year 8 | [x]  |
| Year 9 | [x]  |
| Year 10 | [x]  |
| Year 11 | [ ]  |
| Year 12 | [ ]  |

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| Description of initiative (continued)  |
| 1. \* Which student groups did the initiative target?

If the initiative targeted teachers or principals, indicate the year levels that best apply. (place X against corresponding groups) |
| Indigenous students | [x]  |
| ESL students | [x]  |
| Low SES students | [x]  |
| Students with a disability | [ ]  |
| Students at or below the National Minimum Standard | [x]  |
| Gifted and talented students | [ ]  |
| Other New arrivals and refugee students | [x]  |
| Initiative targeted students from all student groups or was not targeted to particular student groups | [ ]  |
| 1. \* What was the geographic location of the initiative?

 (place X against corresponding groups) |
| Metropolitan | [x]  |
| Regional | [x]  |
| Rural | [x]  |
| Remote | [ ]  |
| Very remote | [ ]  |
| Unsure or not clear | [ ]  |
| 1. \* Please indicate the total cost of the initiative.

Please describe, if possible, the costs associated with the implementation of this initiative. (if applicable)Was a cost benefit analysis done for this initiative? |
| \* Personnel costs |       |
| \* Materials |       |
| \* Administrative |       |
| \* Capital costs |       |
| Other (please describe what this includes)Please see item 9 |       |
| Total | $6.5m |
| 1. \* Where did the funding for this come from?

 (you may check more than 1 option) |
| School/cluster funding | [x]  |
| State or Territory Government funding | [x]  |
| Australian Government funding | [x]  |
| Privately raised funding | [ ]  |
| Other (please indicate the source)(Max 3,500 characters) | [x]  |
| The pilot implemented a co-contribution model for funding the pilot over 2009-10, with cash contributions from DEEWR, and co–contributions from schools, Central office and the two participating regions, representing existing funding arrangements.The funds were distributed to regions based on certain criteria and focussed on supporting teacher professional learning and additional coaches, leadership and whole school approaches, student centred approaches and interventions. |
| 1. \* To what extent were in-kind contributions needed for the initiative to be implemented?

In-kind contributions refer either to staff and community volunteers or donated material resources or both. The response to this question provides an indication of the extent to which volunteers or donations may have been required for the initiative to have been implemented effectively |
|  If either moderate or major, please describe.(Max 1000 characters) |
| Literacy and numeracy is a focus of the work of all schools in Victoria. The schools involved in the pilot used recurrent funding through the Student Resrource Package to fund literacy and numeracy.Schools with indigenous students not achieving at expected achievement standards in one or more dimensions of English and/o Mathematics domains of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards would have been supported at the school level through student intervention programs funded through the Wannik Tutorial program.  |

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| Objectives and design of the initiative  |
| 1. \* What factors prompted the adoption of the initiative?
 |
| Local assessments of student performance | [x]  |
| Student results from NAPLAN | [x]  |
| Meeting the needs of a changing student demographic | [x]  |
| Raising expectations of student performance | [x]  |
| A professional learning experience introducing new ideas or research | [x]  |
| Distributed leadership | [x]  |
| Other (please describe) Student populations represented the target groups | [x]  |
| 1. \* What were the main objectives of the initiative?

Specifically, what student capabilities were you trying to improve? [200-400 words](Max 3,500 characters) |
| The key objectives of the initiative were to achieve sustainable improvement in:• literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students in the pilot schools• literacy and numeracy teaching practice in the pilot schools• leadership capacity, at the school and cluster level, to support changed teacher practice and improved literacy and numeracy outcomes, and• capacity for schools and networks to deliver this comprehensive, multifaceted approach to improving literacy and numeracy beyond the completion of the pilot. |
| 1. \* In designing the initiative, how did you assess improvements in student performance?

Provide information on the links between the objectives of the initiative and defined performance targets.You may tick more than 1 option. |
| Local assessments of student performance | [x]  |
| Student results from NAPLAN | [x]  |
| Other (please describe)(Max 3,500 characters) | [x]  |
| Measurements of the impact of the pilot on student achievement were collected using online assessment tools. Assessment was conducted at six-month intervals in March 2009, September 2009, March 2010 and September 2010.The online assessment tools used were:• Prep – 2 English Online Interview• Prep – 2: Mathematics Online Interview• Yr 3 – 10: VCAA On Demand Adaptive Tests for Reading and Number.Two other measures of student achievement were used:• NAPLAN achievement scores for each student in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy for students in Years 3, 5 and 7 in 2008 and in Years 5, 7 and 9 in 2010• Teacher Judgment scores for English and Mathematics. Means scores for each year level for each school were calculated for each reporting period from Semesters 1 and 2 in 2008 and 2009 and Semester 1, 2010.In addition, there were nine in-depth case studies conducted in the second year of the pilot with selected schools, chosen for their significant growth in Victorian Essesntial Learnings (VELS) literacy and numeracy achievement. Findings from the case studies were confirmed by accounts collected through interviews, collaborative meetings and data collection with principals, network-based coaches and school leaders in the DEECD Pilot initiative.Information about the effectiveness of student intervention programs was also gathered by means of a questionnaire. This was distributed to targeted pilot schools and contained questions designed to gather data about the purpose, content and structure of each student intervention program, as well as how students were targeted for the program. |
| 1. \* Describe the key ideas and research that supported your selection of this particular initiative.

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| The research and reports referred to below informed the development and implementation of the pilot.'School Improvement: A Theory of Action' documents Victoria’s systemic approach to school improvement. The effectiveness of this approach is confirmed by OECD and international experts.The Department adopted the 'Effective Schools Model' (adapted from Sammons, Hillman & Mortimore, 1995) defining eight characteristics with evidence based correlation to improved student outcomes. This framework shows that improving student learning requires a multi-faceted approach. Critical components of this multi-faceted approach are professional leadership, purposeful teaching and a focus on teaching and learning. The multifaceted approach had a strong network focus, encouraging whole-school commitment from all schools in a cluster. This provided the context for pilot schools to continually improve literacy and numeracy outcomes.Evidence shows that networked learning communities produce greater outcomes than schools operating alone. Such networks of schools create communities of innovation, enquiry and transfer which are meaningful and relevant to the context and community within which the problems must be solved and practice improved (McGregor et al, 2004). This bringing together of practical and theoretical knowledge has been shown to promote advanced teaching practice (Desforges, 2005).The professional learning was informed by the Victorian 'Principles of Highly Effective Professional Learning' (2005). Through research, seven principles were identified that outline key characteristics of highly effective professional learning and provide a common language for describing good practice. 'Professional Learning in Effective Schools' (DE&T, 2005) aligns these seven principles to the 'Effective Schools Model' and describes the culture and conditions necessary to implement an effective Professional Development program.Victoria’s 'Early Numeracy Research Project' (1999-2001) and 'Middle Years Numeracy Research Project' (1999-2000) found that a whole-school approach to numeracy improvement, supported by effective leadership, were key to achieving success. They provided evidence-based recommendations about school organisation and supporting structures that lead to improved student learning outcomes in mathematics.Victoria’s 'Early Years Literacy Research Project' (1996-98) and 'Successful Literacy Interventions Literacy Research Project' (2001) indicated that substantial improvements in student early literacy outcomes (effect size 0.65) and literacy outcomes for students in Year 7 (demonstrated on pre and post qualitative and quantitative data measures) can be achieved when schools adopt a whole-school approach such as the 'Effective Schools Model' (1995). Factors contributing to improved student outcomes in literacy included professional learning for teachers, supportive leadership and establishing effective links between home and school. The 'Middle Years Literacy Research Project' (2001) and 'Restart' (2004) supports these findings.The Department’s Literacy Improvement Team Initiative (2007-11) and Teaching and Learning Coaches Initiative (2008-11) provided coaches to build teachers’ capacity to improve the mathematics or literacy of students (with a focus on Koorie students) in Years P-10. Evidence from the Coaching Initiatives showed their positive impact on teacher & school leadership capacity, and demonstrated improved student outcomes. |

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| Implementation  |
| 1. \* How were participants selected for the initiative?
 |
| Self selection | [ ]  |
| Analysis of needs | [x]  |
| Other (please specify) (Max 3,500 characters) | [ ]  |
|       |
| 1. \* Provide an overview or narrative of the project, sufficient for a teacher to have a general understanding of the initiative. Include the design and logic, the major stages and what participants did when in each part of the project.

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| The pilot utilised a networked, school cluster model to build a shared commitment and capacity across schools to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students. Planning, sharing and action occurred at both the cluster and school level. Both the cluster and school accountability and improvement frameworks were utilised.This approach was modelled within schools in four clusters, two in a rural region (Hume) and two in a metropolitan region (Western). The student populations in the selected clusters met the target group for this pilot i.e. low SES, Koorie, EAL and New Arrivals. All schools in each cluster participated in the pilot however the range of support available to individual schools was differentiated according to need.The pilot built on strategies currently being implemented in the two Regions and drew on the broad range of resources and support provided through the system.Victorian experience suggested that improving literacy and numeracy outcomes required a multifaceted approach. The aim of this pilot was to trial a cluster-wide implementation of this approach to literacy and numeracy improvement.The multifaceted approach encouraged whole-school commitment from all cluster schools. It employed strategies including school-based and regional coaches of literacy and numeracy, regional literacy and numeracy coordinators, provision of extensive professional learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers, school based staff to support student intervention in literacy and numeracy, use of Professional Learning Teams and student data analysis which informed planning for differentiated teaching and learning.Particular approaches were required of various participants throughout the pilot, for example:Leadership • Developing and using cluster plans (Strategic and Annual Implementation Plans) to develop a model of shared responsibility for achieving improved literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students across the cluster• Collecting agreed data at agreed times to monitor student progress• Using student data to inform decisions about the allocation of resources at the school level (including school based literacy and/or numeracy coordinators).Teachers• Engaging in professional learning opportunities, at the cluster and school level, which built the capacity of teachers to accurately assess student progress and to deliver quality classroom instruction in literacy and numeracy to support all students to make progress• Implementing ongoing monitoring (tracking) of individual student achievement in literacy and numeracy• Identifying, trialling and evaluating interventions (1:1 and/or small group) for these students.Regions• Providing coaching for principals• Providing literacy and numeracy coaches• Developing a strong evaluation and research framework for the proposal that will inform the work of participating schools and build system knowledge of what works. |
| 1. \* How were data on the outcomes of the project collected?
 |
| Questionnaires | [x]  |
| Interviews | [x]  |
| Tests or other formal assessments | [x]  |
| Other (please specify) (Max 3,500 characters) | [ ]  |
|       |
| 1. \* Describe the extent to which participants and/or key stakeholders were involved in the design of data collection.

For example, you may have conducted consultations, focus groups, or interviews with parents and caregivers, or consulted teachers, in designing instruments to collect data.(Max 3,500 characters) |
| In the first year of the pilot, a process evaluation involved a mixed methods design using both quantitiaitve and qualitative appraches. The quantitative data were gathered as part of the usual school practices. The qualitative component included collaborative practitioner perception analyses. Round table discussions were held to gain personal accounts of practice by school leaders, teachers, coaches and a range of regional support staff involved in the pilot.In the second year of the pilot, an outcome evaluation involved conducting in-depth case studies of nine schools that recorded high levels of growth in literacy and/or numeracy. In addition, questionnaires were used to gather information about student intervention programs occurring in targeted pilot schools and to gather data from all pilot school principals. Interviews of regional leaders and group interviews of coaches and principals were also conducted. These data provided information about how school leaders and teachers developed and implemented strategies to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes. The observations and perspectives of students, teachers and leaders about the impact of these initiatives and the enabling and inhibiting factors were also collected and analysed.Students’, teachers’ and parents’ attitudes were measured using DEECD questionnaires. The following instruments were used to gather these data:• Student Attitudes to School Survey. The survey reports on six factors; stimulating learning, school connectedness, motivation, learning confidence, connectedness to peers and classroom behaviour• Staff Opinion Survey. The survey includes a number of scales for three main domains measuring attitude, organisational climate and motivation• Parent Opinion Survey. The survey is distributed to a randomly selected sample of parents in each school.Average scores for each perception scale in 2008 and 2009 were compared. Average scores for the pilot and clusters were also compared with the Victorian average. |
| 1. \* What types of comparisons were made to assess the contribution of the initiative in lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes for school students?
 |
| Before and after comparisons | [x]  |
| Comparisons with participants and non-participants | [ ]  |
| Both | [x]  |
| Comparisons between different categories of participants or stakeholders | [x]  |
| Other (please describe) (Max 3,500 characters) | [x]  |
| The outcomes of students in particular year levels in the pilot schools were compared with expected achievement levels for the English Online Interview, the Mathematics Online Interview, VCAA On Demand: Number and On Demand: Reading and for teacher judgements against the English and Mathematics domains of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards Teacher Judgement.The outcomes of particular cohorts of students (eg EAL and refugee students) were compared with their non-cohort peers within the pilot schools. Where possible, the outcomes of particular cohorts of disadvantaged students (eg Low-SES,Koorie, EAL etc) from the pilot schools were compared with all Victorian students at the same year level/s.The outcomes of particular cohorts of disadvantaged students, (eg Koorie, EAL etc) within the pilot schools were compared with the outcomes for these cohorts of students from across Victoria, at the same year level/s.For example: The outcomes of secondary EAL and refugee cohort students exceeded that of all other non-EAL and refugee cohort students in the pilot and all other Victorian (non-pilot) secondary students. |
| 1. \* How many participants were in each of the comparison groups?

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| The numbers of students depended on the particular assessment and the particular year level/s. It also depended on the particular cohort of students and who this cohort was being compared with - e.g. other students in the pilot; same cohort, but from across the state - or pilot students with all Victorian students - at the relevant year level/s, for example: NAPLAN.The overall improvement in literacy and numeracy achievement by pilot students is most evident in NAPLAN data. Table 1 (below) shows the overall comparative mean growth in the NAPLAN assessments 2008 to 2010, for the pilot schools and all Victorian students.Year Level NAPLAN (2008 to 2010) Domain Pilot Schools Victorian Schools Student Number Average growth Average growthYr 3 to Yr 5 Reading 1809 88.29 82.3 Writing 1807 75.6 70.2 Spelling 1815 84.33 77.9 Grammar & Punctuation 1815 87.59 83.5 Numeracy 1802 91.49 85.5 |

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| Outcomes  |
| 1. \* To what extent did the initiative demonstrate that it contributed to improved student literacy or numeracy outcomes?
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| 1. \* Describe the evidence used to support the rating given in the preceding question.

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| Overall:The pilot led to significantly improved student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy in low SES communities. These improvements were most evident in the primary year levels. Improved outcomes in reading and number for students in Years 3-6 were sustained over the two years of the pilot and were consistent across NAPLAN, VCAA On Demand Assessment and VELS Teacher Judgements. Secondary student achievement improved in particular periods and/or for particular cohorts. In particular:• Improved numeracy outcomes for students in Prep-Year 2 were most evident in the first year of Mathematics Online Interview data collected by teachers.• Growth in reading achievement for students in Prep-Year 2 was significantly greater than expected in reference to validated assessment items in the English Online Interview.• Students made the most progress in Terms 2 and 3 of each year. Student Cohorts:The pilot had a positive impact on the learning outcomes for low SES students, Koorie students, refugee students, students who were new arrivals to Australia and EAL students. This was most evident in the comparison of NAPLAN results, with the achievement of disadvantaged cohorts of students in the pilot improving relative to that of all Victorian students.• NAPLAN data showed that growth in achievement for the two lowest socio-economic cohorts of students in Year 3 in 2008 (and Year 5 in 2010) was higher than the other students in these year levels in the pilot for all domains except Spelling, and higher than all Victorian students in these year levels for all domains.• NAPLAN results showed that the pilot had a significant impact on number achievement for Koorie students in the primary years since growth for Koorie primary students in the pilot was significantly greater than all Koorie primary students in Victoria.• Achievement growth in each of the literacy domains for Koorie students in the pilot schools was similar to that of all Koorie students. • VCAA On Demand results showed growth in reading achievement for primary Koorie students was significantly greater than expected for the first six months of the pilot and growth in number achievement for primary Koorie students was significantly greater than expected for the last six months of the pilot.• VCAA On Demand results showed that growth in reading achievement for secondary Koorie students in the Shepparton Network (cluster of schools) was significantly greater than expected for the first six months of the pilot.• Reading and numeracy growth for refugee and EAL students in the primary years was significantly greater than the expected rate of growth for both cohorts of students during Terms 2 and 3 in 2009 and 2010.• According to VCAA On Demand data the gap in number achievement closed significantly between primary refugee and ESL students and primary non-refugee and non-EAL students during the period of the pilot. |
| 1. \* What were the main factors that contributed to the success of the initiative?

Provide a detailed description and explanation with reference to the key ideas/research and/or prior experience which underpinned the initiative. [400-600 words](Max 3,500 characters) |
| In the pilot there is evidence of changed teacher and leader practices leading to improved student learning in literacy and numeracy in these low SES school communities. This was significantly evident for primary-level students and the EAL student cohort in both literacy and numeracy, and evident also for Koorie and low SES student cohorts in numeracy. There was significant average growth in NAPLAN results between pilot and non-pilot students.The networked cluster approach to school improvement provided structure and support for building leadership and teacher capacity. Professional Learning Teams proved to be significant in building leadership and teacher capacity, and informing new practices. At all levels of cluster collaboration, teachers and leaders shared resources, assessment data and practices. A shared language for discussing student learning data, expectations of student learning, collaborating for professional learning and the development of student-centred teaching practices was evident.The main factors that contributed to these successes were:• Teachers’ effective and purposeful use of student data in schools strengthened the relationship between collecting and analysing data and using what had been learned to support planning for student-centred teaching and learning. Based on data analyses teachers engaged in informed planning; grouping students; determining levels of need; and designing differentiated learning tasks and activities.• Teacher capacity built through collaborative professional learning. Focused and collaborative network and individual school Professional Learning Teams were central in providing forums for professional discussion, reading and reflection and establishing consistent approaches to teaching and learning in classrooms. Teachers were part of an increased culture of collaboration and collegiality.• Professional Learning Teams of teachers at school and cluster levels were provided with time and space for meetings and professional learning was promoted and enabled. These Teams were central in establishing consistent approaches to teaching in classrooms.• Strengthened leadership approaches; modelling and sharing best practice. Leaders facilitated reflection, introduced new ideas and practices, and provided challenges and support to teachers. Staff Survey findings reported improved organisational health as reported by teachers during 2008-9 in all clusters for ‘Empathy’ (Supportive Leadership), ‘Participative Decision Making’, and ‘Engagement’.• Increased emphasis on student-centred approaches in teaching and learning. Literacy intervention programs resulted in improved student achievement, at the expected level of growth, with the greatest impact on EAL and refugee student cohorts. Numeracy intervention programs resulted in a significant improvement in student achievement andgreater than the expected level of growth, with the greatest impact on Koorie students and low SES student cohorts. The most effective teaching approaches tended to be those conducted daily with small groups of students in classrooms.• The multi-faceted approach incorporating a range of strategies based on analysis of local need provided opportunities for schools to implement new strategies as well as to add value to what was already working. |
| 1. \* Did the initiative produce any positive or negative outcomes that were unplanned or unanticipated? Were there factors which may have constrained or diluted the impact of the initiative?
 |
| Yes (please provide detail below) (Max 3,500 characters) | [x]  |
| No | [ ]  |
| An outcome that was not specifically planned for, but that quickly emerged in the pilot was the emergence of collaborative networks of Professional Learning Teams, often between neighbouring schools, providing multiple opportunities for building leader capacity. School leaders belonging to networks of Professional Learning Teams are now well positioned beyond the scope of the pilot to address issues such as literacy and numeracy curriculum planning, annual growth patterns in student achievement, and understanding of culture, knowledge and learning in low socio-economic communities.Qualitative evidence shows that there was a noticeable increase in teachers’ expectations of their students. Teachers are encouraging students to take control of their learning, to see the relevance of their learning, and make choices; in response to higher expectations, students hold the belief that they can succeed. |
| 1. \* Provide evidence to support the sustainability of the initiative, or information that indicates it could be sustainable. If longitudinal data are unavailable, what other data can support the likelihood of sustainability of the underlying concept or design?

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| Principals reported that sustaining student-centred approaches for teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy depends on continuing to develop teacher leadership expertise to lead groups of colleagues, make differentiated practice common to all classrooms, enhance teacher capacity to use student data for planning, and, especially in secondary schools, attracting highly qualified teachers with effective instructional skills.The pilot built on strategies that were already being implemented in the two Regions and drew on the broad range of resources and support provided through the system.The networked cluster approach to improvement in literacy and numeracy provided structure and support for building leadership capacity, and aiding the implementation of central and regional curriculum programs and initiatives. In the participating clusters, sustainability of the project beyond the pilot phase was implemented through a range of strategies and formalised through cluster Strategic Plans and the School Accountability and Improvement Framework. General strategies to ensure sustainability include:• criteria developed for quality implementation of comprehensive, multi-faceted literacy and numeracy intervention programs• network/cluster leaders’ capacity developed to take ongoing responsibility for the sustainability and viability of the project, in their cluster of schools, beyond the pilot phase• capacity of principals built to sustain the project beyond the pilot through professional learning and coaching and their full participation in the development and implementation of the project at the school and network/cluster level• literacy and numeracy knowledge developed in school-based Literacy and Numeracy Leaders and teachers across the clusters to sustain improved student learning outcomes• building capacity at the leadership and teacher levels through ongoing professional learning at the regional, cluster and school levels• Coaching now seen as an internally funded, school-based, resource in many schools• The use of data to inform the next stages of teaching and learning was refined over the two years of the pilot and continues.• The building of leadership capacity across the pilot was also made possible through distributed leadership practice within the individual schools, the appointment of highly credentialed instructional leaders in schools and clusters, professional learning for leaders in the cluster or region and through leadership capacity building courses offered by the DEECD Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership. |

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| Replication  |
| 1. \* What challenges might a school prepare for if it undertakes this initiative?

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| This pilot was undertaken by a total of 76 schools including seven secondary schools and 36 primary schools in the two rural regaional networks/clusters and five secondary schools, two P-12 colleges and 26 primary schools in the two metropolitan regional networks/clusters. By its nature there were challenges of scale that an individual school would not face. The evaluation from this pilot highlighted that improved literacy and numeracy outcomes are best achieved by schools employing interventions adapted to their context. Outlined below are considerations that a school might prepare for if it undertakes this initiative:Ensure that the school community understands and is committed to the five areas of reform that are essential if students’ literacy and numeracy outcomes are to improve. These are:- Leadership and whole school approaches- Investments in lifting teacher capacity- Effective use of student data- Student centred approaches and interventions- Use of broader community and parental engagement strategies.Ensure that the school community understands and is committed to the key objectives, these are to achieve sustainable improvement in:- literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students literacy and numeracy teaching practice - leadership capacity, at the school and network level, to support changed teacher practice and improved literacy and numeracy outcomes, and- build capacity for schools to deliver a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to improving literacy and numeracy beyond the pilotPrepare for a whole-school, multi-faceted approach to improving student achievement in literacy and numeracy then. This means being prepared and able to both build existing strategies that are working and introduce a range of new strategies.Have strong commitment from the school and cluster leadership.Ensure a strong alignment of understanding of the pilot’s purpose (teachers, school leadership, external support professional and parents)Arrange for dedicated time and space for Professional Learning Teams using student data as the basis for focussed teacher dialogue.Gain prior agreement on key elements of approaches to improving literacy and numeracy, such as classroom observations for all teachers; the development and effective use of Individual Learning Plans for students.Ensure a strong commitment to the use of student data to inform planning for student-centred teaching of literacy and numeracy.Ensure strategies are in place for the systematic collection of data and the analysis and interrogation of this data, by teachers and school leaders to inform planning and teaching.Have literacy and numeracy leaders or coaches in place to provide expert support to teachers. |
| 1. \* What information indicates that the initiative could be replicated in a variety of different settings? What conditions would be required for the initiative to be successfully replicated across other schools, systems, locations or student groups?

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| The adopted networked cluster approach proved to be consistent with research; systemically improving outcomes across the pilot. This strategic, co-ordinated approach supported the school improvement agenda, providing structure and support for building leadership and teacher capacity. Principals commented that being part of a network cluster encouraged schools to share their expertise and resources so that improvement was more wide-spread. They reported that this network approach to building teacher capacity had been an advantage with quality professional learning activities together with coaches and consultants providing important support.The pilot used a multi-faceted approach incorporating a range of strategies based on analysis of local need which provided opportunities for schools to implement new strategies as well as to add value to what was already working. This approach could be adopted by an individual school or a group of schools.Regions, clusters of schools and individual schools would interpret arrangements to best meet local conditions including provision and constraints. Appropriate structures to enhance student learning would be considered involving teaching support and interventions, a range of leadership practices and a framework of policy arrangements as applied at the local level.The approach to instructional leadership was important in changing the role of principals with more proactive responsibilities. In this regard, a whole-school approach is important to this pilot as it assisted distributed leadership across staff resulting in a more common approach to meeting the differentiated need of individual students.The establishment of collaborative Professional Learning Teams with a focus on teaching and learning to enhance teacher capacity, is one of the strategies that led to success in this pilot. A whole-school commitment to teachers’ effective and purposeful use of student data to inform planning for student-centred teaching of literacy and numeracy would support the effective implementation of this pilot approach in other settings.The pilot supported an increased emphasis on student-centered approaches in teaching and learning. Literacy and numeracy intervention programs resulted in a significant improvement in student achievement. The most effective programs tended to be those conducted daily with small groups of students in classrooms. |
| 1. \* Where has the initiative been shown to be effective?
 |
| Schools |  |
| Government  | [x]  |
| Non-government | [ ]  |
| Systemic | [x]  |
| Groups |  |
| Early childhood | [x]  |
| Primary school | [x]  |
| High school | [x]  |
| Special school | [ ]  |
| Other (please specify)      | [ ]  |
| Settings |  |
| In school | [x]  |
| After school | [ ]  |
| Home | [ ]  |
| Community | [ ]  |
| Locations |  |
| Metropolitan | [x]  |
| Regional | [x]  |
| Rural | [x]  |
| Remote | [ ]  |
| Very remote | [ ]  |

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| Additional information  |
| 1. \* Provide three points that describe the essence of your project for a teacher audience.

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| 1. The pilot adopted a strategic, multi-faceted approach to improving student achievement in literacy and numeracy. This meant that a range of approaches, based on local analysis of need, were applied simultaneously by schools, networked clusters of schools and regions to boost or create a range of practices in schools. These included:- Regional Curriculum and Leadership Programs- Related professional learning delivered at cluster and school level- New specialist Literacy and Numeracy leadership positions created within regions and schools- Coaching of colleagues by Numeracy and Literacy leaders and coaches employed at cluster and school levels- Adopting a whole school approach and providing literacy and numeracy training for all teachers and school leaders.- distributing leadership roles across the school so that teachers with a range of experience have the opportunity to take on leadership roles- Literacy and Numeracy student intervention programs implemented such as the Wannik Tutorial Progam, Reading Recovery, Hume Literacy and Numeracy Intervention Strategy, ‘Making a Difference’ with others developed at the school level. 2. Key to the pilot's success was the strengthened relationship between student data collection and teachers’ analysis and use of data to support planning for student-centred teaching of literacy and numeracy. Teachers are now more likely to share what they learn from data and use it to shape improvements. By looking deeply at data, to truly understand what it reveals, schools and teachers are now better equipped to improve practice.By collecting a range of information (e.g. anecdotal records, assessment, running records) teachers are now: - Learning about different aspects of student growth- Closely monitoring and tracking student achievements over their school life- Gaining a clearer/more complex picture of student achievement- Triangulating results from different assessment instruments- Creating a whole class learning profile.Based on this data analysis teachers are now:- Engaging in informed planning- Determining levels of student need- Identifying student learning trajectories - Grouping students for targetted instruction- Designing differentiated learning tasks and activities to meet learning needs.3. Professional Learning Teams of teachers at school and cluster levels were provided with time within the timetable, space for meetings, and professional learning was promoted and enabled. Professional Learning Teams increased collaboration, and provided collegiality and the necessary forum for professional discussion, reading and reflection. They were central to establishing consistent approaches to teaching and learning in classrooms.Through these Professional Learning Teams teachers developed a common language for inquiring into teaching and learning, and sharing student data to develop curriculum and inform planning for teaching. Teachers placed high value on shared spaces and places for professional conversations. |
| 1. If available, provide a good news story or testimonial.

(Max 3,500 characters) |
| Pilot case studies focussed on schools that demonstrated signigiciant growth in their students' literacy and/or numeracy achievment in 2009. Four of these schools, were selected to particpate in the production of vignettes (digital stories) to reflect on and share their journey in achieving improved student learning outcomes, over the period of the pilot. The Digital Stories make clear the factors contributing to each school's individual successes. Digital Story schools are:Deer Park North Primary SchoolHoppers Crossing Secondary CollegeDelatite Road Campus Primary School (as part of Seymour P-12 College)St Georges Road Primary School, SheppartonDigital Story foci varied according to the area where significant growth was achieved; Deer Park North Primary School showcased their reading interventions, Hoppers Crossing Secondary College showcased their school-wide literacy approach, mathematics in years 3-6 is under the spotlight at Delatite Road campus (Seymour P-12 College) and St Georges Road Primary School feature their numeracy interventions. Each story provides interviews with key leaders and teachers, and footage of relevant classdroom and professional learning activities.Find these Digital Stories by following the link:http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/forumdigi.aspxThe Literacy and Numeracy in Low SES School Communities can be found at http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/litnumpilot.aspx  |

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| Attach information or data  |
| Please list and briefly describe any attachments to this form. (Excel spreadsheets, graphics, pictures, etc)**Please note that these will not be included for assessment but may assist with the published article should the strategy be recommended and endorsed.** |
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