

Innovative Language Provision in Clusters (ILPIC) Initiative Evaluation

Commissioned by the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team, Department of Education and Early Childhood (DEECD)

Final Report

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December 2012

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**Document Tracking**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Description** | **Release Date** |
| V1 | Final Report | 7/12/2012 |

# Background to the evaluation

## The ILPIC Initiative

A strong, long-term commitment to improve the quality and quantity of languages programs in Victorian schools is central to the Government’s Plan for a Multicultural Victoria.

The Innovative Languages Provision in Clusters (ILPIC) project was initiated in this context to support clusters of schools to pilot a range of innovative projects to strengthen collaboration in languages teaching and learning across schools and improve the quality, contact time and continuity of their language programs.

The ILPIC initiative provided clusters with the opportunity to trial a range of innovative strategies, including content and language integrated learning (CLIL), blended learning, authentic language practice and the use of online language resources as illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Strategies being trialled through the ILPIC initiative

Clusters were also encouraged to explore partnerships with non-government schools, Community Language Schools, the Victorian School of Languages (VSL), sister schools, vocational education and training (VET) providers, universities, business and local community organisations.

Fourteen clusters from across the state were selected to participate in the initiative, as outlined in Table 1. The full list of participating schools in each cluster is provided in Appendix 1 to this evaluation report.

Table 1: Participating clusters

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **REGION** | **CLUSTERS** |
| Barwon South West | Grovedale Cluster, Hamilton Cluster, Portland Cluster |
| Eastern Metropolitan | Monash-Waverley Cluster |
| Gippsland | Bairnsdale Cluster, Sale Cluster |
| Grampians | University Cluster, Southern Mallee Cluster, Central Grampians Cluster |
| Hume | Benalla Cluster |
| Loddon Mallee | Bendigo Cluster |
| Northern Metropolitan | Inner North Cluster |
| Southern Metropolitan | Somerville-Dromana Cluster |
| Western Metropolitan | Moonee Valley-North Melbourne Cluster |

It should be noted that two clusters did not function as planned or as close to the original intention as others.

The Bairnsdale Cluster struggled for much of the two years of the initiative, primarily because the cluster lacked a clear, coherent and agreed vision at the leadership level from the start for how it might operate and what it sought to achieve. Thus, it had problems delivering on some key program purposes, and even the full range of survey expectations for this evaluation. While this is disappointing, it did start to be addressed in the second half of 2012 as some key leaders became more involved, and should not detract from the fact that some important project work did occur, for example, at Lucknow Primary School where languages provision is being extended next year. In addition, it does help to illustrate the sheer importance of having the school leaders on board with a common objective from the start for any future languages initiatives to take hold. This, we believe, should be a threshold requirement for being accepted into any initiative of this sort, especially since it is confirmed by the broader evaluation findings outlined below.

The Central Grampians Cluster needed to adjust its approach during 2012 as a result of experience on the ground and the difficulty it had in engaging all of its (original) 19 schools. More specifically, it sought to reorganise its program, and cluster support, around four smaller ‘mini clusters’, while four of the schools withdrew from what arguably was an overly large cluster to start. This, it is believed, will enable the Lead Contact in the cluster to manage the implementation of languages programs in more achievable ways in the schools involved, and ensure closer collaboration and sharing of resources, including teaching support, amongst the remaining schools. Not surprisingly, this also impacts on the surveys administered in this cluster over time and limits any comparability since, unlike other clusters, there were no baseline surveys completed for these schools in 2012. As with the experience of the Bairnsdale Cluster noted above, the difficulties experienced do help to inform future such initiatives, since they illustrate the importance of ensuring that all clusters are of manageable size; and clearly 19 schools in this case was simply too much.

A summary of the key initiative strategies initially agreed between each cluster and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team[[1]](#footnote-1) is provided in Appendix 2.

The languages covered by clusters through the initiative were:

* Chinese (Mandarin) — University, Grampians and Inner Northern Clusters
* French — Grampians and Inner North Clusters
* German — Bairnsdale, Bendigo, Southern Mallee and Grampians Clusters
* Indonesian — Portland, Benalla, Bendigo and Somerville-Dromana Clusters
* Italian —Grovedale, Hamilton, Inner North and Moonee Valley-North Melbourne Clusters
* Japanese — Bairnsdale, Sale, University, Benalla, Monash-Waverley Clusters, Somerville-Dromana and Moonee Valley-North Melbourne Clusters

## Evaluation methodology

*Laulon Management, Education and Technology Solutions* was commissioned by the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team to undertake the evaluation of the ILPIC initiative between August 2011 and December 2012.

The evaluation of the ILPIC initiative involved three phases as illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Phases of the ILPIC evaluation

The primary methods adopted to gather data throughout the evaluation were surveys with key stakeholders at the beginning, mid-point and towards the end of project implementation, supplemented by interviews in each year. The evaluation was also informed by a workshop the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team conducted for representatives from all clusters in each of the project years, including a full day workshop in 2011 where clusters presented on their strategies and the successes and challenges of program implementation at the time.

### Surveys

The consultants, in conjunction with the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team developed online surveys that were administered at each key stage. Separate but overlapping surveys were developed for principals, language teachers, parents and students, and Lead Contacts in each cluster supported the administration of the surveys to these stakeholder groups. Given the diversity of partner organisations involved in the initiative in different clusters, they were provided with a short questionnaire rather than completing a survey online.

The online stakeholder surveys and partner organisation questionnaire are provided as Appendix 3. Detailed summaries of survey responses by principals, language teachers, parents and students to the three rounds of surveys were provided as separate Excel files to the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team.

It should be noted that only two partner surveys were returned in 2012, both from the same cluster (compared with three from this same cluster in 2011) and hence do not really add to the evaluation outcomes since they are not representative of partners across the 14 clusters involved in the initiative. This may well reflect the fact that schools are building partnerships between themselves in the ILPIC clusters rather than bringing other partners substantially on board. It is worth noting, though, that the two surveys were very positive about the project in the cluster, the opportunities for extra language learning it provided to children in the kindergartens in each case, and the way in which they had been involved by the schools.

### Interviews

The evaluation involved interviews at two key phases (after set up and towards the end of project delivery) with at least the Lead Contact in each cluster. These interviews were undertaken by phone or online via web conference, eliminating the need for travel, and Lead Contacts were provided with an indication of the interview questions in advance.

Extensive interview notes were kept by the consultants which then were checked with the Lead Contacts for accuracy. The notes for the first round of interviews were appended to the interim evaluation report and the notes for the second round are provided as Appendix 4.

It should be noted that clusters were asked to set aside funding for a minimum of five CRT days to allow the Lead Contact to support the evaluation process summarised above.

# Summary of the interim evaluation

The December 2011 interim evaluation report provided an outline of the state of clusters at a very early stage of implementing their projects, and only relatively soon after their participation in the ILPIC project had been agreed.

As will become clear, there has been significant progress in a number of clusters since that time. Identifying this is made easier by considering the state of play when the interim evaluation report was prepared.

The interim evaluation provided a detailed discussion of the first round interviews and survey administration conducted in 2011. An important feature of this was to confirm the purposes and objectives of each cluster program as outlined in their initial submissions to become involved in the initiative from the start. These are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of cluster program purposes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cluster** | **Program purpose** |
| Grovedale | To offer a continuous, ongoing, innovative and effective languages program in Italian in a cluster of schools situated in a disadvantaged/low socio-economic area, where languages and global education have not been highly valued. |
| Hamilton | To provide an effective Italian language program to students in the two cluster schools from primary through to VCE and/or VET Certificates 2 and 3 level; link this to vocational pathways through a VET-Hospitality/Languages Program at Baimbridge College; and promote a change in the local community in relation to Global Education and the study of languages, through information and education as well as the involvement of parents and mainstream teachers in the languages programs. |
| Portland | To establish a sustainable Indonesian program across all government primary schools in the Portland region with the support of a shared resource centre located at the secondary college, and using modern technology (e.g. videoconferencing), as well as face to face teaching, because of the large number of schools and distance involved. |
| Monash-Waverley | To increase student engagement in Japanese, particularly in the Middle Years; identify and share effective transmedia including web 2.0 technologies, interactive games and software to increase opportunities for language use and development; increase the number of students continuing with Japanese from primary school to secondary school; and work towards increasing the time allocation for languages through the implementation of CLIL methodologies. |
| Bairnsdale | To raise staff and community awareness of the value of languages; promote and deliver language programs in the cluster using classroom teleconferencing, joining an international project and connected interactive whiteboards; build the capacity and confidence of teachers in the cluster in this regard; create language immersion opportunities that foster a sister school relationship in Japan; and work towards a minimum languages delivery of 150 minutes a week. |
| Sale | Increasing the provision of languages through content based learning that involves trialing a range of ICT initiatives to allow access to language learning outside the classroom; delivery of Japanese through videoconferencing; establishing a sister school relationship; and increasing opportunities for authentic language use. |
| University | To enable Asian language courses (Chinese and Japanese) to be offered in primary schools where limited delivery currently exists using a combination of direct- contact teaching, a virtual classroom and Victoria’s first Confucius Classroom Room to deliver innovative language teaching and cultural programs. |
| Southern Mallee | To incorporate ‘world’s best practices’ in the delivery of a blended approach to languages provision from a regional/network hub and thereby both increase the number of students in the cluster studying languages and serve as a sustainable model of provision that can be replicated throughout rural and regional Victoria. |
| Central Grampians | To establish the newly completed Language Centres at Ararat College and Stawell Secondary College as bases for delivering high quality and sustainable French, German or Chinese language programs to secondary and primary schools within the Central and Wimmera East School Networks of the Grampians Region of the DEECD. |
| Benalla | To develop and implement a sustainable, long term languages program for the Benalla and District School Community using a range of strategies including sharing teacher expertise between the schools, the use of ICTs, and the use of an existing Language Centre on one site as a venue for students to come together physically and virtually for their languages learning. |
| Bendigo | To develop strategies to improve language provision based on best practice and increased access to digital learning technologies to support and strengthen students’ language learning, including the use of emerging technologies (IPads and Webex Videoconferencing facilities) and the Ultranet (Design and Collaborative Learning Spaces) to ensure more time for language instruction than just face-to-face teaching can provide. |
| Inner North | To progressively increase language learning time (particularly in P-6 through CLIL and other activities); increase the number of non-background language learners continuing language study until Year 12; immediately enhance the curricular and extracurricular offerings for language students in the inner north and establish professional networks and collaborations across the cluster; rapidly and positively affect the quality of teacher instructional practice and associated student learning in languages classrooms across the cluster; and establish rich programs that supplement and support the language program of the cluster schools. |
| Somerville-Dromana | To introduce and expand languages to primary school students in both Dromana and Somerville clusters in an engaging way through ICT programs such as video-conferencing, web cam conference (Elluminate) and Skype, thereby overcoming distance and travel issues that currently exist. |
| Moonee Valley-North Melbourne | To provide high quality language programs by building on the existing quality programs in schools in the cluster; provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate and share knowledge, skills and ideas to improve their classroom practice; opportunities for students in the cluster schools to work together to improve their language acquisition; and ultimately ‘a model for quality language provision in the government school sector’. |

The purposes were also spelt out in terms of specific approaches to be used to bring them about which are included as Appendix 2 since they substantially continue to apply.

Despite the fact it was only early days at the time as far as implementation of the ILPIC initiative in the 14 clusters was concerned, sufficient information emerged through the interim evaluation stage for a number of key messages to be identified by the consultants for consideration by the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team.

These were summarised at the time in the following terms.[[2]](#footnote-2)

* The primary focus of all clusters appears to be on extending the degree to which languages are offered in the schools, in particular in small primary schools where the lack of staff and/or staff continuity has made the provision fragile at best, and then the amount of time for which they are provided each week.
* In general clusters have adopted a suite of strategies to pursue, rather than placing their eggs in one basket that runs the risk of failing to deliver if, by chance, it is dropped.
* A key focus across the clusters is working together to ensure there is consistency of languages offered between primary and secondary schools and hence continuity for students as they move from primary to secondary school and the consequent certainty that their language study can be maintained.
* Most clusters are seeking to raise awareness of the importance of languages learning in their communities, which is especially important since the challenge most consistently nominated by principals and teachers in the comments included as part of the surveys used for this interim evaluation related to a perceived lack of awareness in some communities of the importance of learning a language at school.
* There are some emerging CLIL and bilingual/immersion approaches being developed and trialled by clusters which potentially could inform other schools and clusters seeking to extend the time for languages learning without reducing the time for other subjects on the timetable.
* Clusters where distance constitutes an impediment to delivering viable and ongoing language programs are using technology to provide languages to more (especially primary) schools through a blended approach, often supported by trained teachers in their cluster secondary schools.
* Some language-oriented VET Certificate programs are being introduced as pathways for students who otherwise may be inclined to drop out of language learning at a relatively early date.
* The ILPIC funding is being used for up-front investments (including in processes) that can be sustained at minimal cost as outlined in the discussion of program sustainability earlier in this report.

In the same way as some early messages from the clusters had become clear, so too had some preliminary advice the consultants were able to advance at the time. This included that:

* successful implementation of any cluster program depends on first having the schools’ principals on-side and involved or else it will fail to gain traction in schools;
* there is a need to do some awareness raising amongst stakeholders and within the community so there is understanding of, and support for the programs that are planned;
* the necessary planning must occur up-front in part to ensure that the necessary stakeholder support is in place; that schools and their teachers are able to implement the approach; and that the cluster can hit the ground running from the appointed date and implementation can succeed;
* clusters provide an important structural means of ensuring continuity of language programs, viability of language teaching resources and groups and hence sustainability over time; and
* there is value in combining resources, including sharing specialist language staff so suitable applicants for vacancies can be attracted and retained.

The consultants concluded in the interim evaluation that sufficient evidence existed, even at that preliminary stage, to suggest that the trials would yield valuable information, processes, strategies and program approaches that can be shared across the system to support the progressive implementation of the Government’s vision for languages provision as outlined in *The Victorian Government’s Vision for Languages Education* of which the ILPIC initiative is an important part.

The remainder of this report examines and analyses progress since the interim evaluation phase, based on the evidence gathered through subsequent interviews and administrations of the survey instruments.

# Evaluation findings

The second round of cluster interviews was conducted by phone in October/ November 2012. Each of the interviews was summarised for the information of the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team and these summaries are provided as Appendix 4.

The baseline surveys for 2012 were administered in March/April to cluster principals, language teachers, a sample of students in classes from Year 3 upwards (since the survey was deemed too complex for students in earlier years) and the parents of students who were surveyed. In addition, as already indicated, partner organisations were invited to respond to a short written questionnaire.

While it was not required as part of the evaluation methodology, the consultants did provide a 2012 interim evaluation report analysing the outcomes of the baseline surveys and, with substantial caveats related to differences in cohorts completing the surveys and also the different times at which they were administered, providing some observations about the outcomes compared with the first round of surveys the previous year. The 2012 interim evaluation report is provided as Appendix 5.

The surveys were administered again in October/November 2012 to gain a sense of the impact of program delivery over the course of the first full year of implementation; as opposed to the first round of surveys covered in the interim evaluation which gave more of a sense of reactions to the planning for implementation phase.

Thus, by the end of the evaluation, the consultants had gathered a snapshot set of surveys in 2011 prior to the implementation of cluster programs, a baseline set of surveys from March/April 2012 as implementation commenced, and a set of surveys of current attitudes in October/November 2012 to determine what, if any, shifts had occurred after initial implementation was experienced in cluster schools.

As was the case in the interim evaluation phase (and outlined in the second interim report in June 2012) a range of logistical issues occurred in baseline administration primarily related to getting the consent of survey participants as required by the protocols for research undertaken in DEECD schools. This did not occur the second time round as the consents gained continued to apply. The upshot was that the baseline survey administration was delayed beyond the original intention, with the result there was less time between the two administrations of the survey than planned, and hence less opportunity for the impact of project implementation to be felt. In addition, as already noted, the composition of the Central Grampians Cluster changed between the two survey rounds in 2012.

The number of respondents by category in each cluster to the two rounds of 2012 surveys is provided in Tables 3 (Principals and Teachers) and 4 (Parents and Students).

Table 3: Responses to the three rounds of surveys, Principals and Teachers

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cluster** | **Principals** | | | **Teachers** | | |
|  | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| **ILPIC 1** | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| **ILPIC 2** | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| **ILPIC3** | 1 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| **ILPIC4** | 8 | 9 | 8 | 16 | 15 | 15 |
| **ILPIC5** | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| **ILPIC6** | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| **ILPIC7** | 2 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| **ILPIC8** | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 3 |
| **ILPIC9** | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| **ILPIC10** | 0 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| **ILPIC11** | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| **ILPIC12** | 5 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| **ILPIC13** | 7 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 6 |
| **ILPIC14** | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 11 | 9 |
|  | **34** | **57** | **58** | **55** | **69** | **62** |

Table 4: Responses to the Round 2, 2012 ILPIC evaluation surveys

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cluster** | **Parents** | | | **Students** | | |
|  | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| **ILPIC1** | 23 | 33 | 35 | 26 | 28 | 21 |
| **ILPIC2** | 4 | 4 | 1 | 19 | 12 | 0 |
| **ILPIC3** | 5 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 21 | 8 |
| **ILPIC4** | 97 | 76 | 60 | 101 | 155 | 147 |
| **ILPIC5** | 7 | 5 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| **ILPIC6** | 27 | 31 | 13 | 17 | 10 | 14 |
| **ILPIC7** | 7 | 5 | 4 | 21 | 22 | 22 |
| **ILPIC8** | 0 | 30 | 11 | 0 | 18 | 6 |
| **ILPIC9** | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **ILPIC10** | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| **ILPIC11** | 0 | 19 | 13 | 0 | 4 | 8 |
| **ILPIC12** | 7 | 7 | 5 | 66 | 70 | 45 |
| **ILPIC13** | 5 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 18 | 14 |
| **ILPIC14** | 31 | 27 | 27 | 39 | 12 | 23 |
|  | **213** | **253** | **221** | **294** | **374** | **334** |

It also was possible to track respondents to the different survey rounds to identify matched cohorts for each group. More specifically, the stakeholders who responded to both Rounds 2 and 3 of the survey comprised 45 principals, 52 teachers, 53 primary and 55 secondary school parents, and 114 primary and 83 secondary students, thereby giving an insight to how a significant number of respondents’ views have changed over seven to eight months in 2012.

While a significant number of survey responses were received in aggregate and even for matched cohort groups, it is clear that:

* substantial variation exists between the clusters, with some cases where no response was received at all, including from teachers and principals in the cluster, with the result that no meaningful comments can be made about individual clusters as opposed to the initiative as a whole;
* the number of students and parents responding in a number of clusters has meant that year level results cannot be disaggregated in meaningful ways, with the result they are recorded as whole primary and secondary parent and student groups; and
* the number of respondents in the matched cohorts is smaller than the aggregate numbers which means that changes from one survey round to the next can be affected by relatively fewer respondents changing their mind.

It also needs to be acknowledged that survey outcomes could be affected by the time of year in which they were gathered whereby, for instance, secondary students may have been preparing for exams and/or considering their subject choices for the following year, teachers may have been in the process of considering their summative judgments of student performance and the writing of reports, and so on.

Despite all this, there are sufficient responses to draw some conclusions from the survey results, particularly when these are matched to the qualitative information the evaluation interviews provide, which can inform the deliberations of the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Education Project Team.

With the caveats cited in mind, the qualitative and quantitative data gained, along with relevant documentation from the clusters, have been analysed by the consultants and are reported below in terms of the five key categories of:

* program purpose;
* program design;
* program delivery;
* responses to the program;
* impact of the program; and
* program sustainability.

## Program purpose

Clusters were contacted by the Languages, EAL and Multicultural Strategy Division to confirm the key strategies that underpinned their programs, as outlined in the 2011 interim evaluation report. A pro forma was provided that invited each cluster to either confirm the strategies identified in 2011 or indicate any changes they had introduced. In addition, confirming the program purpose and focus constituted an element of the second round of interviews conducted for this evaluation report.

As already noted, the Bairnsdale Cluster experienced significant implementation difficulties which, as evidenced in the evaluation interview summary in Appendix 4, led the cluster’s purpose to shift ‘from a more organised cluster arrangement being developed and pursued, to a situation where opportunities are provided that cluster schools can buy into when it is seen as meeting their needs’. This reflects the fact acknowledged in the interview that the ‘degree of enthusiasm’ the Lead Contact had for expanding languages in the cluster may have exceeded that of others in cluster schools, including leaders, and therefore ‘had to be scaled back’.

Similarly, the Central Grampians Cluster needed to adjust its approach, in part to manage what proved to be an overly large and ambitious starting group of 19 schools. The shifts involved sought to pick up schools that had expected to be involved which initially were not, while seeking to operate in more manageable ways on the basis of four mini clusters and saw:

* Pomonal and Great Western schools coming on board in offering Chinese using a blended learning approach with the support of a secondary teacher who came out of an Ararat school and who, coincidentally, is also doing some work with Mt Clear Secondary College;
* German provided to the Stawell area schools where two schools are working together which each have a German teacher who is using a blended learning approach to improve their collective offering;
* some Japanese teaching provided at Lake Bolac Primary School from a Japanese teacher based at Trawalla Primary and who also is going to work with Mt Clear Secondary to arrange immersion visits for Lake Bolac students along with a shared Ultranet space; and
* the maintenance of a successful French program in Ararat schools and its extension to Avoca Primary School.

The experience of both these clusters has informed some recommendations at the conclusion of this evaluation report.

These two clusters aside, the interviews reveal that all clusters essentially stuck to the program purpose they originally outlined, with only minor variations such as a change in location of the resource centre in one cluster and a change in timing in another which are each still consistent with what was envisaged and planned.

Although a range of program purposes exist across the 14 clusters, they all reflect a desire to extend the reach of language teaching and learning in participating schools, whether it be by increasing the number of students undertaking one or more languages in the school, extending languages to schools which previously were unable to provide them, increasing the time devoted to languages in the curriculum, and/or extending the number of year levels where languages are offered to students in the school. This almost overarching purpose of the initiative in all clusters is readily evident in such comments in interview as[[3]](#footnote-3):

* *A key purpose has been to increase the number of students continuing with Japanese from primary to secondary school, and work towards increasing the time allocation for languages through the implementation of a CLIL approach*; and
* *The basic purpose … has remained to enable Chinese and Japanese language courses to be offered in primary schools where only limited if any delivery has existed, using a mix of direct contact teaching and a virtual classroom*.

For a number of clusters this meant ensuring there is greater commonality of language provision across the cluster schools, sometimes replacing the disparate provision that hitherto had prevailed. This is being done not only so students can pursue their primary school languages into secondary school, but also to support more common approaches to curriculum development and delivery in order to ensure more sustainable provision of programs over time. As one interviewee cogently explained, the cluster’s ‘shared ILPIC purpose has been as much to develop their commonality around language learning as to promote the teaching and learning of Italian within the schools’. In a few cases, especially in country regions, this sort of purpose was even more ambitious still with clusters seeking, as one put it, ‘to establish a potentially sustainable model of provision that can be replicated not only in the region, but throughout rural and regional Victoria’.

As noted in the interim evaluation in 2011, a purpose common to a number of clusters that the surveys arguably do not capture (albeit covered in other survey domains discussed later in this report), is the effort to overcome the tyranny of distance that impedes the provision of languages in a number of smaller, especially rural schools. This most clearly is evident in the rural cluster which has sought, from the outset, ‘to incorporate “world’s best practices” in the delivery of a blended approach to languages provision from a regional/network hub … to increase the number of students studying languages in the cluster’.

Technology has played a key role in this regard, but the use of ICTs is not limited to a response to the challenge that distance provides. It also is seen as part of an effort that a number of clusters have made to ensuring that students learn in more engaging and authentic ways. One cluster, for instance, consciously sought ‘to increase student engagement in Japanese, especially in the Middle Years, while identifying and sharing effective transmedia including Web 2.0 technologies, interactive games and software to increase the opportunities for language use and development’. Another has used ‘a range of ICT initiatives to allow access to language learning outside of the classroom … and generally increasing the opportunities of authentic language use’.

Perhaps not surprisingly, students particularly nominated the use of technology as a ‘highlight’ in their survey returns, commonly writing such comments as:

* *Being able to use such technology like the IPads makes Japanese more enjoyable in so many different ways.*
* *getting to make videos;* and
* *I really enjoy playing on the IPads because we get to play with something awesome as well as learning at the same time. I also love interactive games like snap and learning different words for things and objects.*

Central to all of this in a number of clusters has been work to increase the capacity of teachers and teaching teams to both extend and improve language provision in cluster schools; most clearly expressed by the cluster whose implementation decisions were actually framed ‘in terms of quality language learning and the development of a greater team approach around language learning in the … schools’.

The surveys reveal a very positive view of the program purpose across stakeholders, albeit with some small-scale differences between them, in part perhaps reflecting their degree of connection to the program and its implementation in cluster schools.

Particularly encouraging in this context is the very strong support for the importance of learning a language at school which principals, teachers, parents and students alike all rate in aggregate (Tables 5 and 7) at just under four on a five point scale in the case of students (who arguably take less of a long-term view than their parents and the professionals responsible for their schooling) and above four in the case of the rest, with language teacher scores in particular almost at five. The matched cohort results outlined in Tables 6 and 8 are even more encouraging, except for students who are neutral at best and whose results, especially at the secondary level, have declined between the rounds. This may in part reflect the survey timing, which meant that secondary students in particular were responding when they were likely doing or about to do exams, and also considering whether to keep languages in the mix of subjects they would take in the following year. That said, however, it may also signal a need for schools to continually advance the benefits that students can gain from learning a language, particularly at secondary school.

As can be seen from Table 5, principals and teachers each recognise the benefits of learning a language for later life and, to a lesser extent, feel they have designed programs that will help students to become fluent to that end. Similarly, Table 6 for matched cohorts of principals and teachers show these results have remained stable at a high level throughout the year. Principals and teachers, including those who answered both surveys are very clear in their view that the programs they have designed aim to improve the students’ understanding of other cultures, rating this right near the top of the scale across all three survey rounds, with outcomes rising for the matched groups, with the result that both stakeholders, but especially the principals, see the programs as contributing to global understanding in the community as a whole.

The strong support of principals for program purposes is important since the research is clear that major initiatives and improvements in a school depend on the extent to which they have leadership support and are driven by the leadership team. It is encouraging in this context that the number of principals responding to the survey has increased in round three in particular, including in clusters where leadership support initially was not as strong as the research suggests is required. A clear message to emerge from the interviews in particular is that gaining initial principal level support in schools across the cluster is a pre-requisite for success.

Both principals and teachers are positive about the extent to which their schools have clearly stated purposes for their language programs and, in the case of the matched group of principals, more so in the most recent round. Principals, including the matched group, are particularly sure that language classes help students to make valuable connections, and certainly more so than their language teachers, perhaps because in this case, they are the ones who lead the making of connections to others, especially where sister school relations are involved.

Somewhat surprisingly perhaps, teachers are more likely than principals to see the connection between the language program and students’ later employment prospects, albeit very positive on both counts, and with a very slight improvement for the matched group between rounds 2 and 3. Similarly, while both are positive, teachers are significantly more so about the extent to which language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school, with a difference of around 0.7 in each round for the matched groups. This may reflect a natural tendency for the teachers to have a stronger affinity to the value and impact of the programs they teach than their principals whose connection is less direct.

Table 5: Principal and teacher responses to program purpose (Average)

*Statements:*

1. The language program is designed to help students to become fluent in a language other than English
2. Learning a language will benefit students later in their lives
3. The language program aims to improve students’ employment prospects
4. Language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school
5. Language classes help students to make valuable connections (e.g., sister schools, e-pals, cultural events)
6. The language program aims to improve students’ understanding of other cultures
7. The school has a clearly stated purpose for its language program
8. Language teaching contributes to global understanding in the community
9. It is important that students learn a language at school

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | | ***Teachers*** | | |
| **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 4.06 | 3.85 | 3.74 | 3.57 | 3.65 | 3.74 |
| 2 | 4.53 | 4.44 | 4.50 | 4.65 | 4.66 | 4.80 |
| 3 | 3.47 | 3.42 | 3.40 | 3.73 | 3.59 | 3.76 |
| 4 | 4.15 | 4.07 | 3.98 | 3.76 | 3.82 | 4.10 |
| 5 | 4.59 | 4.31 | 4.23 | 3.86 | 3.89 | 3.94 |
| 6 | 4.74 | 4.71 | 4.72 | 4.58 | 4.40 | 4.58 |
| 7 | 3.82 | 3.89 | 3.98 | 3.61 | 3.73 | 3.73 |
| 8 | 4.74 | 4.55 | 4.69 | 4.43 | 4.29 | 4.47 |
| 9 | 4.68 | 4.29 | 4.45 | 4.67 | 4.58 | 4.84 |

Table 6: Matched cohort principal and teacher responses to program purpose (Average)[[4]](#footnote-4)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | ***Teachers*** | |
| **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 3.77 | 3.80 | 3.96 | 3.94 |
| 2 | 4.42 | 4.56 | 4.63 | 4.81 |
| 3 | 3.40 | 3.64 | 3.58 | 3.77 |
| 4 | 4.00 | 4.09 | 4.63 | 4.81 |
| 5 | 4.28 | 4.34 | 3.96 | 3.94 |
| 6 | 4.70 | 4.78 | 4.40 | 4.60 |
| 7 | 3.88 | 4.07 | 3.79 | 3.79 |
| 8 | 4.51 | 4.73 | 4.31 | 4.50 |
| 9 | 4.26 | 4.49 | 4.63 | 4.83 |

Aside from the very strong support for the importance of learning a language at school noted in Tables 7 and 8 the parents are firmly of the view that language teaching contributes to global understanding in the community. This may in part suggest that the efforts some clusters have made, as one put it, ‘to promote a change in relation to global education and the study of languages in the local community through information and education as well as involving parents and mainstream teachers in the language programs’, are beginning to bear fruit.

It also no doubt relates to the strong and stable belief parents, including the matched cohorts, appear to have that their schools’ language programs aim to improve their children’s understanding of other cultures. While slightly less effusive than their parents, the students also have a very positive opinion in this regard though, as is clear from both tables, more so in primary than secondary schools.

Somewhat surprisingly, then, the students in particular and to a lesser extent their parents are substantially less likely to see language classes as helping them to make valuable connections such as to sister schools, e-pals and cultural events. At the very least this suggests that this element of language programs is weaker in both design and delivery than other components such as the more direct teaching of languages and activities to promote cultural understanding as opposed to ‘cultural events’.

Such speculation is arguably supported by the stronger student view in particular that the language program is designed to help them become fluent in another language, albeit with a noticeable drop off at secondary between rounds 2 and 3, which has consistently rated around 3.5 or above through all three survey rounds. Parents are equally positive, but noticeably less inclined than the professionals to adopt this view, perhaps reflecting some unrealistic expectations about the degree of progress that can be made in one year and/or the fact they do not experience their children using the language much at home — even though a number suggest in their comments on the survey that they do.

Parents are generally positive about the extent to which their school has a clearly stated purpose for its language program, though the much higher rating for the importance of learning a language at school suggests that the potential exists in some clusters/schools at least to articulate this even more clearly still.

Parents, and especially primary parents, particularly see the potential benefits of learning a language for later life, but are less likely to connect this directly to enhancing employment prospects in the future. This may reflect an awareness of the importance of languages for future work in a globalised world, since the results are positive, but also a desire for more outcomes from learning a language than just this. Somewhat surprisingly the students, including in matched groups, are noticeably more positive about the extent to which languages will enhance their employment prospects, than they are about the overall benefits to later life; with primary students even surer about the employment connections than their secondary peers. It is difficult to speculate why this is the case in the absence of further qualitative data to unpack these results.

The aggregate outcomes for parents and students about the connection they see between learning a language and learning other subjects is slightly better than for matched cohort groups. Parents in aggregate are stronger than students about the fact a connection exists, while the results for the matched cohort are the other way around; especially for primary students, perhaps reflecting the fact there seem to be more CLIL programs at the primary level than in secondary schools.

Table 7: Parent and student responses to program purpose (Average)[[5]](#footnote-5)

*Statements:*

1. It is important that my child learns a language at school
2. Language classes help my child to make valuable connections (e.g., sister schools, e-pals, cultural events)
3. The language program is designed to help my child to become fluent in a language other than English
4. The school has a clearly stated purpose for its language program
5. The language program aims to improve my child’s employment prospects
6. The language program aims to improve my child’s understanding of other cultures
7. Learning a language will benefit my child later in life
8. Language teaching contributes to global understanding in the community
9. Language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | | | ***Students*** | | | | | |
| **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* |
| 1 | 4.30 | 4.04 | 4.19 | 4.04 | 4.24 | 3.93 | 2.91 | 2.92 | 3.24 | 3.03 | 3.20 | 2.64 |
| 2 | 3.56 | 3.23 | 3.55 | 3.43 | 3.37 | 3.29 | 2.76 | 2.90 | 2.83 | 3.08 | 2.86 | 2.62 |
| 3 | 3.30 | 3.58 | 3.56 | 3.61 | 3.37 | 3.37 | 3.23 | 3.06 | 3.42 | 3.40 | 3.55 | 3.04 |
| 4 | 3.56 | 3.47 | 3.66 | 3.54 | 3.66 | 3.45 | 3.81 | 3.77 | 4.13 | 3.79 | 4.28 | 3.40 |
| 5 | 3.21 | 3.12 | 3.30 | 3.21 | 3.22 | 3.10 | 4.01 | 3.91 | 4.16 | 3.88 | 4.28 | 3.61 |
| 6 | 4.29 | 4.37 | 4.26 | 4.28 | 4.13 | 4.02 | 3.45 | 3.17 | 3.68 | 3.17 | 3.81 | 2.86 |
| 7 | 4.21 | 3.88 | 4.18 | 3.99 | 4.11 | 3.83 | 4.13 | 4.03 | 4.21 | 3.95 | 4.43 | 3.65 |
| 8 | 4.25 | 4.02 | 4.10 | 4.07 | 4.12 | 3.99 | 2.91 | 2.92 | 3.24 | 3.03 | 3.20 | 2.64 |
| 9 | 3.59 | 3.32 | 3.58 | 3.44 | 3.38 | 3.19 | 2.76 | 2.90 | 2.83 | 3.08 | 2.86 | 2.62 |

Table 8: Matched cohort parent and student responses to program purpose (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | ***Students*** | | | |
| **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec |
| 1 | 4.22 | 4.04 | 4.33 | 4.08 | 3.34 | 2.95 | 3.21 | 2.54 |
| 2 | 3.60 | 3.44 | 3.43 | 3.40 | 2.83 | 3.07 | 2.82 | 2.51 |
| 3 | 3.50 | 3.56 | 3.46 | 3.45 | 3.51 | 3.42 | 3.62 | 3.04 |
| 4 | 3.53 | 3.55 | 3.72 | 3.66 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | 3.22 | 3.15 | 3.22 | 3.40 | 4.28 | 3.73 | 4.38 | 3.33 |
| 6 | 4.20 | 4.29 | 4.20 | 4.19 | 4.20 | 3.78 | 4.36 | 3.59 |
| 7 | 4.10 | 4.02 | 4.15 | 4.06 | 3.74 | 3.17 | 3.89 | 2.77 |
| 8 | 4.02 | 4.05 | 4.20 | 4.08 |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | 3.52 | 3.40 | 3.50 | 3.47 | 4.38 | 3.86 | 4.52 | 3.62 |

## Program design

Fifty-eight cluster principals responded to the survey in Round 3 (compared with 57 in Round 2 and 34 in Round 1) about the nature of programs offered in their schools. Taking account of the fact that many if not most schools are undertaking more than one type of approach, the results show that:

* 59% are introducing a CLIL or partial immersion language program;
* 36% are working to develop blended languages learning incorporating online interaction with a language teacher;
* 29% are introducing authentic languages practice and use through sister school relationships, workshops with native speakers and language immersion camps;
* 21% are pursuing innovative use of online language resources to enhance the languages programs delivered; and
* 9% are developing partnerships with complementary language providers, non-government schools, business, community, vocational education and training providers and universities.

Of the clusters with schools adopting a CLIL and/or partial immersion approach:

* 29% are doing so through the Arts;
* 21% are using Humanities;
* 10% are pursuing it through Mathematics;
* 17% are using Science as the disciplinary focus; and
* 21% are adopting another approach such as teaching languages through a kitchen garden program, physical education and ICT.

There is very strong support amongst principals and teachers in aggregate for most elements of program design as can be seen in Table 9, which have also mostly increased between survey rounds two and three as evident in Table 10. The result is that the observation in the interim evaluation in December 2011 that these stakeholder views were understandably more muted than those of program purpose[[6]](#footnote-6), no longer applies.

The fact that responses to the design variable are closer to those for program purpose, and generally at a highly positive level, suggests the design of programs across the clusters reflects the purposes they outlined, at least as far as these two professional groups of stakeholders are concerned. This may in part relate to the work a number of clusters did through their program design to ensure that principals in particular were on board from the start. To cite one cluster in particular from its interview report, ‘An important focus to start was to ensure that the principals were meeting, talking and agreeing about what they were seeking so the requisite leadership support was in place’. Similarly, another explained how

*the key … was first to get the schools’ leaders on board, and hence the program started with leadership teams. Principals are the gate-keepers to what happens in schools and the cluster believed that it had to invest in them and their leadership teams as the only way to sustainability as opposed to a program that is seen as a one-off event.*

This, it is noted, contrasts with the Bairnsdale experience in particular, referenced earlier, which required a subsequent change in approach. It only emphasises the need for principals to be involved and supportive from the start to ensure the program designs can take hold.

The narrowing evident between the view of program purpose and program design may also reflect the strong positive view that principals and teachers share, as evident in Tables 9 and 10, that teaching of languages is an important element of the school program as a whole. What is more, this view has improved in the months between survey rounds two and three for principals at least, albeit tempered by the caveats about survey interpretation already outlined, to the point where it rates around four or above in each case.

The statement with the weakest response from principals and teachers alike relates to the extent to which sufficient time is devoted to language teaching in the school, and this declined between rounds 2 and 3 for the matched cohort of teachers involved. Principals are more positive than teachers about this, perhaps reflecting the desire teachers usually have for more time to teach their subject than principals suspect their school timetable can allow. In general, though, it is clear that, although these professionals are positive about the amount of time for languages teaching their schools can provide, a hint exists that they would like more. Interestingly enough, while parents and students in aggregate are more positive than principals and teachers about the time that language teaching receives, the matched cohort of students is neutral, if not even negative, suggesting that those engaged in the programs would like more than they have, which is encouraging as far as ILPIC programs are concerned.

An interesting point to consider in this context is whether or not upping the ante on language delivery in cluster schools may also have generated some higher expectations for language learning time that then have been perceived as not having been met. Some evidence for this exists in the fact the survey results, as noted, are relatively weak as far as principals and teachers are concerned, yet the interviews point to significant ways in which clusters have worked to increase the time available for language teaching in cluster schools. In some cases this has come from the use of a CLIL approach which has seen languages used in other subject domains, and in some from the offering of languages face-to-face and/or virtually in primary schools which previously had no language at all.

One encouraging outcome in this context, however, is the strong and growing positive view the principals in particular as well as the teachers hold that students have the opportunity to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful situations. This will only help to deliver the sort of increased fluency and other language-related aims that all stakeholders have embraced.

Both principals and teachers strongly believe that languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers, in part due to the fact that most clusters have worked to extend the teaching available, especially between primary and secondary schools, whether by jointly employing staff where one school could not do it on its own, sharing teachers and language assistants across schools directly or through technology, and/or generally working together in language teaching teams. One rural cluster in particular explained how

*The cluster has designed a blended delivery approach, using the Language Centre as a hub, as a means of ensuring delivery across all of the cluster primary schools. This is supplemented by extensive professional learning to build the capacity of language teaching staff, as the cluster develops a sustainable model of provision that can be replicated in other clusters and regions around the state.*

*The program design arises from years of difficulty that primary cluster schools have had in attracting quality, trained teachers of Indonesian with the result the schools tended to put language in the basket of too hard to address. By building capacity of their own, including through training other non-language staff to learn Indonesian as outlined below, the cluster schools are beginning to grow their own expertise.*

Principals and especially teachers are less positive about the extent to which mechanisms are in place to retain language teachers for program continuity, albeit still positive in both cases, and the matched cohort of teachers has become a little more positive over the course of the year. This in part reflects the natural concern about language vulnerability should a key teacher leave, and also perhaps, some small-scale anxiety that some teachers may have about the security of their own position in their school. This to some extent is counter-balanced by the highly positive and noticeably growing view among principals at least that there is access to native language speakers to support language learning in the school which contributes to continuity over time.

One of the strongest positive responses as far as principals and teachers are concerned is a shared view that programs are designed to foster collaboration between cluster schools in delivering languages, and the significant growth in matched cohort teacher perceptions that this is the case. This suggests some success for the goal the clusters had, whether explicitly stated or not, to strengthen the cluster itself as much as grow the provision of languages in cluster schools. This in turn relates to the overarching purpose across clusters to ensure there is continuity of language provision between primary and secondary schools. It is encouraging in this regard to note the positive view of principals in particular, and teachers as well that students do know they can study the same languages in secondary as primary school.

It is worth noting in this context, however, that aside from the changes made to the Grampians Cluster due to its size (see earlier), the three metropolitan clusters which also were quite large, have operated as sub-clusters albeit with interlinked programs and a different language in each. This suggests a need for any future clusters that are formed to limit themselves to a manageable number of schools, perhaps defined as the number of schools that can effectively be supported through the structures the cluster establishes for languages program implementation.

Given that capacity building constitutes an important part of most cluster purposes as outlined above, it is noteworthy that principals are significantly more likely to believe that professional learning opportunities are provided to support language teachers in the school than the language teachers themselves; albeit with strong positive views in each case, though declining in the case of the matched cohort teacher group. This may result from the natural desire that teachers have for more professional learning to improve their teaching than they actually receive, almost regardless of the amount, compared with the principals’ focus on how much the cluster provides in the context of their need to cover all classes in the school.

Some evidence for this exists in the interview reports which reveal that significant work has occurred in terms of building professional learning opportunities for teachers individually and in teams. This is readily evident in such cluster observations as:

* *teachers involved in delivery of the program … had time to meet in professional learning teams …* (to) *ensure that the Italian language programs met the needs of both primary and secondary schools*; and
* the approach one cluster used of linking language teachers to a *‘significant partner’ in each school, such as a literacy coordinator or a year level coordinator, etc. and then expect this partner to attend professional learning with the teacher* to break down the isolation language teachers sometimes feel and link them more to *the general dialogue and professional learning that occurs in schools.*

In at least one case, the cluster is playing what it describes as

*‘a long game’ whereby it is seeking to skill teachers … where the experience of language teaching has not been as strong, to adopt a new and ultimately more sustainable approach centred on CLIL.*

What this disparity may signal, however, is an ongoing challenge to build professional learning in teams into the work that teachers do as language programs are actually delivered in the classrooms across cluster schools, rather than just activities that occur out of class.

While principals have consistently believed that a mix of face-to-face teaching and online learning has occurred in language classes, teachers initially were less effusive in this view, but have become more positive in each survey round; in part, perhaps, because it has started to happen more as technology has arrived and program implementation proceeds. Not surprisingly in this context, principals are more likely than teachers to believe that sufficient access to technology exists, even though both are positive in this regard. This almost certainly reflects a different definition between principals and teachers about what ‘sufficient’ means, especially since one will tend to focus more on uses in class while the other will seek to balance it against cost. At the same time, significant evidence emerged through the interviews to suggest that technology definitely is being used more in cluster schools, with several reporting, as one somewhat commonly observed, that ‘an important learning strategy that increasingly has been adopted within the cluster … is the use of IPads connected to Interactive Whiteboards’.

This accords with efforts in other clusters, such as the one seeking to increase ‘the opportunity to learn through technology which is being built into the ordinary classroom instruction that occurs. Thus, time is provided within classrooms for IPads in particular, and Interactive Whiteboards, to be used in both the primary and secondary schools’. This it was noted,

*is proving important since the IPads not only engage the students in class, but sufficiently interest them that students are borrowing IPads at recess and lunchtime, which effectively increases the time they are learning a language, and even seek them when they have teachers absent and classes covered by CRTs. Beyond this, evenings have occurred within cluster schools where students have demonstrated the use of their IPads to their parents with a very positive response.*

It is also likely that the increased use of learning technologies in these ways is one reason that principals and teachers adopt the strong and growing view referenced above that students have the opportunity to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways.

There is only a moderate belief among principals and teachers that language teaching in the school depends on some virtual delivery for programs to run, which arguably may be a good thing (given the use of the word ‘depends’), and the decline in principals taking this view that is evident in Tables 9 and 10 may reflect a greater security about the potential that some schools have to provide languages independently if required. Aside from that, it may also be an artefact of the averaging of responses that has occurred, since there are differences between clusters and schools related to the fact that some require virtual delivery for their language programs to exist and some, including those providing the virtual delivery to others, do not. The tyranny of distance referred to earlier in this report simply does not apply to all.

Certainly several cluster interviews outlined the virtual delivery arrangements they have set in place, with one typically observing how ‘Central to program design is the delivery of videoconference sessions to P-2 students at … (primary school) which has no language program by the teacher (at another primary school) as she delivers her own class’. In other cases, delivery came from the secondary college to primary schools such as the cluster where ‘direct face-to-face teaching from a team of Chinese and Japanese teachers based at the secondary college to a number of cluster primary schools’ is supplemented by ‘videoconference lessons to three other primary schools using the Polycom system which the ILPIC grant helped fund’. In fact, the use of a blended approach of some sort is arguably the defining feature of program design in most rural clusters at least, and even one urban cluster as well.

Extra- curricular activities are clearly seen as an important part of languages teaching in schools by both teachers and principals, suggesting that they do constitute an important component of program design.

There appears to be a growing awareness among teachers and principals that parents and others are involved in the learning of languages in the school, though this is more muted than most other responses to statements related to program design. That said, some increased parental involvement could flow from the increased perception of principals and teachers that sufficient information about the languages program exists in the school, perhaps reflecting the fact that program information generally increases as implementation, as opposed to planning, starts to occur.

Table 9: Principal and teacher responses to program design (Average)

*Statements:*

1. Opportunities are provided for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful situations
2. Parents and others are involved in the learning of languages in the school
3. Professional learning opportunities are provided to support language teachers in the school
4. There is sufficient time for language teaching in the school
5. The program is designed to foster collaboration between cluster schools in delivering languages
6. There is sufficient access to technology (e.g., online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) for language learning
7. Students know they will be able to study the same languages in secondary as in primary school
8. There is a mix of face-to-face teaching and on-line learning in language classes
9. Language teaching in the school depends on some virtual delivery for the program to run
10. Languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers
11. The school has mechanisms in place to retain its language teachers for program continuity
12. The teaching of languages is supported with other extra-curricular activities
13. The teaching of languages is an important element of the school program as a whole
14. There is access to native language speakers to support language learning in the school
15. There is sufficient information about the language program in the school

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | | ***Teachers*** | | |
| **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 3.81 | 3.85 | 3.93 | 3.66 | 3.76 | 3.97 |
| 2 | 2.77 | 3.00 | 3.12 | 2.75 | 2.91 | 3.11 |
| 3 | 4.32 | 4.19 | 4.07 | 3.84 | 3.88 | 3.55 |
| 4 | 3.03 | 3.35 | 3.23 | 2.85 | 2.99 | 2.79 |
| 5 | 4.48 | 4.25 | 4.33 | 3.22 | 3.69 | 4.06 |
| 6 | 3.88 | 4.22 | 4.35 | 3.32 | 3.85 | 3.92 |
| 7 | 3.70 | 3.96 | 3.89 | 3.39 | 3.45 | 3.62 |
| 8 | 3.35 | 3.83 | 3.95 | 2.96 | 3.46 | 3.53 |
| 9 | 2.68 | 3.24 | 3.02 | 2.94 | 3.22 | 3.21 |
| 10 | 4.66 | 4.50 | 4.31 | 4.27 | 4.28 | 4.13 |
| 11 | 4.10 | 3.81 | 3.71 | 3.30 | 3.30 | 3.56 |
| 12 | 3.65 | 3.85 | 3.95 | 3.35 | 3.48 | 3.65 |
| 13 | 4.06 | 4.04 | 4.16 | 3.98 | 3.94 | 4.05 |
| 14 | 3.97 | 4.04 | 4.16 | 3.82 | 3.85 | 4.03 |
| 15 | 3.59 | 3.69 | 3.93 | 3.51 | 3.50 | 3.56 |

Table 10: Matched cohort principal and teacher responses to program design (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | ***Teachers*** | |
| **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 3.77 | 4.07 | 3.83 | 3.98 |
| 2 | 3.09 | 3.18 | 2.94 | 3.10 |
| 3 | 4.12 | 4.13 | 3.96 | 3.58 |
| 4 | 3.30 | 3.41 | 2.94 | 2.69 |
| 5 | 4.21 | 4.42 | 3.79 | 4.10 |
| 6 | 4.14 | 4.38 | 3.88 | 3.92 |
| 7 | 3.88 | 3.93 | 3.42 | 3.65 |
| 8 | 3.90 | 4.09 | 3.44 | 3.56 |
| 9 | 3.45 | 3.11 | 3.31 | 3.19 |
| 10 | 4.50 | 4.27 | 4.20 | 4.15 |
| 11 | 3.81 | 3.80 | 3.39 | 3.56 |
| 12 | 3.79 | 3.89 | 3.54 | 3.65 |
| 13 | 4.05 | 4.25 | 3.92 | 3.94 |
| 14 | 3.95 | 4.33 | 3.83 | 3.98 |
| 15 | 3.72 | 3.91 | 3.57 | 3.58 |

While parents are positive about the amount of information they receive on the language program in their school, this is even less than the teachers and principals who, as noted, rated this less highly than a number of other key aspects of program design. Given they do tend to see the teaching of languages as an important element of the school program, this suggests it is something that clusters could improve, especially as program implementation progresses and there are more things to communicate in positive ways.

Like principals and teachers, the parents are convinced that languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers, interestingly enough, almost to the same extent as the teachers themselves. On the only other statement exclusive to parents and not their children in this variable on the survey, the parents appear to agree in large part that a mix of face-to-face and online learning is provided to their children in class, presumably reflecting what they hear and observe about their children’s learning at home.

There is a seemingly paradoxical outcome in relation to extra-curricular activities to complement the time devoted to language teaching discussed earlier, whereby students in aggregate, as seen in Table 11, are noticeably more inclined than their parents to see these as being provided by the school, albeit both rating lower than principals and teachers, yet in the case of the matched cohort students, especially in primary school, are the most positive of all. While it is merely speculation, this may reflect the range of culturally-related language activities (e.g., cooking, gardening, cultural visits, etc.) that are part of language programs in schools and which the students may appreciate in the context of the other elements of their program each week.

The extent to which parents and students feel the students can pursue the same languages from primary to secondary school is, as Tables 11 and 12 show, positive but, with the exception of the matched cohort of primary students only some of whom are in Year 6, less so than that of principals and teachers. What is more, these parent and student views appear to have declined slightly between survey rounds two and three at a time when the professionals’ responses have increased. It is difficult to speculate why this might be the case, but they could be influenced by some changes in cluster structure that did occur as noted earlier, and the fact there was at least one cluster where a change in secondary school language for 2013 is planned.

Parents and students in aggregate are both very positive about their access to technology for language learning, in common with the principals and teachers in their schools, though the matched cohort of students, especially secondary students, is less effusive in this regard. This suggests that teachers are using the technology in creative and engaging ways, and reflects the increased availability of technological resources in cluster schools that the ILPIC funding has helped provide, yet at the same time the desire that students, especially at the secondary level, commonly express for even more.

Parents are almost ambivalent about the opportunities they have to become involved in the learning of languages at school, perhaps suggesting a desire for more in the same way as they seem to seek more information as noted above. Students in contrast are strongly of the view that people other than teachers are involved in the language programs in schools, though this begs the question of who they have in mind and whether or not, for example, language assistants are seen in this way.

Table11: Parent and student responses to program design (Average)

*Statements:*

1. There is sufficient information about the language program in the school
2. There is sufficient time for language teaching in the school
3. The teaching of languages is an important element of the school program as a whole
4. The teaching of languages is supported with other extra-curricular activities
5. I have the opportunity to be involved in the learning of languages in the school
6. I know that my child will be able to study the same languages in secondary as in primary school
7. There is a mix of face-to-face teaching and on-line learning in my child’s language classes
8. There is sufficient access to technology (e.g., Interactive Whiteboards, virtual classrooms, webcasts) for language learning
9. Languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | | | ***Students*** | | | | | |
| **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* |
| 1 | 3.35 | 3.35 | 3.49 | 3.46 | 3.18 | 3.32 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 3.24 | 3.39 | 3.42 | 3.51 | 3.29 | 3.26 | 2.46 | 2.64 | 2.35 | 2.44 | 2.74 | 2.17 |
| 3 | 4.02 | 3.82 | 4.01 | 3.89 | 3.81 | 3.68 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 3.66 | 3.53 | 3.61 | 3.64 | 3.44 | 3.68 | 3.85 | 3.95 | 4.05 | 3.90 | 4.17 | 3.63 |
| 5 | 2.92 | 2.51 | 3.06 | 2.90 | 2.69 | 2.66 | 4.46 | 4.44 | 4.40 | 4.49 | 4.68 | 4.12 |
| 6 | 3.27 | 3.39 | 3.66 | 3.43 | 3.42 | 3.09 | 3.75 | 3.60 | 3.94 | 3.55 | 4.01 | 3.27 |
| 7 | 3.31 | 3.38 | 3.46 | 3.43 | 3.47 | 3.47 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | 3.96 | 3.91 | 3.94 | 4.07 | 4.06 | 3.96 | 2.78 | 2.93 | 3.15 | 2.93 | 3.17 | 2.61 |
| 9 | 3.35 | 3.35 | 3.49 | 3.46 | 3.18 | 3.32 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Table 12: Matched cohort parent and student responses to program design (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | ***Students*** | | | |
| **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec |
| 1 | 3.45 | 3.56 | 3.26 | 3.46 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 3.35 | 3.54 | 3.33 | 3.37 | 2.43 | 2.42 | 2.72 | 2.13 |
| 3 | 4.00 | 3.91 | 3.80 | 3.82 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 3.47 | 3.75 | 3.59 | 3.83 | 4.04 | 3.82 | 4.23 | 3.61 |
| 5 | 3.02 | 2.69 | 2.76 | 2.87 | 4.49 | 4.49 | 4.72 | 4.09 |
| 6 | 3.63 | 3.22 | 3.35 | 3.23 | 4.13 | 3.54 | 4.07 | 3.15 |
| 7 | 3.43 | 3.47 | 3.62 | 3.49 |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | 3.78 | 4.18 | 3.91 | 4.15 | 3.24 | 2.87 | 3.22 | 2.44 |
| 9 | 4.30 | 4.29 | 4.28 | 4.17 |  |  |  |  |

## Program delivery

Unlike the interim evaluation in December 2012, clusters and schools no longer are at ‘a very early stage’ where only limited implementation had occurred. By the time of this final evaluation, they had experienced almost a year of work to deliver the approaches and programs they designed.

As already mentioned within this report, leadership support is critical if the implementation of programs is to succeed. It is particularly encouraging, therefore, to see the very high, and in the case of teachers growing degree to which the survey respondents feel their school leadership supports the implementation of language teaching as evident in Tables 13 and 14. This support is no doubt reinforced by the strong and increasingly positive view the principals in particular have that cluster schools collaborate closely to provide languages to their students, with the scores for the matched cohort of principals rising by almost 0.4 between the two survey rounds. As already noted in the discussion of design, such collaboration is vital for any delivery in some cases and contributes to broader and more sustainable delivery in others. Teachers, it should be noted, are less effusive in this regard, though also noticeably up between rounds two and three of the survey in aggregate and a little for matched cohorts, possibly because they are less connected to cluster operations than their principals are, but still involved in more cluster activities as project implementation proceeds.

Consistent with the finding about appropriately trained teachers in the discussion of program design, principals and teachers are very strongly of the view that these teachers also know their subject matter well. It is broadly agreed by both stakeholders that native language speakers are also used to support language teaching in the programs for students, with notable increases for matched cohorts of teachers and even more so principals. Similarly, the school language assistants are seen as enriching language programs by virtue of learning opportunities they are able to provide which students otherwise would not have.

Both contributions are important since several clusters are using an immersion-based approach to extend language learning, sometimes in ways, as one cluster interviewee explained, ‘that also involves the community through the performances that then occur’, through this cluster’s use of CLIL in relation to the arts. This, it was noted, involves work to

*ensure a consistent language is adopted across the cluster, but to also cement the same style of Italian teaching and approach to learning Italian at school …* (so*) when students move from primary to secondary school, they not only come better prepared, but know what to expect in terms of the approach that their teachers will adopt.*

As an interesting adjunct to this, the same cluster also observed that coaching provided through ILPIC for primary language teachers, who often do not get the level of professional learning and coaching that other (e.g. literacy and numeracy) teachers receive, has ‘helped to improve their general pedagogical skill level and contributed to a decline in student management issues in language classes and better student engagement as a result’.

Reflecting the very positive view of teacher capacity to teach languages that was expressed, the principals and even more so teachers are almost at the top of the scale in terms of their belief that a variety of activities are undertaken in language classes, with the principal matched cohort opinion having grown significantly during 2012. While still positive, and in the case of principals increasingly so, they are a little less sure about the fact there are opportunities for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways, perhaps reflecting the fact this is harder to ensure than simply providing a range of activities for students to pursue, and hence requires work over time.

That said, there are examples of work to ensure this more consistently occurs, such as the cluster whose lead school

*which had previously lacked documentation related to language learning, and hence relied purely on the calibre of the language teacher at the time, used a teacher professional leave project to support a team in examining and unpacking the VELS as the precursor to filling this documentation gap. This in turn provided the basis for developing scope and sequence for language provision in Japanese, formative and summative assessment tools and more. With a whole school plan in place, the school was then able to provide professional development for other schools.*

Both principals and teachers remain positive about the extent to which regular assessment of progress occurs in language classes, though in this case, the teachers themselves are more positive than their principals. There is a range of reasons why this might be the case, such as the fact the teachers are much closer to this aspect of delivery through their programs, and/or the principals are not sufficiently advised of the assessment regime that applies, and/or there are different expectations about what ‘regular’ assessment actually means and how it’s enacted in class. Regardless of the explanation, it does provide a fruitful topic for talk within schools in a context where the talk would start from a positive base.

Traditional cultural activities are clearly a feature of program delivery as far as principals and teachers are concerned, and each group feels, albeit to a slightly lesser extent, that cultural days are held when schools celebrate global education, languages and culture. In some clusters, these sorts of opportunities have even extended to trips overseas, such as the one where the cluster secondary college selected students through interview ‘to participate in a trip … which is seen as a “big innovation” for this rather mono-cultural area where students have not had such opportunities in the past’.

More commonly, however, they tend to involve such activities as one cluster’s ‘language day … where primary students are invited to spend a day at the college and the secondary students undertaking Indonesian will run part of that day’. This not only occurs between primary and secondary schools, but sometimes involves kindergartens as well. A good example is the cluster where the primary school has

*been working with its local kindergartens to seed the teaching and learning of Japanese. More specifically, Year 5 and 6 students periodically work with kindergarten children with benefits to all who are involved. In terms two and three, for instance, the senior primary students visited the kinders three times to introduce basic Japanese to the children and undertake some simple activities with them. In term four the kindergarten children will visit the school and the school also hosts a concert where the students present items drawing on their learning in Japanese and the kindergarten children sing Japanese songs they have learned in something of a celebration of the approach.*

Where the principals and teachers part company somewhat is in their view of planning time and other support. Principals are far more likely to think that sufficient planning time and other support for language teachers exists, and are relatively positive about this statement in the program delivery variable the survey contains. Teachers are much more neutral in this regard. As suggested for other items outlined above this, as much as anything else, may reflect different perceptions of what ‘sufficient’ means, aligned to the different interests that principals and teachers sometimes may have, especially given the desire that tends to permeate schools for more planning time.

For all of this, it is clear from interviews that substantial training, joint planning and other capacity-building activities are underway in clusters and schools. One cluster, for instance, described a significant effort to, as it describes it, grow its own, whereby

*the cluster has encouraged and supported a group of two primary and one secondary teacher to undertake a Graduate Diploma of Education in Indonesian through Deakin University, funded by Department scholarships they receive. The group is given time each Friday, supported by the three fully qualified Indonesian teachers in the cluster and an Indonesian language assistant, to undertake their study and generally work together as a languages professional learning team. This means that the teachers involved are not only developing their Indonesian language skills, but all of the teachers involved are sharing their teaching experiences and hence developing their capacity to teach Indonesian as well. So successful has this been, that cluster principals view this team as one of the strongest professional learning teams across the cluster as a whole. It should also be noted that one of the ‘trainees’ in Indonesian is a secondary music teacher who is part of the college plan for 2013 to introduce a CLIL approach that will embrace music and humanities which already has a qualified Indonesian teacher on board.*

*As part of the training through Deakin being received, teachers will also have a four week intensive stint in Indonesia in January that not only will contribute markedly to their language capacity and the speed at which facility is gained, but also their cultural understanding which can inform their teaching in following years.*

Aside from this, the cluster schools all share their trained staff to maximise their collective expertise.

Despite this perceived lack of planning time and other support, both principals and teachers are relatively positive about the extent to which language teachers work with teachers of other subject areas to align and/or reinforce their content. This may in part reflect the efforts of several clusters and schools to implement a CLIL approach, which inevitably means that some other subject teachers will be involved, and hence a level of joint planning is likely to occur. Suffice to say that the extent to which it does occur can only contribute to improving teaching and learning in each domain as different practices are shared, explained and adjusted as needed to enable students to learn in this way.

In common with the very positive findings about technology as part of program design, the principal and teacher respondents are also highly positive about the use of a range of technologies to support language teaching and learning in class. IPads particularly have been used, with teachers increasingly identifying Apps to support the focus on learning through IPads in and beyond class. One cluster, for example, described how it uses

*a range of Apps that teachers have found that make learning fun and somewhat easier for students undertaking German, Indonesian and, to a lesser extent, Chinese. The use of these Apps is supported by the focused use of downloaded podcasts, accessed from TV and other channel websites that produce news for foreign learners, kids’ programs and more which students are keen to hear, even when they address such areas as grammar that they traditionally avoid.*

*What is more, the schools are finding that Apps and podcasts the teachers use get downloaded by students at home, with the result they work on language learning activities out of hours with one student, for example, explaining how he listened to podcasts and though he didn’t understand much, he knew he benefited from getting used to how the language sounds.*

The other aspect of technology that came into play in some clusters was the use of Ultranet spaces for teachers and students to use. One cluster in particular put substantial effort into developing:

* *A design space for teachers where they can download a full week-by-week course for the different VELS levels from Prep through to Year 6;* and
* *A collaborative space for students where the cluster is pioneering a new practice of pre and post activities to support the online lessons so students undertake an activity before the lesson, engage in the class and then work on a post-activity with the support of the primary teacher(s) in their school.*

These spaces, it was explained,

*are especially important since the Lead Contact will not continue her position into 2013 (in part because she is not fully trained to teach German at the secondary level) and the cluster has yet to attract a teacher to take on a similar role. While the cluster schools are committed to collectively seek a teacher, it traditionally is difficult to attract someone to the area, and the existence of these important material supports can enable the primary teachers to maintain languages teaching next year.*

Videoconferencing, as evident in the discussion of program design, is an important aspect of technology use, especially for enabling primary schools in particular to deliver languages that sometimes they could not provide themselves. It is interesting to note in this context that a difference did emerge between clusters about how videoconferencing might best occur. One cluster, for example, explained how initially

*two classes received a 45 minute lesson at the same time, but the teachers found that often the students were more interested in watching the other class on the screen than paying attention to what the delivering … teacher had to say. Thus, the approach was restructured to enable the teacher to deliver to only one class, thereby reducing the distraction, and for 30 minutes instead of 45 minutes so the level of input was reduced. This has proven much more successful with the result the students are much more engaged.*

Similarly, a teacher in another cluster teaches her own class, and is beamed to another in a separate school with whom she also interacts, but only one other class.

In contrast, there are some more ‘entrepreneurial’ clusters which are seeking to establish models whereby a teacher can deliver either to a class on site or even an empty studio, and to several other classes remotely at the same time. The intention here is to create what one of these clusters described as a ‘model … (to) facilitate future growth’. It is predicated on the view the teacher can effectively deliver to several classes at once which the other clusters cited above would tend to dispute.

There is not sufficient evidence through this evaluation to suggest that one or other of these approaches works better and, given the contrasting experiences and views, it may be a case where both can succeed depending on the context of the schools involved and the capacity the lead delivery school has to manage its preferred approach. In addition, the teachers do need to carefully think about how to effectively implement the approach, especially if students at both/all locations are to be fully engaged. A good example, provided by one cluster interviewee, described how

*The Japanese teacher delivering the program readily acknowledges that initially it was difficult to establish and get running right. That said, the relationship is now established between the two classes, and sessions are run in a way that maximises the participation of students in each. For example, students recently were learning about weather and the teacher introduced a number of words related to the time of year and climatic conditions that can apply. One class was nominated as being in Australia and the other in Japan and then volunteer students used a range of clothing provided in each classroom to select appropriate gear to demonstrate to both their own class and the other students online. This illustrates the way in which interaction between the groups is promoted as well as the language teaching being shared.*

Regardless, it does seem that experience through both approaches is that the students benefit from some periodic face-to-face visits by the delivering teachers to the receiving schools so, as one typically put it, they ‘can see and get to know their online teachers in the flesh’. This, the same and other clusters observed, ‘really excites them because, from their perspective, they are meeting someone who is on TV’.

As was the case in the interim evaluation in 2011, both principals and teachers do not really see the involvement of partners who contribute to language teaching in the school, and are neutral at best about the extent to which partners are sufficiently involved. This may be one reason why so few partner survey responses were received. The one exception to this is some sister school relations that individual schools may have which, in some cases, are being spread across the cluster as a whole through, for example, visits to primary schools from teachers and students who are visiting their sister secondary school in Australia, or the facilitation of other cluster schools developing sister school relations themselves.

This sister school exception aside, it tends to suggest that partners and their involvement did not really figure much in program design (as confirmed by the interviews where they basically were not mentioned at all), with the inevitable result they do not really impact on initial implementation in schools. This could, however, be one aspect of delivery that could develop in time, especially as schools, principals and teachers become more confident about their approach and seek to extend and build on it in creative ways. It’s a topic that ought be kept on the agenda in clusters and schools to take advantage of the opportunities that exist which the clusters/schools cannot provide themselves.

Language assistants, it is noted, could play a positive role in this regard, especially since both principals and teachers already see them as helping to promote the language within the school and broader community, and the view of principals in this regard grew noticeably between survey rounds two and three for the matched group.

Table 13: Principal and teacher responses to program delivery (Average)

*Statements:*

1. Students have the opportunity to experience traditional cultural activities in the relevant language(s)
2. The school leadership supports the implementation of language teaching
3. There is a variety of activities in language classes
4. There are opportunities for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways
5. Native language speakers are used to support language teaching
6. The involvement of partners (e.g., business, community organisations, tertiary institutions) contributes to language teaching in the school
7. The school’s language assistant enriches the language program, by providing learning opportunities that would otherwise not be available (if applicable).
8. Technology (e.g., online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used to support language teaching
9. There are cultural days when schools celebrate global education, languages and cultures together
10. Languages are taught by teachers who know their subject matter well
11. There is regular assessment of progress in language classes
12. There is sufficient planning time and other support for language teachers
13. The school’s language assistant helps to promote the language within the school and broader community (if applicable).
14. Partners are sufficiently involved in the program
15. Language teachers work with teachers of other subject areas to align and/or reinforce their content
16. The cluster schools collaborate closely to provide languages to their students

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | | ***Teachers*** | | |
| **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 4.29 | 3.98 | 4.23 | 4.00 | 3.88 | 4.05 |
| 2 | 4.73 | 4.57 | 4.58 | 3.87 | 4.00 | 4.16 |
| 3 | 4.16 | 4.05 | 4.32 | 4.44 | 4.37 | 4.48 |
| 4 | 3.74 | 3.73 | 4.11 | 3.62 | 3.81 | 3.97 |
| 5 | 4.13 | 4.11 | 4.38 | 3.86 | 4.00 | 4.24 |
| 6 | 2.81 | 2.89 | 2.95 | 2.77 | 2.85 | 3.13 |
| 7 | 3.64 | 4.02 | 4.12 | 3.95 | 4.02 | 4.25 |
| 8 | 4.00 | 4.35 | 4.35 | 3.96 | 4.13 | 4.31 |
| 9 | 3.68 | 3.85 | 3.97 | 3.43 | 3.56 | 3.65 |
| 10 | 4.45 | 4.38 | 4.49 | 4.27 | 4.25 | 4.23 |
| 11 | 4.03 | 3.84 | 3.95 | 4.19 | 4.13 | 4.15 |
| 12 | 3.94 | 3.87 | 3.82 | 2.92 | 2.99 | 3.03 |
| 13 | 3.42 | 3.64 | 3.83 | 3.63 | 3.84 | 3.97 |
| 14 | 2.48 | 2.85 | 2.82 | 2.80 | 3.06 | 3.15 |
| 15 | 3.39 | 3.60 | 3.69 | 3.18 | 3.19 | 3.41 |
| 16 | 3.16 | 3.82 | 4.16 | 3.02 | 3.40 | 3.76 |

Table 14: Matched cohort principal and teacher responses to program delivery (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | ***Teachers*** | |
| **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 3.93 | 4.27 | 3.85 | 4.06 |
| 2 | 4.55 | 4.64 | 4.04 | 4.12 |
| 3 | 4.02 | 4.40 | 4.42 | 4.50 |
| 4 | 3.72 | 4.20 | 3.85 | 3.94 |
| 5 | 4.05 | 4.48 | 4.02 | 4.23 |
| 6 | 2.93 | 3.00 | 3.02 | 3.19 |
| 7 | 4.00 | 4.28 | 3.35 | 3.48 |
| 8 | 4.33 | 4.36 | 4.31 | 4.37 |
| 9 | 3.91 | 4.07 | 3.58 | 3.65 |
| 10 | 4.37 | 4.47 | 4.19 | 4.21 |
| 11 | 3.79 | 4.00 | 4.13 | 4.13 |
| 12 | 3.79 | 3.91 | 3.10 | 3.00 |
| 13 | 3.59 | 4.00 | 3.93 | 3.98 |
| 14 | 2.86 | 2.87 | 3.14 | 3.17 |
| 15 | 3.51 | 3.73 | 3.35 | 3.48 |
| 16 | 3.84 | 4.23 | 3.54 | 3.73 |

Parents and students are very positive about the aspects of program delivery surveyed, with two exceptions evident in Table 15 and 16, as noted below.

Like the principals and teachers, parents and especially students feel that their language classes are taught by teachers who not only are appropriately trained (see earlier), but also know their subject matter well, albeit with the matched cohort of secondary students significantly less positive than their primary counterparts.

Reflecting this, albeit not as strongly, these two stakeholders also are positive about the variety of activities experienced by students in class, once again with a difference between primary and secondary students as commonly emerges in surveys of this sort. It is interesting to note the results in this case are very similar between parents and students at the primary level and, given the fact that parents have little or no direct experience on which to draw, this suggests that the primary students at least are talking favourably about this at home. It is also worth noting that, although very favourable, the results are lower than those of the teachers who provided the range of activities the students undertake.

Similarly, parents and students are both positive about the extent to which regular assessment of progress occurs in languages classes, with somewhat similar results, again a bit below what the professionals themselves think.

Both stakeholders do feel that the opportunity exists to experience traditional cultural and language activities in the relevant language, but in this case a significant difference can be observed between the primary and secondary student outcomes especially round two on. When looked at in aggregate, the parent and student scores lag behind those of principals and teachers — which at first glance is not surprising since a tension sometimes exists between the balance a teacher feels is needed for students to learn and what the students and their parents would like — but also a gap between the students and their parents in the matched cohorts opens up. This aggregate difference, however, primarily relates to the much less positive views of secondary students (albeit neutral rather than negative) compared with the very positive views of primary students. This tends to suggest that such activities are more evident in primary schools, where arguably the language program is more likely to be integrated with the program as a whole, and hence less in ‘competition’ with other subjects for time.

This same effect may be evident in the much weaker view of students in particular that cultural days are held when schools can celebrate global education, languages and cultures together.

As a counter-balance to this, however, the parents in particular see that technology, which is known to engage students in class, is being used in the language programs at school. Students are more neutral in this regard at both the primary and secondary level. It is difficult to know why this is the case in the absence of further investigation, but one factor may be the fact that exposure actually increases demand, especially given the apparent conflict of these outcomes with other data gained through interviews.

Where students are noticeably less positive than their teachers and principals in aggregate is the extent to which they feel they get to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways. They are basically neutral about the chance they have to use their language learning in ‘real’ ways such as writing an email to another student in an overseas school, especially at the secondary level in the case of the matched groups. This is a difference that may be significant in terms of students’ learning and could suggest a need for schools to be provided with advice and exemplars on how students can be engaged in more authentic activities that support their engagement and really build their language learning skills.

Students also are quite neutral about the opportunities their parents have to be involved in language program activities, as are the parents themselves. This reflects the lower level judgment of principals and teachers, even though there has been a marked improvement in the matched group of primary students’ views in this regard, and may signal an area where advice to schools could be required.

Table 15: Parent and student responses to program delivery (Average)

*Statements:*

1. Languages are taught by teachers who know their subject matter well
2. My child has the opportunity to experience traditional culture and language activities in the relevant language(s)
3. There is a variety of activities in my child’s language classes
4. There is regular assessment of my child’s progress in languages
5. I have the opportunity to be involved in language program activities in the school
6. Technology(e.g., online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used to support language teaching
7. There are cultural days when schools celebrate global education, languages and cultures together
8. I have the chance to practice using my language learning in real ways (e.g., writing an email to another student in an overseas school)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | | | ***Students*** | | | | | |
| **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* |
| 1 | 4.47 | 4.30 | 4.31 | 4.32 | 4.33 | 4.14 | 3.82 | 3.94 | 4.09 | 3.83 | 4.07 | 3.61 |
| 2 | 3.86 | 3.75 | 3.87 | 4.00 | 3.76 | 3.78 | 3.54 | 3.54 | 4.07 | 3.44 | 4.08 | 3.06 |
| 3 | 3.92 | 3.67 | 3.88 | 3.88 | 3.85 | 3.62 | 3.53 | 3.40 | 3.83 | 3.30 | 3.63 | 3.18 |
| 4 | 3.56 | 3.80 | 3.63 | 3.61 | 3.39 | 3.66 | 3.52 | 3.73 | 3.43 | 3.74 | 3.69 | 3.56 |
| 5 | 3.03 | 2.61 | 3.21 | 2.90 | 2.87 | 2.73 | 2.64 | 3.19 | 2.86 | 2.80 | 3.09 | 2.49 |
| 6 | 3.64 | 3.66 | 3.85 | 3.74 | 3.74 | 3.84 | 2.34 | 2.49 | 2.69 | 2.49 | 2.63 | 2.38 |
| 7 | 3.92 | 3.68 | 3.66 | 3.98 | 3.54 | 3.81 | 2.68 | 3.02 | 2.98 | 2.86 | 3.08 | 2.52 |
| 8 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 3.15 | 2.79 | 3.28 | 3.32 | 3.39 | 2.92 |

Table 16: Matched cohort parent and student responses to program delivery (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | ***Students*** | | | |
| **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec |
| 1 | 4.35 | 4.35 | 4.37 | 4.23 | 4.10 | 3.72 | 4.08 | 3.46 |
| 2 | 3.76 | 4.09 | 3.80 | 3.92 | 4.18 | 3.43 | 4.17 | 2.95 |
| 3 | 3.96 | 3.95 | 3.87 | 3.73 | 3.75 | 3.30 | 3.69 | 3.20 |
| 4 | 3.69 | 3.75 | 3.43 | 3.74 | 3.59 | 3.76 | 3.77 | 3.50 |
| 5 | 3.12 | 2.73 | 2.87 | 2.85 | 2.85 | 2.82 | 3.18 | 2.50 |
| 6 | 3.82 | 3.80 | 3.82 | 3.96 | 2.78 | 2.48 | 2.58 | 2.37 |
| 7 | 3.63 | 4.02 | 3.52 | 3.88 | 3.02 | 2.82 | 3.09 | 2.49 |
| 8 | 4.35 | 4.35 | 4.37 | 4.23 | 3.22 | 3.20 | 3.35 | 2.75 |

## Responses to the program

Unlike the planning stage in 2011, when it was noted that ‘there is not really a significant range of responses as yet, particularly the further one gets from those who are intimately involved in the planning’, this first year of implementation has seen the reactions of stakeholders start to emerge.

Thus, the observation that one cluster made that a ‘lack of reaction from parents was … “seen as a good thing’’’, has given way to more of a positive response; albeit with

* one cluster still observing that, ‘While there has not really been much parent reaction to date, this may well be a positive result in a community where there have been some negative responses to languages in the past’; and
* another cluster, in more muted fashion, describing a more softly, softly approach whereby ‘parents haven’t really noticed much because of the incremental way in which the cluster has implemented it’.

‘One of the most observable responses’, one cluster somewhat more typically explained, ‘has been a decline in negativity in the cluster about language learning at school’. Having a whole cluster approach has helped in this regard, since it enables the primary schools in particular to point to the fact the students will need the language ‘for when they go to secondary schools’. Beyond this, the better pedagogy that some clusters feel has flowed from joint planning and team work has meant the ‘students have become more engaged with the result their talk about languages at home is more positive than in the past’. This is only helped to the extent that CLIL approaches in some clusters are linked to performing arts which has led to public performances that build the buzz as well.

Illustrative of the point is the experience of one cluster where

*The parent response is described by the cluster as ‘fabulous’. One of the primary schools, for instance, had an Oktoberfest function one evening where parents were invited to experience the program in the way the students do, and as shown by their own children, and simply ‘loved’ it. The secondary college had a similar experience with its parents, with the result the schools are ‘incredibly positive all around’*.

Clusters with schools that are providing a language for the first time are finding a very positive response indeed. One, for example, described how ‘parents are very pleased’, to the point where they are now ‘keen to keep the program going in future years’. Similarly, another rural cluster explained how parents ‘are … “thrilled” with the whole program since most of them want their children to be able to study a language at school’. In this cluster’s case, the teachers too ‘have gone from an initial position of hesitation as they were confronted by an unknown approach, to substantial enthusiasm, evident in the fact they are supporting plans to keep the arrangement in place from next year’.

These sorts of responses, as will be seen, are confirmed by the survey data outlined below.

Central to gaining these positive responses in most clusters, as already foreshadowed in relation to program design and delivery, has been the importance of having the principals on board. ‘The response from the principals on whom successful implementation ultimately depends’ was described by one cluster as ‘overwhelming’. As a group, this cluster continued,

*they have moved in the course of the ILPIC project from some initial wondering about why it was being done (‘is it just to get the additional resources?’), to the point where they really believe in the value and importance of teaching a language in their schools.*

Even clearer still, another cluster observed that their ‘principals have been on board from the start and really led the program in the schools. This has proved critical, not only for generating the project and its approach, but also progressively bringing other people on board’. This reinforces the comments already made about a threshold requirement for cluster success (and arguably cluster selection for any future initiatives of this sort) is having full principal support.

Reflecting the way in which responses can ripple through the cluster and schools from the principal down, one cluster explained how, once the principals were on board, parents have started

*to embrace the approach, in large part because some teacher teams have … ‘jumped on board’ with the result they are providing a better level of program that the students enjoy, and then take home when they talk to their parents about their day.*

The use of videoconferencing and immersion programs has proved popular in several clusters, with ‘very positive feedback’ received by some. ‘Particularly important in this regard’, one explained, ‘is the fact that the videoconferencing provides language classes to schools and students that otherwise would not have them’. While several clusters did experience technical difficulties along the way in this regard, as well as a need for teachers to become more skilled with the approaches, these challenges progressively were overcome, with the result, according to this same cluster, that when the teachers turn the videos on, ‘they find students who are ready to learn and really engaged. They seem excited about the fact they are getting an opportunity they otherwise did not expect, and hence are seizing it with both hands’.

The approach also is seen as benefiting the primary teachers involved who, as one cluster typically described, ‘participate in the videoconferences and … are empowered by observing the approach’. In addition, all of the teachers involved in this case ‘observed how engaged the students are and, despite some initial wariness about how they would manage to sit through a 30 minute session each week, how much they seem to enjoy the approach — perhaps reflecting how much more open the students are to learning online than the (older) people who teach them’.

From the perspective of secondary colleges involved in clusters, the program in most cases contributes, as one put it, ‘to ensuring consistency of language provision between primary and secondary school, and hence helps to ensure that incoming students are better prepared to learn a language at secondary level’. It also contributes to more viable language learning groups, with one cluster commenting that ‘every time we get a Year 12 class … it’s an achievement, and reflects a degree of support for language learning’ in the area. That said, there was one cluster where things went the other way as the secondary college decided to change its language provision for 2013 in ways that may reflect their community and its needs, but not the languages provided by the primary schools. So for this cluster, unlike the others in the initiative, the challenge has been renewed to strike a common cluster approach.

As is clear from the survey results, stakeholder responses have now not only been received but also are, with only a small exception noted below, very positive overall.

As evident in Tables 17 and 18, teachers, and even more so principals are strongly of the view that students do work hard in their language classes, that they find them interesting and that they are well-behaved, albeit with a slight fall in the score for the matched teacher group. These, it should be noted, are all pre-requisites for successful teaching and learning in class, and hence constitute a very positive outcome indeed, especially since they are areas where language classes have sometimes been criticised in the past. Principals, it is noted, have scored all of these statements above four which is very encouraging as far as program delivery is concerned.

Interestingly, the students themselves, who could be expected to have a positive view of their own role, are certainly positive, as evident in Tables 19 and 20, but noticeably less so than the professionals about how hard they work, how interesting they find their classes (albeit with a high score in this regard at the primary as opposed to secondary level) and about how well-behaved they and their peers are in class, especially again at primary. Parents are noticeably more positive than the students about how hard their children work in class, which is surprising as the students would be expected to be their primary source of information on this. They also tend to think the students are well-behaved in class and find their classes interesting, though in this case, less than the primary students.

The extent to which students willingly do homework for language classes is among the lowest ranked statements for teachers and students alike, and moderately rated by principals and parents who are not as directly involved. Whether this relates to homework in general, or homework specific to language classes is impossible to tell from the data available though, somewhat counter-intuitively given the homework results, students in aggregate and matched groups are very positive that they practice language learning at home, while their parents are much less sure this is the case.

Despite this, teachers and principals both strongly express the view that the students would feel they are developing greater proficiency in one or more languages which, ultimately, is the purpose of the whole exercise.

Students, and hence their parents in aggregate, have a strong, positive view that they enjoy their language classes and also learning a language at school, though this is not so evident for the matched groups where the student view noticeably declines. In contrast, principals and teachers strongly feel this to be the case. There appears to be a positive shared view that all four stakeholders have that parents value the opportunity for their children to learn a language, with the possible exception of the matched group of secondary students in round 3.

The result as far as the professionals are concerned is that there is growing interest in language learning in their schools, though this doesn’t necessarily extend as strongly to partners (as mentioned earlier in this report) and the extent to which any partnership work is acknowledged in the school.

Suffice to say that perhaps the most significant statement within this variable about responses to the programs introduced through the ILPIC initiative is the fact that principals, teachers, parents and students all would strongly recommend the language program in their school especially, in something of an advertisement for their work, the teachers who rated this above 4.5 on a five point scale. The fact that students, including the clearly more critical secondary students rate this around 4 suggests that some of the lower scores for other statements in this variable are not impacting negatively on overall views of the language experience the students have.

Table 17: Principal and teacher responses to the program (Average)

*Statements:*

1. Students work hard in language classes
2. Students feel they are developing greater proficiency in one or more languages
3. Parents value the opportunity their children have to learn a language other than English
4. I would recommend the language program in this school
5. Students find their language classes interesting
6. Students enjoy language classes
7. Partners are sufficiently acknowledged in the program
8. Students willingly do homework for language classes
9. Students enjoy learning languages in this school
10. There is growing interest in language learning in the school
11. Students are well-behaved in language classes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | | ***Teachers*** | | |
| **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 3.74 | 4.04 | 4.05 | 3.87 | 3.78 | 3.97 |
| 2 | 3.61 | 3.80 | 4.02 | 3.68 | 3.74 | 3.94 |
| 3 | 3.75 | 3.84 | 4.04 | 3.30 | 3.46 | 3.65 |
| 4 | 4.23 | 4.16 | 4.29 | 4.23 | 4.34 | 4.55 |
| 5 | 3.87 | 4.04 | 4.12 | 4.00 | 4.12 | 4.21 |
| 6 | 3.94 | 4.09 | 4.16 | 4.04 | 4.06 | 4.15 |
| 7 | 2.87 | 3.19 | 3.23 | 3.00 | 3.28 | 3.40 |
| 8 | 3.30 | 3.43 | 3.46 | 2.78 | 2.97 | 2.97 |
| 9 | 3.87 | 4.09 | 4.16 | 3.90 | 3.94 | 4.19 |
| 10 | 3.75 | 3.87 | 3.98 | 3.61 | 3.61 | 4.02 |

Table 18: Matched cohort principal and teacher responses to the program (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | ***Teachers*** | |
| **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 4.05 | 4.11 | 3.87 | 3.96 |
| 2 | 3.84 | 4.02 | 3.77 | 3.96 |
| 3 | 3.84 | 4.09 | 3.60 | 3.63 |
| 4 | 4.19 | 4.39 | 4.39 | 4.54 |
| 5 | 4.05 | 4.22 | 4.17 | 4.23 |
| 6 | 4.10 | 4.24 | 4.13 | 4.17 |
| 7 | 3.20 | 3.21 | 3.39 | 3.44 |
| 8 | 3.38 | 3.57 | 3.06 | 3.02 |
| 9 | 4.12 | 4.22 | 4.06 | 4.19 |
| 10 | 3.91 | 4.09 | 3.77 | 4.04 |
| 11 | 4.05 | 4.16 | 3.94 | 3.77 |

Table 19: Parent and student responses to the program (Average)

*Statements:*

1. My child enjoys language classes
2. Students are well-behaved in language classes
3. My child works hard in language classes
4. My child willingly does homework for language classes
5. My child practices their language(s) at home
6. My child finds their language classes interesting
7. Students enjoy learning languages in this school
8. I value the opportunity my child has to learn a language other than English
9. I would recommend the language program in this school

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | | | ***Students*** | | | | | |
| **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* |
| 1 | 3.96 | 3.75 | 3.94 | 3.87 | 3.92 | 3.71 | 2.68 | 3.02 | 2.98 | 2.86 | 3.08 | 2.52 |
| 2 | 3.45 | 3.20 | 3.59 | 3.55 | 3.47 | 3.25 | 3.95 | 3.84 | 4.19 | 3.84 | 4.29 | 3.57 |
| 3 | 3.94 | 3.91 | 3.88 | 4.06 | 3.88 | 3.85 | 2.98 | 3.25 | 3.21 | 3.31 | 3.20 | 3.14 |
| 4 | 3.20 | 3.40 | 3.21 | 3.55 | 3.09 | 3.50 | 3.25 | 3.16 | 3.54 | 3.24 | 3.58 | 3.02 |
| 5 | 2.80 | 2.81 | 3.09 | 2.93 | 2.97 | 2.65 | 4.10 | 4.05 | 4.22 | 3.97 | 4.17 | 3.87 |
| 6 | 3.87 | 3.63 | 3.81 | 3.75 | 3.74 | 3.55 | 3.71 | 3.67 | 4.08 | 3.49 | 4.10 | 3.16 |
| 7 | 3.83 | 3.51 | 3.91 | 3.67 | 3.86 | 3.42 | 2.63 | 3.08 | 3.03 | 3.00 | 3.11 | 2.66 |
| 8 | 4.41 | 4.32 | 4.34 | 4.34 | 4.40 | 4.24 | 3.23 | 3.35 | 3.62 | 3.38 | 3.56 | 3.02 |

Table 20: Matched cohort parent and student responses to the program (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | ***Students*** | | | |
| **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec |
| 1 | 3.98 | 3.91 | 3.79 | 3.94 | 4.15 | 3.94 | 4.06 | 3.65 |
| 2 | 3.58 | 3.47 | 3.40 | 3.40 | 4.35 | 3.84 | 4.37 | 3.50 |
| 3 | 4.02 | 4.13 | 3.83 | 4.00 | 3.24 | 3.27 | 3.22 | 3.11 |
| 4 | 3.16 | 3.69 | 2.98 | 3.60 | 3.65 | 3.28 | 3.64 | 3.00 |
| 5 | 3.00 | 2.85 | 2.74 | 2.77 | 4.31 | 4.00 | 4.18 | 3.85 |
| 6 | 3.84 | 3.78 | 3.60 | 3.77 | 4.22 | 3.45 | 4.22 | 3.09 |
| 7 | 3.90 | 3.71 | 3.78 | 3.64 | 3.07 | 2.95 | 3.14 | 2.57 |
| 8 | 4.35 | 4.40 | 4.46 | 4.34 | 3.67 | 3.34 | 3.52 | 2.96 |
| 9 | 3.96 | 3.82 | 3.98 | 3.81 | 4.19 | 3.79 | 4.11 | 3.78 |

## Impact of the program

Twelve months on from the observations in the interim evaluation that:

* *If it is too early at this stage for responses to ILPIC initiative programs to be gained, this arguably holds even more true for the impact such programs can be expected to have;* and
* *This is readily evident in the fact that this section of the interview reports … is by far the shortest component of these reports*

Clusters now do have something to say.

This most clearly can be seen in the set of cluster interview reports provided in Appendix 4, and is confirmed by the survey outcomes discussed below.

Clusters commonly spoke, for example, of how secondary colleges in particular expect, as one somewhat typically put it, ‘that from 2013 it will receive students who are better prepared to learn … at secondary school and more attuned to the immersion approach the school adopts’. Another agreed, observing that some evidence already exists this year that ‘students in Year 7 have a better knowledge of the language expectations at their level than their predecessors at the school’.

Beyond this, the most evident impact in most clusters has been the provision of languages teaching in primary schools in particular where previously there was none. ‘In simple terms’, one cluster explained, ‘the impact of ILPIC … has been to create more opportunities for students to engage in languages learning in some form’.

This, it was noted, has been very well received. In most cases it has seen the primary schools involved start with Prep students, or at the lower end of the school, as a means of growing languages as these students move through the school and new ones come in to take the language the school now provides. The result, as one cluster speaking for most observed, is a significant positive impact on ‘the engagement Prep students have with language learning’ which, in the case of this cluster, also contributed to ‘opening the eyes of the community’ in an area that ‘does tend to be somewhat “insular” and disconnected from other cultures … (and which) the cluster’s work has made a start in helping to break … down’.

In a similar vein, another cluster experienced what it referred to as

*a “wonderful” level of student engagement in learning a language. They know the students are engaged because they have observed them repeating things in the playground they heard in their lessons, asking their parents to cook Indonesian foods, and generally discussing some of the issues that have been raised in class.*

This, the cluster also suggests, ‘has even contributed to greater levels of respect for other cultures within and beyond the cluster schools’. For yet another cluster still, the general improvement in student engagement is best seen in ‘the decline in unruliness in language classes at the school’.

Developing viable programs was not limited to participating primary schools. A number of clusters also described how, to quote one, its secondary college now has ‘a viable Certificate 2 group in Year 9 with the potential for a Certificate 3 group at Year 10 in 2013. This not only is building a critical mass in the college for this particular VET program, but is also giving more kudos to VET since it’s a challenging program … and something the cluster expects to accelerate even further still’.

Similarly, another secondary college will see Chinese extended to Year 9 for the first time, as it now has a viable class as ‘students are starting to hold on to languages for longer at school’. A third suggests that ‘one of the key manifestations of … increased engagement in language learning has been that all 17 students undertaking German in Year 9 in the cluster will continue into Year 10, thereby creating a viable group for German at a level where the language was not taught in 2012’.

Closely related to the increased provision of languages especially in primary schools, and particularly in rural areas where some of these schools are very small, is what one cluster referred to as ‘the increase in alignment around language provision between the secondary college and its neighbouring primary schools’. Clusters did commonly describe how one or more languages have been ‘established as a common language across the cluster, provided in all cluster schools, which didn’t exist in the past’.

Underpinning the better engagement levels observed, and a measure of impact in its own right, has been the improved capacity of teachers and teaching teams which constituted part of the program purpose in programs the clusters designed. ‘At its simplest level’, one cluster explained, ‘even at this early stage of its longer-term plan, the schools are offering better programs in which students are better engaged’. Another, somewhat more expansively, explained how

*One of the key impacts to date is the fact that Indonesian is being provided in cluster schools that either previously have not had it, or where it has been fragile at best. This is underpinned by work that has markedly lifted the collective language and teaching capacity of the cluster’s Indonesian team, with the result there are better lessons being delivered and more engaged students in all of the schools. What is more, the students are starting to take their learning home, because they are enjoying it more, which then impacts on the views of parents and the community as a whole. It is neatly illustrated by one principal’s own experience of how her grandchild in Prep came home singing an Indonesian song from a primary school that previously did not have Indonesian at all.*

*In time, the cluster expects this will mean both greater certainty about language provision in the area and better continuity between the primary and secondary schools. In addition, the students entering Year 7 can be expected to be better prepared for learning a language and Studies of Asia at secondary school, and the college expects it will build the pool of students who will continue with Indonesian through to Year 12.*

And one of the urban clusters went so far as to suggest that

*Arguably the biggest impact of the program to date, consistent with the cluster purpose and design, has been to make teachers feel supported, confident and able to do more in relation to teaching Italian in particular, so this language can be offered to students in a consistent way. Put simply, the cluster describes how teachers are ‘more into language teaching, doing more interesting things in class and generally sharing more’. This in turn means that students are more engaged, with anecdotal reports that this especially is the case in Year 6 when commonly many of them have disengaged in the past.*

For one cluster at least, the impact goes beyond the language teachers involved. More specifically, this cluster expects that in future

*its English teachers will be better able to make references to grammatical concepts that, at present, only come from studying a language in the school. In effect, the school seeks a flow-on of a clearer understanding of grammatical elements of language through the professional interaction between teachers that is underway, and the dialogue the students themselves will start to have because of their understanding of the sorts of concepts involved. This, it is expected, will have a positive pedagogical benefit for the school.*

These sorts of comments suggest that one impact the ILPIC initiative has had in clusters is that the increased opportunities provided for students extend to teachers as well. As one rural cluster in particular explained,

*This sense of extra opportunities applies to teachers … in a context where the school is comparatively remote and things are expensive as a result. Teachers, for instance, cannot readily go to Melbourne for professional development, since it generally means staying overnight. The ILPIC initiative has enabled the cluster to provide language teachers with professional development opportunities that otherwise would not have occurred.*

The effect of this most clearly is seen in the cluster where

*Teachers involved in the program have noticed that the work they are doing with students in Years 4 and 5 is somewhat closer to the level and quality of work that is done by Year 7 and 8 students in the secondary school. While they are not entirely sure why, they speculate it may relate to one or more of the existence of 30 minutes a week of very intensive learning time, the level of engagement the students have, and/or the fact that younger students may be more open to learning a language at school. Regardless of the reason, the impact is expected to be that students entering Year 7 from 2013 on will be better equipped for language classes in the school. Secondary teachers are particularly looking forward to teaching students who have some familiarity with learning a language compared to the previous experience of always starting from scratch.*

*Aside from this, all of the teachers involved have a very strong sense of levels of student engagement in something that otherwise they would not have or be able to do. Again this partly reflects the existence of opportunities they previously have not had, but also the way in which the program has structured activities that ensure active participation, such as play-based activities for students in Prep. From the teachers’ own point of view, they are constantly on screen for each 30 minute session, which means they have to be very conscious and well-planned about how they use that time. This in turn is seen as something that potentially could influence pedagogy throughout the cluster schools.*

A few clusters with slightly more expansive plans are beginning to generate models of provision, generally involving a blended learning approach that includes significant videoconferencing and/or an immersion-based approach, that potentially are, as one of these clusters put it, ‘appropriate to other, similar contexts, albeit taking some time to really work out’. In this case the cluster, similar to some others, suggested it is devising ‘a model which not only delivers to students in remote, and commonly small schools, but also helps build the capacity of local classroom teachers to support videoconference delivery in a subject for which they are not themselves trained’.

In a somewhat similar vein, a cluster where schools not only have generated an ‘incredible level of student engagement’, but also some ‘growing interest from outside the cluster in the immersion program in particular’, has effectively now begun ‘seeding language learning more through the region as a whole’. Schools outside the cluster without any real language provision ‘have approached the cluster through the Language Centre to find out how to start, and some have even undertaken a professional development day to examine how to kick start language learning in their school’.

This experience is not limited to just one cluster, and another described how

*One unexpected outcome of the cluster initiative has been the flow on impact to other, non-cluster schools. The region, for example, has had no difficulty getting schools to apply for start-up grants, in part because of the fact more schools and teachers have been engaged with a blended learning approach. The cluster’s work has generated interest in non-cluster schools that have heard about it and are interested in trying a similar approach. In addition, it has had the effect of providing the region with experience to point to as a potential model as well as personnel in schools who can be approached and spoken to by people from other schools.*

The upshot is that the ILPIC initiative impact is starting to spread beyond the bounds of the list of schools in Appendix 1.

The outcomes of the surveys conducted also suggest that the impact is being felt by principals, teachers, parents and students in participating cluster schools.

As can be seen in Tables 21 to 24, all four stakeholders who were surveyed agree that the programs are generating improved student language proficiency, including the students themselves, with the exception of matched cohort secondary students who, like secondary respondents to surveys in general, tend to trail their primary counterparts. Scores around or above four in all cases bar parents (who are close to four) and secondary students as noted, are very encouraging indeed, especially since the ratings of principals and teachers increased noticeably between survey rounds two and three.

Table 21: Principal and teacher responses to program impact (Average)

*Statements:*

1. There is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school
2. Students’ language proficiency is improving in this school
3. Links are being established between students in this school and students in overseas schools (e.g., exchange visits, on-line communication)
4. I believe the language program is achieving its aims
5. The teaching of languages contributes positively to student learning in all subjects
6. Languages are valued as a subject in this school
7. The teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school
8. The role of language teachers is valued by the school community

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | | ***Teachers*** | | |
| **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 3.90 | 4.13 | 4.14 | 3.38 | 3.47 | 3.84 |
| 2 | 3.93 | 3.96 | 4.29 | 3.73 | 3.76 | 4.10 |
| 3 | 3.33 | 3.44 | 3.25 | 3.51 | 3.44 | 3.55 |
| 4 | 3.80 | 4.02 | 4.09 | 3.88 | 3.91 | 4.13 |
| 5 | 3.73 | 3.96 | 4.06 | 4.04 | 4.06 | 4.23 |
| 6 | 4.03 | 4.25 | 4.34 | 3.40 | 3.55 | 3.71 |
| 7 | 4.03 | 4.11 | 4.31 | 3.42 | 3.55 | 3.76 |
| 8 | 3.67 | 3.96 | 3.98 | 3.47 | 3.65 | 3.61 |

Table 22: Matched cohort principal and teacher responses to program impact (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Principals*** | | ***Teachers*** | |
| **Round 2** | **Round 3** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| 1 | 4.19 | 4.31 | 3.67 | 3.81 |
| 2 | 4.00 | 4.36 | 3.83 | 4.06 |
| 3 | 3.26 | 3.45 | 3.42 | 3.46 |
| 4 | 4.00 | 4.14 | 3.98 | 4.13 |
| 5 | 3.95 | 4.14 | 4.06 | 4.21 |
| 6 | 4.30 | 4.36 | 3.63 | 3.67 |
| 7 | 4.14 | 4.38 | 3.67 | 3.71 |
| 8 | 3.98 | 4.07 | 3.77 | 3.62 |

Table 23: Parent and student responses to program impact (Average)

*Statements:*

1. Languages are valued as a subject in this school
2. My child is making good progress in language learning
3. The teaching of languages contributes positively to my child’s learning in all subjects
4. The teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school
5. There is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school
6. My child is making links with students in overseas schools (e.g., exchange visits, on-line communication)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | | | ***Students*** | | | | | |
| **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 1** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* | *Prim* | *Sec* |
| 1 | 3.98 | 3.77 | 4.10 | 3.98 | 3.88 | 3.89 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 3.81 | 3.79 | 3.85 | 3.89 | 3.78 | 3.78 | 3.96 | 3.74 | 4.07 | 3.67 | 4.11 | 3.35 |
| 3 | 3.92 | 3.56 | 3.82 | 3.66 | 3.84 | 3.45 | 3.71 | 3.51 | 4.06 | 3.63 | 4.09 | 3.31 |
| 4 | 3.98 | 3.84 | 4.07 | 4.05 | 3.95 | 3.91 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | 3.86 | 3.72 | 3.83 | 3.76 | 3.64 | 3.69 | 2.95 | 2.90 | 3.24 | 3.26 | 3.27 | 2.91 |
| 6 | 3.13 | 3.02 | 3.03 | 2.93 | 2.94 | 2.73 | 2.94 | 2.99 | 3.31 | 3.09 | 3.30 | 2.80 |

Table 24: Matched cohort parent and student responses to program impact (Average)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Statement*** | ***Parents*** | | | | ***Students*** | | | |
| **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | | **Round 2** | | **Round 3** | |
| Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec | Prim | Sec |
| 1 | 4.02 | 4.07 | 3.89 | 4.00 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 3.80 | 3.85 | 3.80 | 3.98 | 4.11 | 3.70 | 4.19 | 3.29 |
| 3 | 3.80 | 3.62 | 3.83 | 3.50 | 4.11 | 3.61 | 4.20 | 3.20 |
| 4 | 3.96 | 4.15 | 3.98 | 3.94 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | 3.63 | 3.78 | 3.59 | 3.87 | 3.25 | 3.26 | 3.22 | 2.77 |
| 6 | 3.14 | 2.84 | 3.09 | 2.83 | 3.31 | 2.94 | 3.28 | 2.70 |

This no doubt reflects the strong sense that all three adult groups have, and especially the principals, that there is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school. This in turn is manifest in the equally strong belief that languages are valued as a subject in the school, once again with the principals to the fore. Hardly surprising in this context that principals and teachers would both feel that the role of language teachers is valued by the school community, especially given the high rating that parents give the capacities of language teachers as cited earlier in this report.

While principals and teachers are very positive indeed about the extent to which language teaching contributes positively to learning in all subjects, parents and secondary students are much less sure; though the primary students, perhaps surprisingly, have very high scores in this regard. This may in part reflect professional understanding about the way in which concept and skill development in one domain can transcend contexts, and/or the fact there are more CLIL programs in primary than secondary schools where the links are perhaps being more overtly made. On the surface there may be a case for describing to parents and secondary students how learning a language can contribute to learning in other domains, though this may not matter so long as these two stakeholders continue to see the importance of learning a language at school.

Principals very strongly believe that the teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school, much more so than parents and teachers who, nevertheless, are very positive in this regard.

The lowest rated item within the impact variable is the extent to which links are being established between students in the schools and students overseas. Teachers and to a lesser extent principals are moderately positive about this, but parents and students are neutral at best. This could reflect the fact, which also is evident in the interview reports, that most clusters have worked in other ways to develop the programs they provide, with exchanges and other strategies only recently starting to emerge in some.

In what could stand as the final word on impact, it is noted that both principals and teachers agree at a very high level that the language programs in their schools are achieving their aims, with increasing scores for the matched groups. This is a significant outcome in less than twelve months of program implementation in schools.

## Program sustainability

As is clear from the interviews conducted, clusters have thought about the sustainability of programs from their inception, with the result that sustainability has constituted a key part of program design.

More specifically, clusters have generally sought to use the ILPIC funding to make the sort of up-front one-off investments, whether for technology and/or planning and/or capacity building of staff, so the conditions are in place to enable their programs to be sustained.

Typical of the approach is the cluster where

*The ILPIC funding primarily was used for coaching and time for teachers to work together and plan. This, it was noted, is an up-front investment that does not need to occur at the same level again. It initially was needed to get the approach developed and start implementation off right. It in turn has helped to establish languages as more acceptable, and hence sustainable in the schools.*

While most clusters have acted in this way, it cannot be said to apply to all. Two at least acknowledged that sustainability remains an issue to be addressed, as evident in their observations that:

* *sustainability is an issue the cluster recognises it needs to address when ILPIC funding stops. It’s not a matter of will, since the schools definitely want languages retained, but rather of finances which present a challenge that needs to be overcome*; and
* *sustainability of the approach is uppermost in the cluster’s mind and is an issue it recognises it still needs to fully resolve. Presenting videoconference sessions is sustainable as long as a staff member exists who can deliver them; which may mean that schools will have to pay in the same way that some already have paid for access to the Language Centre … The cluster view in this context is that, although user-pays can take it so far, it will need a dedicated coordinator to ensure it is not just something that occurs on a sessional basis, but rather a coordinated and planned approach.*

A key aspect of sustainability in many cases has been the mere formation of the cluster itself and the way in which it enabled the schools to work together to maximise the likelihood that sustainability could collectively be achieved. This is readily evident in one cluster’s observation that

*The primary school principals have all identified funding within their (very tight) SRPs to support languages in 2013, in contrast to the pre-ILPIC period when some schools had no language at all. Collectively they have decided to employ a language assistant between them and are in the process of seeking someone for the role.*

This reflects the fact in this particular cluster that they ‘prefer a face-to-face approach rather than going the videoconference route’. The important thing, however, as far as the cluster is concerned, ‘is that the ILPIC experience has helped create an imperative for the schools to do something about languages provision and everyone is on board with that’.

The importance of having the schools on board through the cluster and recognising the importance of providing languages to students in the cluster is similarly evident in the following comment another cluster made comparing the ILPIC experience with what existed in the past.

*In the past, principals in schools across Victoria have sometimes cut languages because the students have become bored. The sort of process that ensues is that programs are not developmentally appropriate, which manifests in behaviour problems in language classes and then complaints, culminating in cuts.*

*The cluster approach to sustainability is to tackle this systemic problem from the ground up, ensuring appropriate programs are in place and that language teaching capacity is improved, as part of a whole-school approach, so the quality of engagement, and hence student outcomes, are improved. This reflects the firm cluster view that ‘if the students are enjoying languages as is happening in the schools, then the schools will be loath to cut’. This in turn is underpinned by the ongoing efforts to raise awareness of why languages are important in a globalised world …*

Several clusters described how they invested in technology to enable them to sustain their programs in the longer term. Typical of the approach is the cluster which decided that although its funding could have been used to support teaching in primary schools face-to-face, ‘this was not sustainable in the long term when funding ceased’. So it invested in videoconferencing instead. ‘Videoconferencing and teaching of joint classes by a single teacher, alongside work to build the capacity of the classroom teacher at the “second” site, is the nub of sustainability’ as far as this cluster is concerned; albeit, in this case, complicated by the secondary college decision already referred to in this report to change its language in 2013.

The point, as one cluster cogently explained, is that ILPIC funded investments in technology that need not be made again for some time.

*The fact the Polycom system already is established helps contribute to sustainability as it is an investment that does not have to be made again.*

*As indicated earlier, the program will not necessarily have a dedicated secondary-trained teacher providing videoconferencing next year, but can still continue to the extent that the primary teachers can pick up the Ultranet-based course and feel confident to deliver it. This is made more likely by the fact the primary teachers have been in the videoconference classes, albeit not directly delivering them, but still observing and learning from the online teacher’s approach. It also is helped by the addition of … pre and post lesson activities online which add further structure to teaching language lessons to students in primary school. That said, the hope is to collectively source a teacher who could be based in the secondary college and manage the program, including the videoconferencing arrangements and the ongoing development of the Ultranet space.*

In another cluster’s case, the technology in use focuses more on IPads and the Apps associated with them, which the addition of videoconferencing via Polycom can support.

*The cluster does feel its approach is sustainable over time, in part because of the strong focus on leveraging off the use of Apps. There are always new Apps emerging and, since it did its first big multi-App download, it has found lots more it can use to support language learning in and beyond school.*

*As long as the IPads do not get damaged, which is one reason they cannot be borrowed and taken home, then they can be used in class, since there is no need to upgrade them for some time. Teachers are still learning lots about how they can be used so there is a lot of life in them still.*

*Beyond this, teachers are developing their capacity in collaborative ways just by applying the approach with the support of the Ultranet coach. And they now intend to start using the Polycom system to do cross-school mentoring which will further cement working as a cluster in place.*

In the case of one cluster seeking to establish a model of provision that can also support schools outside of its cluster, as noted earlier in this report, the quest for sustainability has led it to think about ‘user pays’. More specifically, the cluster explains that sustainability for it

*centres on building the sort of user-pays arrangements that are being … The way it is being envisaged it would seek schools tapping into virtual delivery of lessons at an agreed time each week where they know the nature of the content and then, having paid for the service, ‘dial into’ the class. Provided there is a local teacher with the class, who will follow up on what is pursued, the cluster sees no real limit to the number of classes that potentially could be involved; and the Lead Contact had experience through the year conducting lessons of this sort with as many as twelve groups.*

While technology has been the focus of most up-front investment for sustainable delivery over time, there are also instances where the money went to building capacity for the longer term. One cluster, for example, explained that from its perspective,

*Perhaps the key to sustainability in the cluster once funding ceases is the way in which it is working to grow its own language teaching expertise in an area where previously it has been difficult to attract qualified staff. As a result of the training already underway and supported by the schools, the cluster by 2014 will have three additional trained language teachers on which to draw …*

*This is all underpinned by the strong and consistent support of cluster principals for the approach and the way in which they have worked together as a result.*

And in one case that arguably brings together the approaches to sustainability that have been outlined, the cluster explains how

*The ILPIC funding supported the schools to meet the big up-front technology costs which now are in place and need not be repeated again. This contributes to the sustainability of the approach. Beyond this, the two secondary college principals have been very supportive of languages and have given time to it as a result. This reflects a vision they have for languages in their schools, including the contribution they can make to better transition into secondary school, and is worthy of credit since it too contributes to the likelihood the approach can be maintained.*

*Put simply, the cluster feels it has developed a model that works, though it requires a lot of time, effort, resources and leadership support up-front, including to get the relationships right. It is important, the cluster advises, to ‘not cut corners along the way’, but to set the system up right. This partly means ensuring the relations are built whereby a real cluster team exists, with the same objective and shared sense of how to proceed, and partly setting a system in place where one teacher does relate to each class, rather than trying to deal with too many classes at once.*

*The sustainability of the approach is evident in the fact that all of the cluster schools are committed to 2013, and discussions are underway to extend the languages taught from one to two where the secondary capacity exists.*

Looked at overall, then, the clear message is that clusters and schools did take sustainability seriously from the start, especially in a context where they knew the grants they received were definitely one-off, and invested in ways that ensured the preconditions were in place to enable them to sustain their approach as most now indicate they will be able to do.

# Conclusion

The overwhelming conclusion from the foregoing discussion of ILPIC initiative program purposes, design, delivery and impact, along with the response to programs to date is that, even in only a relatively short period of time, the initiative has made a real and positive difference to almost all participating clusters and schools. In addition, in key areas, such as the perception of those most closely involved that the programs are meeting their aims, there has been improvement in the survey scores in aggregate and for matched cohort groups.

This is all evident in the fact that:

* clusters now are firmly in place to collaboratively provide languages to students in cluster schools, build the collective capacity of cluster language teaching teams, and increase the likelihood that there will be continuity of languages provision between primary and secondary schools;
* languages are being provided in schools where previously they did not exist, more viable language classes are being generated in year levels in both primary and secondary schools where previously numbers fell short, the time devoted to languages is increasing in a number of schools, and there is generally increased provision of languages in ILPIC schools;
* students appear to be more engaged in language learning as reported by all stakeholders including the students themselves, with the likelihood they will therefore improve their learning outcomes, behave better in class and continue their languages beyond where they previously would; and
* some early signs are beginning to emerge that learning outcomes are starting to improve and students entering/will enter secondary colleges better prepared for learning a language at that level.

What is more, this is happening in ways that stakeholders seem to endorse, as evidenced above, and that are expected to be sustainable as far as most of the clusters are concerned.

These positive outcomes are reinforced by the comments the various stakeholders made when given the opportunity in the surveys they filled out. Many of these comments were, as would be expected, one-off remarks that reflected the view of the individuals concerned. Many others, however, were common to a number of respondents and constituted a more widely-held view.

Principals and teachers in particular were, for instance, consistent in their view that the mere existence of clusters established through the initiative contributed to improved languages provision and better teaching and learning of languages in schools. This can be seen in such typical references to:

* *High quality interaction with other schools in our cluster and the high quality teaching and learning … Sharing between schools in our cluster, of expertise … Students more engaged in learning.*
* *As an immersion school, a big part of the project involvement has been the sharing of our practice and supporting our colleagues in other schools.*
* *Our staff work collaboratively with staff of schools across the cluster, sharing planning every Friday, and participating in interactive online sessions between schools. We have a teacher (and two others in the cluster) undertaking a Grad Dip Languages (Indonesian), hence we are adding to the sustainability of our long-term Languages program. We have invested in iPads etc to increase technology as a tool for language learning. This is engaging to students and staff and has proven successful. Staff support and coach each other to increase their ICT capacity to support the Languages program. The Year 7 music teacher incorporates Indonesian language into the music program (never done in the past). We plan to use a CLIL method of integrating Indonesian and Humanities in Year 8 for 2013 (never done before) and staff and students are receptive to this. Principals in the cluster have gained a heightened awareness of the value of learning a second language, and two principals and five teachers are visiting Indonesia in January.*
* And several teachers observed, as one put it, that *I would like to keep in touch with other schools in our cluster. It was a fantastic opportunity for us to meet regularly and share ideas*.

Central to this in their expressed views through their comments is the value that a blended approach holds, especially as comfort with it grows. As one respondent who reflected many others put it, ‘our teachers are now comfortable with using videoconferencing … Quality learning sessions, well-planned and supported by resources prior to the session’. Others simply listed the approach as being ‘flexible, interesting’ and providing ‘variety’, and many commented on what one simply put as ‘good use of ICT’.

These outcomes, of course, did not come without challenges which, in some cases, continue to apply. One of the biggest challenges aside from some logistical issues, usually related to technology and which progressively are being overcome yet annoy different stakeholders to some extent, is the ability to access quality teachers and staff, especially in more remote areas where they are reluctant to go. Clusters have arguably been much more successful in doing this than individual schools, in part because they can provide better employment options especially when there are only part-time opportunities in the smaller individual primary schools. Nonetheless, this remains a continuing challenge for some clusters whose respondents express concern should a key teacher or language assistant leave.

In some cases respondents did call for more funds to support continuation of the program in 2013. As one comment, reflecting several put it, ‘the ILPIC teachers … have been an excellent addition to the program in 2012. We will make every effort to continue the program in 2013 using online resources but suspect it will be a degraded program’ unless further funding can be found. Just as common as far as principals were concerned (though not necessarily teachers who were more likely to call for more resources), was the observation that ‘I am happy to contribute to the future of the program. It has been a highlight for my students and I will plan to budget for ILPIC teacher time in 2013’. In something of a half-way house, one teacher observed how in their cluster,

*before knowing the cost involved, eight schools out of eight wanted to continue with the program. As such, I considered the whole program to be a success. There have been challenges along the way (technical, diplomatic and organisational), but I believe these have been overcome. The main one remains for next year: the cost.*

A challenge also exists, at least as far as some teachers are concerned, to maintain the level of professional development required, especially to ‘cater for different levels of language ability’, in a context where blended delivery often means ‘there are teachers involved who are not trained language teachers in their schools’.

Challenges aside, though, the summative judgment of the professionals in particular through their survey comments is that , ‘it has been more successful than we could have anticipated’. This was echoed by the commentator who observed that

*it’s been a great project and our cluster has been very successful in improving language learning. All credit to the project leaders and language teachers for the way this was achieved!*

With such positive outcomes from the investment in ILPIC that was made, it’s important to also note the lessons that can be learned from the experience to inform further work of this sort. The ones that really stand out include:

* The need to ensure the participating principals are clearly and firmly on board from the start for the school and cluster programs to take hold. It is well-known from a range of research that leadership makes the difference between whole school (or in this case cluster) improvement and pockets of improvement that otherwise can occur. The ILPIC experience outlined confirms the central importance of principals and other leaders for cluster success.
* The need for clusters to be of manageable size. Most ILPIC clusters fitted this bill, but a few were clearly too large. In some cases the cluster managed this by effectively splitting into almost separate mini-clusters, but in one case as already outlined, the cluster had to be re-formed late in the piece. What constitutes a manageable size can vary depending on context, but could best be defined in terms of the number of schools that effectively can be supported through the structures the cluster establishes for languages program implementation.
* ICTs have an important role to play in more effectively engaging students in language learning in and beyond school. In addition, ICTs can help to provide languages through a blended delivery approach in schools that cannot provide them on their own. Similarly, the use of immersion-based approaches such as CLIL are an effective means of extending languages provision in some schools, provided teachers are appropriately trained for the approach.
* Providing more substantial and better language programs in schools requires the schools and their clusters to have strategies in place that help build the capacity of their language teaching teams. Primarily this involves strategies to enable them to meet together to plan, share and monitor implementation, supplemented by the opportunity to collectively access professional development opportunities that individually they may not be able to get.
* There is an extent to which the way in which schools, clusters and the system as a whole recognise, celebrate and promote the ILPIC achievements to date can contribute to meeting the desire that many parents in particular expressed for more information about language programs and more opportunities to participate in these in some way. This also potentially could help get more partners on board as contributors to language learning, given this has been the weakest aspect of program delivery through the initiative as a whole.
* The work of schools and clusters should be made easier by helping them to ensure they do not, at times, seek to ‘reinvent the wheel’. Language program delivery at the school and cluster level can be supported with advice and exemplars about effective delivery, including how to involve students and parents along the way and provide students with the opportunity to learn in authentic and meaningful ways. Such advice and exemplars could start with approaches and materials the ILPIC clusters already have used with some success.

By keeping these lessons in mind, the DEECD will, in future, be able to support more schools to have the sort of experience described above, and which saw the principals in particular use their survey comments to say such things as

*Thank you to DEECD for supporting our program and providing the opportunity to be part of the ILPIC initiative. We were intending to shift from 50 minutes of LOTE to a partial immersion program before we became associated with ILPIC. Because of their support and involvement (it) has allowed the program to progress, become embedded and build the capacity of our teachers at a much faster rate.*

Suffice to say that, in less than two years of the ILPIC initiative, sufficient evidence has emerged to suggest that the cluster projects have yielded valuable information, processes, strategies and in some cases even teaching and learning materials that can be shared across the system to support the ongoing implementation of *The Victorian Government’s Vision for Languages Education* and its associated commitment to improve the quality and quantity of language programs in Victorian schools.

## Recommendations

1. That in future, a threshold requirement for clusters to receive grants to support the introduction or extension of languages learning be the guaranteed support of each school principal involved in the cluster and a written commitment to support the programs the cluster has agreed to implement.
2. That any future clusters to be formed be urged to limit themselves to a manageable number of schools, defined as the number of schools that can effectively be supported through the structures the cluster establishes for languages program implementation.
3. That schools forming clusters be urged to at least focus on the development of continuity of language provision so primary students can pursue the same language at secondary school, increasing language provision within cluster schools, and identifying strategies for sustaining this in the cluster.
4. That the DEECD consider developing a set of more detailed case studies of blended delivery and immersion-based approaches in selected clusters/schools as examples of successful strategies that other schools and clusters can use to sustainably increase and improve languages provision.
5. That school and cluster delivery of languages be supported with advice and exemplars for involving students and parents and ensuring the opportunity for students to learn in authentic and meaningful ways. The development of such advice and exemplars should start with the experiences, ideas and materials that have been successfully trialled in ILPIC cluster schools.
6. That the DEECD recognise, celebrate and promote the achievements of ILPIC clusters as a means of supporting other schools to learn from the approach and thereby extend their language provision with the support and involvement of stakeholders in the school community/ies.

# Appendix 1: Participating cluster schools

**Barwon South West Region**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Grovedale Cluster***  Grovedale SC  Grovedale PS  Grovedale West PS | ***Hamilton Cluster***  Baimbridge College  Hamilton (Gray St) PS | ***Portland Cluster***  Portland PS  Portland South PS  Portland North PS  Narrawong District PS  Bolwarra PS  Bundarra PS  Portland SC |

**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Monash[Waverley Cluster*** | |
| Huntingdale PS  South Oakleigh HS  Oakleigh PS  Sussex Heights PS  Waverley Meadows PS  Syndal South PS | Brentwood SC  Mount Waverley SC  Glen Waverley South PS  Clayton North PS  Mount Waverley PS  Oakleigh South PS |

**Gippsland Region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Bairnsdale Cluster***  Bairnsdale SC  Bairnsdale PS  Lucknow PS | ***Sale Cluster***  Sale College  Sale PS  Cobains PS |

**Grampians Region**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***University Cluster***  Mount Clear SC  Lal Lal PS  Gordon PS  Napoleons PS  Rokewood PS  Mount Clear PS  Buninyong PS  Mount Pleasant PS | ***Southern Mallee Cluster***  Yaapeet PS  Hopetoun PS  Rainbow PS  Beulah PS  Hopetoun SC  Rainbow HS  Dimboola Memorial SC  Dimboola PS  Jeparit PS | ***Grampians Cluster***  Ararat College  Moyston PS  Great Western PS  Buangor PS  Maroona PS  Stawell SC  Elmhurst PS  Navarre PS  Landsborough PS  Amphitheatre PS  Moonambel PS  Natte Yallock PS  Avoca PS  Beaufort College  Lake Bolac College  Trawalla PS  Halls Gap PS  Concongella PS  Pomonal PS |

**Hume Region**

***Benalla Cluster***

Benalla College

Benalla East PS

Benalla West PS

Benalla PS

Broken Creek PS

Devenish PS

Peranbin Primary College

Thoona PS

**Loddon Mallee Region**

***Bendigo Cluster***

Crusoe SC

Kangaroo Flat PS

Specimen Hill PS

Spring Gully PS

**Northern Metropolitan Region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Inner North Cluster*** | |
| Clifton Hill PS Melbourne Girls’ College  Northcote HS  Fitzroy HS  Brunswick South West PS  Brunswick North PS | Brunswick South PS  Carlton North PS  Fitzroy North PS  Merri Creek PS  Princes Hill PS  Spensley Street PS |

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Somerville-Dromana Cluster*** | |
| Dromana SC  Dromana PS  Red Hill PS  Somerville SC  Somerville Rise PS | Somerville PS  Tyabb Railway PS  Tyabb PS  Sorrento PS  Mt Martha PS |

**Western Metropolitan Region**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Moonee Valley-North Melbourne Cluster*** | |
| Essendon Keilor College  Moonee Ponds West PS  Flemington PS | Essendon PS  North Melbourne PS  Aberfeldie PS |

# Appendix 2: The focus of the ILPIC initiative in each cluster

***Grovedale Cluster***

* Introduction of a VET Applied Languages Program (alongside a VCE Program) in Years 9-10 (Certificate 2) and in Years 11-12 (Certificate 3).
* Introduction of a primary CLIL Program consisting of **40 minutes** per week in the arts in one year level in all primary schools
* Introduction of a secondary CLIL Program consisting of **90 minutes** per week of CLIL in media, film making, music, community work and environment for Year 8.
* Introduction of Global/Languages education evenings for the school community to occur once a term.
* Linkups with Italy on Smartboards located in Italian classrooms.

***Hamilton Cluster***

* Offering 2 hours of contact time to Prep students at Hamilton Gray PS - 1 hour for linguistic tuition and 1 hour for CLIL through art.
* Offering 2 hours of contact time to Grade 4 students at Baimbridge College - 1 hour for linguistic tuition and 1 hour for CLIL through technology.
* Embedding the methodology of total physical response (TPR) and other relevant, hands-on activities into languages lessons at both schools.
* Starting an intensive education/information program for the community, including a community survey to collect relevant data over a period of 5 years, to inform future decisions.
* VET/Languages Certificate 2 for Years 9 and 10 students.

***Portland Cluster***

* Bringing together students for cultural days to celebrate global education, the Indonesian language and culture, intercultural understanding, through sports and games, cooking, music and dance.
* Establishing a mentoring system between primary and secondary students to support transition and between teachers to support professional learning.
* Facilitating conversations between students through online projects (such as through the Ultranet), online classes and e-pals with students from other Portland schools and students in Indonesia.
* Exploring a trial of interactive languages tuition via videoconferencing to primary classes, with additional face-to-face tuition.

***Monash-Waverley Cluster***

* Building Leadership team confidence to lead and facilitate the languages program
* Providing ongoing professional learning, mentoring and opportunities to network and collaborate on program development.
* Increasing student engagement through ICT and differentiation leading to greater language provision.
* Trialling CLIL methodologies by implementing the Australian Science Curriculum in Japanese at Years 5 – 8, with support from technology.
* Collaborating with the John Monash Science School on developing units of work
* Collaborating with sister schools in Japan on scientific investigations.

***Bairnsdale Cluster***

* Employing a part-time coordinator to oversee the project.
* Organising a presentation from a languages expert to the cluster schools and the wider community on the benefits and importance of learning languages.
* Organising professional development workshops and coaching for classroom teachers to give them an introduction to Japanese and develop their skills, including an optional in-country experience.
* Using IPad applications to enhance Japanese learning.
* Engaging students in an international project through iEARN that increases their exposure to the target language (e.g.. a day in the life of students in Japan/Australia)
* Using videoconferencing/webconferencing to:
  + Develop links with Literacy through the development of online books that can be shared with other year levels and cross age tutoring projects.
  + Establish programs whereby students read to each other in the target language, locally or abroad.

***Sale Cluster***

* Authentic language use with parents and students from Japanese playgroup in Warragul
* A presentation from a languages expert to the cluster schools and the wider community on the importance of learning languages.
* Literacy immersion program involving Year 10 students reading Japanese books to small groups of primary students  (either face to face or via videoconferencing) and Year 10 students creating their own digital stories in Japanese for younger students (along with support materials and accompanying activities).
* Using webconferencing for language practice between schools.
* Using IPads for teaching students at the primary and secondary schools the Japanese script.
* Establishing sister school relationships to enable students to develop relationships with Japanese students, learn about their daily lives and have a real purpose for their learning.
* Blended delivery using videoconferencing from the lead school to Years P-2 students at Cobains PS which is not currently offering a languages program.
* Trialling a CLIL program for Prep or Years 1 and 2 in a specialist area.

***University Cluster***

* Developing a range of digital curriculum documentation and activities to be shared among language teachers and students.
* Facilitating visits to the Language Centre providing cultural immersion experiences for students and the wider community.
* Using a shared specialist arrangement to deliver a primary Chinese and Japanese Languages Program to students in rural primary schools.
* Assisting cluster primary schools in setting up sister schools arrangements in China and Japan.
* Sharing a language assistant from Japan and China across cluster schools to provide additional authentic language experiences for all students.
* Enabling a substantially increased number of student enrolments to be accepted into the VET Chinese Certificate 2 program through RMIT in 2012.
* Using videoconferencing facilities to enable students to experience face to face linkups with students in China and Japan, as well as other regional schools, pending the provision of equipment.
* Providing professional learning and language support for teachers via regular scheduled videoconferences with language staff at the Language Centre.

***Southern Mallee Cluster***

* Implementing a blended learning approach to languages learning in P-2 and Years 5-8 – firstly for German and possibly later for students learning Japanese, consisting of direct teaching, video and web conferencing, online resources including the Ultranet, podcasts/vodcasts and periodic face-to-face contact via cluster day activities.
* Developing German and possibly Japanese blended learning curriculum materials for students.
* Facilitating webconference link-ups with sister schools in Germany and Japan.

***Grampians Cluster***

* Implementing a blended learning approach to languages learning for P-10 students, via videoconferencing, Ultranet, Web 2.0 technologies, provision of support material and face-to-face visits between teachers and students.
* Developing a French, German and Chinese blended learning curriculum which is suitable for primary and secondary students.
* Facilitating school-based activities with native speakers in the community (possibly CLIL), such as sport, food and school garden programs.
* Facilitating web conference link-ups with sister schools in China, France and Germany, including virtual excursions.

***Benalla Cluster***

* Providing scholarships to support four teachers to undertake the Graduate Diploma in LOTE (Indonesian) at Deakin University.
* Employing an ICT Coach to support the languages program across the cluster for the first twelve months, to provide in-class support to languages teachers in engaging students through the use of Web 2.0 tools and the Ultranet.
* Creating opportunities using ICT for students to interact with Indonesian native speakers through the Indonesian Language Assistant, associates in the School of Languages at Monash University, the VSL, other government schools with high quality Indonesian programs (e.g.. Wallan SC) and sister-school communications.
* Forming a Professional Learning Team (PLT) for cluster languages teachers to use data to inform their teaching, and develop strategies to develop interest in the Indonesian language, high-level skills in language use, and a sense of fun in Languages learning.
* Working in partnership with the Languages and Multicultural Education Resources Centre (LMERC) to develop a bank of Indonesian ‘realia kits’ available to all cluster schools.
* Creating an authentic Indonesian learning space at the BER Language Centre at Benalla College, and regularly facilitating visits by students from all schools (physically and virtually).  This includes a kitchen for use by the Indonesian program.
* Looking at possibilities of extending the bilingual program, e.g.. Two streams at the secondary college.
* Supporting teachers to develop a strong Indonesian scope and sequence to provide effective languages learning pathways for all students.
* Using videoconferencing technology to allow live lessons to be delivered across schools.
* Purchasing a class set of netbooks and/or other appropriate devices for each school which are dedicated for learning languages.

***Bendigo Cluster***

* Exploring the effective use of IPads and language learning applications to engage students in the language.
* Using videoconferencing equipment as well as web conferencing with interactive whiteboards to enable students and teachers to work with native speakers in Indonesia/Malaysia and Germany and bring authentic situations and language use into their classrooms.
* Enabling teachers to share resources and ideas through an Ultranet Design Space.
* Enabling students across the cluster to access and share online resources for language learning through an Ultranet Collaborative Learning Space.
* Expanding languages provision to all students.

***Inner North Cluster***

* Establishing a small *Executive Planning Group* to develop a business plan to ensure the sustainable provision of languages across the cluster, beyond the funding period.
* Forming a *Networked Professional Community* to facilitate collective professional learning across the cluster, including conferences, linking with languages experts and online networking.

* Developing a ‘hot house’/‘summer-school' style language and immersion program and after-school language program for French (possibly Italian and Mandarin Chinese later), to address the learning needs of three cohorts: beginners, intermediate and accomplished.
* Exploring and developing the innovative teaching practices associated with Accelerated Integrative Methodology (AIM) in schools teaching French, Mandarin and possibly Italian.
* Producing instructional videos, lessons and learning activities that can be used in Ultranet and shared across the system to support a CLIL approach to language learning.
* Initiating a small-scale Italian CLIL program in one primary school (possibly Brunswick South PS).

***Somerville-Dromana Cluster***

* Employing a Project Coordinator to guide curriculum planning to link primary and secondary programs, develop timetables for web conference sessions between member schools, purchase necessary resources and build relationships between the stakeholder groups, e.g. primary classroom and language teachers.
* Implementing a blended languages program across the cluster using a combination of face-to-face lessons and web conference lessons with classroom teachers supervising and assisting their class.
* Facilitating authentic language use through workshops with languages assistants and Secondary School VET students and through web conference link-ups with schools in Japan and Indonesia.

***Moonee Valley-North Melbourne Cluster***

* Establishing a steering committee that involves all principals.
* Facilitating opportunities for students to connect and communicate with native speakers of Italian and Japanese by building on existing sister school relationships and overseas visitors.
* Facilitating immersion days and camps for students across the cluster in Italian and Japanese.
* Sharing Language Interns (Italian through COASIT), Language Aides and Master of Teaching students (University of Melbourne) across the cluster to support the languages program.
* Facilitating cross-age tutoring between the secondary and primary students.
* Developing a professional learning program for staff including access to highly skilled language educators and expertise within the cluster.
* Using webconferencing to facilitate oral language practice with sister schools and from secondary to primary schools.

# Appendix 3: Online stakeholder surveys and partner organisation questionnaire

(Note: The reports on the respective survey responses are provided as separate Excel files.)

## ILPIC Parent Survey

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question No** | **Question** | **Response** | | | | |
| 1 | In what year level is your child enrolled? | Prep |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 7 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 8 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 9 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 10 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Which language(s) does your child study? | Chinese |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | French |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | German |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Indonesian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Italian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Japanese |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | How many periods of language study does your child have each week? | 1 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | My child works hard in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 5 | My child enjoys language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 6 | My child practices their language(s) at home | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 7 | My child finds their language classes interesting | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 8 | The school has a clearly stated purpose for its language program | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 9 | The teaching of languages is supported with other extra-curricular activities | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 10 | I know that my child will be able to study the same languages in secondary as in primary school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 11 | I would recommend the language program in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 12 | Language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 13 | The language program aims to improve my child’s understanding of other cultures | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 14 | My child is making good progress in language learning | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 15 | There are cultural days when schools celebrate global education, languages and cultures together | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 16 | There is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 17 | There is sufficient time for language teaching in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 18 | There is sufficient information about the language program in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 19 | There is sufficient access to technology (e.g. Interactive Whiteboards, virtual classrooms, webcasts) for language learning | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 20 | My child has the opportunity to experience traditional culture and language activities in the relevant language(s) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 21 | I value the opportunity my child has to learn a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 22 | There is a mix of face-to-face teaching and on-line learning in my child’s language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 23 | The language program is designed to help my child to become fluent in a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 24 | Language teaching contributes to global understanding in the community | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 25 | The teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 26 | Languages are taught by teachers who know their subject matter well | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 27 | The language program aims to improve my child’s employment prospects | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 28 | I have the opportunity to be involved in language program activities in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 29 | Students are well-behaved in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 30 | There is regular assessment of my child’s progress in languages | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 31 | Students enjoy learning languages in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 32 | Technology(e.g. online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used to support language teaching | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 33 | I have the opportunity to be involved in the learning of languages in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 34 | It is important that my child learns a language at school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 35 | The teaching of languages contributes positively to my child’s learning in all subjects | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 36 | My child is making links with students in overseas schools (e.g. exchange visits, on-line communication) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 37 | The teaching of languages is an important element of the school program as a whole | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 38 | There is a variety of activities in my child’s language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 39 | My child willingly does homework for language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 40 | Languages are valued as a subject in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 41 | Languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 42 | Language classes help my child to make valuable connections (e.g. sister schools, e-pals, cultural events) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 43 | Learning a language will benefit my child later in life | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 44 | What aspects of your child's languages program are you most satisfied with? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 45 | Are there any aspects of your child's languages program that could be improved upon? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 46 | Are there any further comments you wish to add in relation to your child's language program (if none type “None”)? | Free text |  |  |  |  |

## ILPIC Principal Survey

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question No** | **Question** | **Response** | | | | |
| 1 | Which Year level(s) at your school will be involved in the ILPIC Initiative? | Prep |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 7 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 8 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 9 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 10 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Which language(s) will be covered by the ILPIC initiative at your school? | Chinese |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | French |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | German |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Indonesian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Italian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Japanese |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | What is the nature of the ILPIC Initiative in your school? | Content and integrated language learning or partial immersion language program | | | | |
|  |  | Blended languages learning incorporating online interactions with a language teacher | | | | |
|  |  | Authentic languages practice and use, through sister school relationships, workshops with native speakers and language immersion camps | | | | |
|  |  | Innovative use of online languages resources to enhance the languages program delivered | | | | |
|  |  | Partnerships with complementary language providers, non-government schools, business, community, vocational education training providers and universities | | | | |
| 4 | If the nature of the ILPIC Initiative in your school is not described in Question 3, please describe, otherwise go to Question 5? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Which other subjects include teaching of content in a language other than English in your school? | Arts |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | English |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Humanities |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Mathematics |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Science |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Other |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | If you selected ‘Other’ in Question 5, please specify the subjects | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | What time is allocated each week for language classes you teach (in minutes) this year? |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Prep | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 1 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 3 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 4 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 5 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 6 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 7 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 8 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 9 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 10 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 11 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 12 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | What time was allocated each week for language classes you taught (in minutes) last year? |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Prep | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 1 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 3 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 4 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 5 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 6 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 7 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 8 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 9 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 10 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 11 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
|  | 12 | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | It is important that students learn a language at school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 10 | Language classes help students to make valuable connections (e.g. sister schools, e-pals, cultural events) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 11 | The language program is designed to help students to become fluent in a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 12 | The school has a clearly stated purpose for its language program | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 13 | The language program aims to improve students’ employment prospects | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 14 | The language program aims to improve students’ understanding of other cultures | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 15 | Learning a language will benefit students later in their lives | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 16 | Language teaching contributes to global understanding in the community | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 17 | Language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 18 | There is sufficient information about the language program in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 19 | There is sufficient time for language teaching in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 20 | The teaching of languages is an important element of the school program as a whole | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 21 | Opportunities are provided for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful situations | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 22 | The teaching of languages is supported with other extra-curricular activities | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 23 | Parents and others are involved in the learning of languages in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 24 | Students know they will be able to study the same languages in secondary as in primary school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 25 | The program is designed to foster collaboration between cluster schools in delivering languages | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 26 | There is a mix of face-to-face teaching and on-line learning in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 27 | There is sufficient access to technology (e.g. online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) for language learning | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 28 | There is access to native language speakers to support language learning in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 29 | Languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 30 | Language teaching in the school depends on some virtual delivery for the program to run | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 31 | The school has mechanisms in place to retain its language teachers for program continuity | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 32 | Professional learning opportunities are provided to support language teachers in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 33 | The school leadership supports the implementation of language teaching | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 34 | Languages are taught by teachers who know their subject matter well | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 35 | Students have the opportunity to experience traditional cultural activities in the relevant language(s) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 36 | There is a variety of activities in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 37 | There are opportunities for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 38 | There is regular assessment of progress in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 39 | Technology (e.g. online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used to support language teaching | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 40 | Native language speakers are used to support language teaching | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 41 | The involvement of partners (e.g. business, community organisations, tertiary institutions) contributes to language teaching in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 42 | Partners are sufficiently involved in the program | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 43 | There is sufficient planning time and other support for language teachers | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 44 | Language teachers work with teachers of other subject areas to align and/or reinforce their content | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 45 | There are cultural days when schools celebrate global education, languages and cultures together | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 46 | The cluster schools collaborate closely to provide languages to their students | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 47 | The school’s language assistant enriches the language program, by providing learning opportunities that would otherwise not be available (if applicable). | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 48 | The school’s language assistant helps to promote the language within the school and broader community (if applicable). | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 49 | Students enjoy language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 50 | Students are well-behaved in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 51 | Students work hard in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 52 | Students willingly do homework for language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 53 | Students find their language classes interesting | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 54 | Students enjoy learning languages in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 55 | Students feel they are developing greater proficiency in one or more languages | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 56 | Partners are sufficiently acknowledged in the program | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 57 | Parents value the opportunity their children have to learn a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 58 | There is growing interest in language learning in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 59 | I would recommend the language program in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 60 | Languages are valued as a subject in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 61 | I believe the language program is achieving its aims | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 62 | Students’ language proficiency is improving in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 63 | The teaching of languages contributes positively to student learning in all subjects | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 64 | The teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 65 | There is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 66 | The role of language teachers is valued by the school community | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 67 | Links are being established between students in this school and students in overseas schools (e.g. exchange visits, on-line communication) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 68 | What do you see as the highlights of your languages program? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 69 | What do you see are the main challenges of your languages program? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 70 | Are there any further comments you wish to add in relation to your language program (if none, type “None”)? | Free text |  |  |  |  |

## ILPIC Student Survey

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question No** | **Question** | **Response** | | | | |
| 1 | What Year level are you in? | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 7 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 8 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 9 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 10 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Which language(s) do you study? | Chinese |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | French |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | German |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Indonesian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Italian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Japanese |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | How many periods of language study do you have each week? | 1 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The teaching of languages helps my learning in other subjects | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 5 | Students willingly do homework for language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 6 | Students are well-behaved in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 7 | I would recommend the language program in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 8 | I understand the importance of learning languages at school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 9 | Students enjoy learning languages in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 10 | I am getting better in the language I am learning | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 11 | I am making links with students in overseas schools (e.g. exchange visits, on-line communication) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 12 | The language program is designed to help me to become fluent in a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 13 | My language teachers know their subject matter well | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 14 | There are enough different things to do in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 15 | Language teaching is relevant to other subjects I study in school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 16 | The language program aims to improve my understanding of other cultures | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 17 | I find my language classes interesting | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 18 | I know that I can learn the same language from primary school through to secondary school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 19 | The teaching of languages is supported with other activities outside of class (e.g. cultural days) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 20 | There is regular assessment of how well I am learning the language | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 21 | My parents can take part in some of my language program activities | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 22 | I have the chance to practise using my language learning in real ways (e.g. writing an email to another student in an overseas school) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 23 | Language classes help me to make valuable connections (e.g. sister schools, e-pals, cultural events) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 24 | Learning a language will benefit me later in life | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 25 | Technology (e.g. online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used in my language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 26 | The language program aims to improve my chance of getting a job | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 27 | Students work hard in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 28 | My parents are pleased I am able to learn a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 29 | I enjoy language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 30 | I practise the language I am learning at home | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 31 | I have the opportunity to experience traditional culture and language activities in the language(s) I am learning | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 32 | There is enough time for language teaching in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 33 | It is important that I learn a language at school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 34 | There is enough technology (e.g. online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) for language learning | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 35 | There are cultural days when we celebrate global education, languages and cultures together | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 36 | People other than teachers are involved in the language program in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 37 | What do you enjoy most about your school's languages program? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 38 | What do you enjoy least about your school's languages program? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 39 | Do you have any further comments about your languages program (if none type “None”)? | Free text |  |  |  |  |

## ILPIC Language Teacher Survey

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question No** | **Question** | **Response** | | | | |
| 1 | In which Year level(s) do you teach languages? | Prep |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 7 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 8 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 9 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 10 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Which of the following language(s) do you teach? | Chinese |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | French |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | German |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Indonesian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Italian |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Japanese |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | What time is allocated each week for language classes you teach (in minutes) this year? | Prep |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 7 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 8 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 9 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 10 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 11 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 12 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | What time was allocated each week for language classes you taught (in minutes) last year? | Prep |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 4 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 5 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 6 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 7 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 8 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 9 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 10 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 11 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 12 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Technology (e.g. online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used to support language teaching | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 6 | Language teaching in the school depends on some virtual delivery for the program to run | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 7 | Professional learning opportunities are provided to support me in the delivery of language classes in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 8 | There are opportunities for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 9 | Native language speakers are used to support language teaching | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 10 | Students have the opportunity to experience traditional culture activities in the relevant language(s) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 11 | There is regular assessment of progress in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 12 | The involvement of partners (e.g. business, community organisations, tertiary institutions) contributes to language teaching in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 13 | Students feel they are developing greater proficiency in one or more languages | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 14 | The language program is designed to help students to become fluent in a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 15 | Opportunities are provided for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful situations | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 16 | Parents and others are involved in the learning of languages in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 17 | My role is valued by the school community | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 18 | Language teachers work with teachers of other subject areas to align and/or reinforce their content | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 19 | Learning a language will benefit students later in their lives | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 20 | The language program aims to improve students’ employment prospects | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 21 | I would recommend the language program in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 22 | I believe the language program is achieving its aims | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 23 | There are cultural days when schools celebrate global education, languages and cultures together | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 24 | There is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 25 | The teaching of languages contributes positively to student learning in all subjects | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 26 | Links are being established between students in this school and students in overseas schools (e.g. exchange visits, on-line communication) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 27 | I know my subject matter well | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 28 | Students work hard in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 29 | There is sufficient time for language teaching in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 30 | Language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 31 | The program is designed to foster collaboration between cluster schools in delivering languages | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 32 | There is sufficient access to technology (e.g. online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) for language learning | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 33 | Parents value the opportunity their children have to learn a language other than English | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 34 | I have sufficient planning time and other support for the delivery of language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 35 | Students know they will be able to study the same languages in secondary as in primary school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 36 | Language classes help students to make valuable connections (e.g. sister schools, e-pals, cultural events) | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 37 | The language program aims to improve students’ understanding of other cultures | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 38 | Students enjoy language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 39 | There is a mix of face-to-face teaching and on-line learning in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 40 | The school has a clearly stated purpose for its language program | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 41 | The school has mechanisms in place to retain its language teachers for program continuity | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 42 | There is a variety of activities in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 43 | I am appropriately trained to teach language classes in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 44 | Partners are sufficiently involved in the program | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 45 | The school leadership supports the implementation of language teaching | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 46 | Students find their language classes interesting | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 47 | The teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 48 | The teaching of languages is supported with other extra-curricular activities | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 49 | Languages are valued as a subject in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 50 | Language teaching contributes to global understanding in the community | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 51 | Partners are sufficiently acknowledged in the program | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 52 | It is important that students learn a language at school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 53 | The school’s language assistant enriches the language program, by providing learning opportunities that would otherwise not be available (if applicable). | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 54 | There is growing interest in language learning in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 55 | Students willingly do homework for language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 56 | The teaching of languages is an important element of the school program as a whole | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 57 | Students’ language proficiency is improving in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 58 | There is access to native language speakers to support language learning in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 59 | The cluster schools collaborate closely to provide languages to their students | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 60 | Students enjoy learning languages in this school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 61 | The school’s language assistant helps to promote the language within the school and broader community (if applicable). | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 62 | There is sufficient information about the language program in the school | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 63 | Students are well-behaved in language classes | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 64 | What do you see as the highlights of your languages program? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 65 | What do you see are the main challenges of your languages program? | Free text |  |  |  |  |
| 66 | Are there any further comments you wish to add in relation to your language program (if none, type “None”)? | Free text |  |  |  |  |

## ILPIC Partner Organisation Questionnaire

**Department of Education and Early Childhood Development**

**Innovative Languages Provision in Clusters Initiative**

**Questionnaire for Partner Organisations**

**Cluster <Cluster Name**

**Cluster Schools <School Name 1>**

**<School Name 2>**

**<School Name X>**

**Partner Organisation <Partner Organisation Name>**

**Partner Organisation Contact <Partner Organisation Contact Name>**

<Cluster Lead Contact> has advised that your organisation is assisting with the *Innovative Languages Provision in Clusters Initiative* for <Cluster Name>. The Department of Education and Early Childhood has contracted *Laulon Research Consortium* to complete an evaluation of the *Innovative Languages Provision in Clusters Initiative.* To inform this evaluation, it would be appreciated if you could complete the following questionnaire. Responses to the questionnaire are confidential and no individual organisation or person will be identified in the evaluation report.

1. What is your understanding of the scope of the language program your organisation is supporting?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the nature of your organisation’s support for the program?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Why is your organisation supporting a language program in a cluster of schools?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How was your organisation involved in the design and start-up of the program? How is your organisation involved in its delivery?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What benefits do you expect will be gained from this approach to languages teaching? How are you involved in monitoring the outcomes?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How is your organisation’s role acknowledged? Are you satisfied with this?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How will the program your organisation is supporting contribute to a better understanding of the importance of learning a language in the community as a whole?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Is there anything else important about this languages program and your role in it that you think we should know?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 4: Notes of second round cluster interviews

## ILPIC1: Grovedale Cluster, Barwon South West Region

Interview conducted on 16 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The core of the initiative has been to develop a continuous, ongoing, innovative and effective languages program in Italian in a low socio-economic, disadvantaged cluster where languages have not really been particularly valued to date.

All cluster decisions in this context have been framed in terms of quality language learning and the development of a greater team approach around language learning in the three schools. This reflects the fact that, although the schools have operated as a cluster in other domains, such as literacy and numeracy, they have not done so in relation to languages, hence a shared ILPIC purpose has been as much to develop their commonality around language learning as to promote the teaching and learning of Italian within the schools.

**Program Design**

An important focus to start was to ensure that the principals were meeting, talking and agreeing about what they were seeking so the requisite leadership support was in place. Then within this context, time was provided for teachers to meet and plan the core and CLIL programs the cluster wanted to collaboratively introduce to primary schools.

The core program is designed to focus on the linguistic teaching of Italian, while the CLIL program focuses on the performing arts in the primary schools. Together the programs are delivered by a team of teachers comprising one teacher who works solely in the core, one who works across the core and CLIL and two who work only in the CLIL program.

Secondary teachers involved in delivery of the program, as outlined below, had time to meet in professional learning teams in the primary schools so they could be connected to the core work of those schools, and thereby ensure that the Italian language programs met the needs of both the primary and secondary schools.

**Program Delivery**

The core, linguistic program is delivered by a primary teacher in one of the two primary schools, by a teacher who is working jointly with the secondary college and the primary school in the case of another, and by secondary staff at the college. All of the core programs adopt an immersion-based approach which is consistently applied across the cluster schools.

The primary CLIL program focuses on the performing arts with a particular emphasis on working with girls. In semester one, the program only involved girls in both schools, and continued this way in semester two in one school, but in the other, extended to boys in the area of music with a focus on guitar. The program promotes language learning through the arts in a way that also involves the community, particularly through the performances that then occur. All of the secondary language teachers have worked in the primary schools as part of this program, which is having a flow on to their overall pedagogical approach, especially as they gain a greater appreciation of the work of these schools and the level of understanding of the students they later will receive.

The CLIL program at the secondary level operates at Years 7 and 8 and has cycled through a number of areas over recent years including physical education, food and, in 2012, media.

Students in the primary schools receive their regular Italian teaching plus CLIL for two and a half hours a week, and the secondary students receive three sessions, or 150 minutes of language instruction a week.

An important element of program delivery is not just to ensure a consistent language is adopted across the cluster, but to also cement the same style of Italian teaching and approach to learning Italian at school. This will contribute to common expectations being developed across the cluster, such as the use of a broad immersion approach. Thus, when students move from primary to secondary school, they not only come better prepared, but know what to expect in terms of the approach that their teachers will adopt.

Central to delivery has been the professional learning support the language teachers, particularly in primary, have received. For example, some of the ILPIC funding was used to provide some coaching for teachers in a context where they tend to be the ones who miss out. ‘Mainstream’ primary classroom teachers often get coaching in literacy and numeracy which specialists, such as the language teachers, do not commonly receive. The coaching they have received through ILPIC has helped to improve their general pedagogical skill level and contributed to a decline in student management issues in language classes and better student engagement as a result.

Beyond this, developing a much clearer languages teaching team across the cluster as a whole has meant that for some teachers, such as the teacher who works in more than one school, they have been part of an Italian language teaching team for the first time.

**Responses to the Program**

One of the most observable responses has been a decline in negativity in the cluster about language learning at school. Traditionally many parents have not seen the value, or even necessity of learning a language and have sometimes experienced what might be described as ‘a tarnished brand’.

Having a whole cluster approach helps the primary schools since it enables them to point to the fact that the students need Italian for when they go to secondary school. Aside from this, as the pedagogy has improved by virtue of the joint planning and team work that exists, students have become more engaged with the result their talk about languages at home is more positive than in the past. This is further helped by the positive impact the culminating CLIL program performances have in the community and the way in which the parents can be engaged. At the secondary level, although the non-language secondary teachers are not especially touched by the program at all, the student managers report there are fewer incidences of poor behaviour in language classes in the school.

Central to these positive responses, according to the cluster itself, has been the decision from 2011, when ILPIC commenced, to shift from Japanese and Indonesian to Italian across the three schools. This is seen as being a more ‘sensible’ language choice for the community that has given languages education a real boost.

**Program Impact**

The secondary college in particular expects that from 2013 it will receive students who are better prepared to learn Italian at the secondary level and more attuned to the immersion approach the school adopts.

Beyond this, it expects that in future its English teachers will be better able to make references to grammatical concepts that, at present, only come from studying a language in the school. In effect, the school seeks a flow-on of a clearer understanding of grammatical elements of language through the professional interaction between teachers that is underway, and the dialogue the students themselves will start to have because of their understanding of the sorts of concepts involved. This, it is expected, will have a positive pedagogical benefit for the school.

The general improvement in student engagement is evident in the decline in unruliness in language classes in the schools. It has been noted at the secondary level at least, that the college has yet to have a parent come to demand that their child not do a language in the way that used to happen in the past. In other words, people are no longer looking for reasons to object.

Since the primary schools are somewhat newer to teaching languages in a consistent way, they are working and struggling with it a bit more, but the coaching and consistency of focus between the primary and secondary years is helping in this regard. In addition, teachers can see the improved engagement of students which helps reinforce what they are seeking to implement.

**Program Sustainability**

The ILPIC funding primarily was used for coaching and time for teachers to work together and plan. This, it was noted, is an up-front investment that does not need to occur at the same level again. It initially was needed to get the approach developed and start implementation off right. It in turn has helped to establish language as more acceptable, and hence sustainable in the schools.

## ILPIC2: Hamilton Cluster, Barwon South West Region

Interview conducted on 22 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The cluster has pursued an ambitious program aimed at providing an effective Italian language program to students from primary through to VCE and/or VET Certificates 2 and 3 level, linked to vocational pathways via the VET Hospitality/Languages Program at the secondary college. At the same time, it has sought to promote a change in relation to global education and the study of languages in the local community through information and education as well as involving parents and mainstream teachers in the language programs.

**Program Design**

Having identified a very ambitious purpose to pursue, the cluster designed its implementation to spread over two years that essentially involved preparation in year one and initial delivery in 2012.

Since the primary school did not really have a language program before ILPIC, other than some token activities, the cluster decided to focus initial attention on Prep students this year. This reflects a view that if languages can take hold at that level, then they progressively can be spread through the school as the Prep students move up and continue to take a language each year. The program was then delivered by a native-speaking Italian teacher from the secondary component of its partner P-12 college who came and took classes at the primary school.

**Program Delivery**

The secondary Italian teacher provided the Prep students a 45 minute language class once a week, supplemented by an extra 45 minute CLIL session in Art where he provided Italian input alongside the school’s own Art teacher. Although some early teething difficulties were experienced as the two teachers sorted out their respective roles, this quickly was resolved with the support of regional staff who helped in planning some early lessons with an Italian focus through art. The fact that the primary school teachers and students have found the Italian teacher to be very engaging and innovative only further helped in this regard.

Aside from the work of the Italian teacher, who provides the link between the emerging language program at primary and the more substantial offerings at the P-12 school, a secondary-based language assistant also periodically supports the teachers and students in Prep.

In order to prepare for maintaining the program in future, the primary school’s recent Prep transition session included an Italian afternoon for pre-schoolers, which built on some interest generated through an earlier article in the local paper, The Spectator.

While the P-12 college has delivered VET to Certificate 2 level, it did not attract sufficient students to offer level 3. Fifteen students undertook Certificate 2 in Year 9 in 2012, with the likelihood they will continue into next year, so the college will run both Year 9 and 10 groups, with Year 9 already assured.

Beyond this, the college has selected six of these students through interview to participate in a trip to Italy the school and region are organising, which is seen as a ‘big innovation’ for this rather mono-cultural area where students have not had such opportunities in the past.

The other premise that guides the cluster’s work is that all of this language-based activity will, in time, contribute to the overall global education of the community, particularly as they see that language education matters, is do-able in the schools, and delivers valuable outcomes for the students concerned. The cluster has, in this context, worked to deliver targeted activities to get the message across. It has talked to parents about the big picture of language learning at transition nights and used Departmental information not only to demonstrate the benefits of learning a language, but to also show how those benefits can transfer to other learning the students undertake.

The Italian teacher has used a range of technology to support his teaching and learning approach, including Interactive Whiteboards and computers, but the cluster has not used videoconferencing to date. This, it was acknowledged, is something it may need to look at more as ILPIC funding ceases and the programs initiated need to be maintained.

**Responses to the Program**

The response to the program is described by the cluster as ‘amazing’, especially in the primary school. The students, who have not really had a language before, are finding it ‘really engaging’, in large part because of the mix of activities the Italian teacher provides, built on the knowledge of audience he has. Together, the teachers involved have provided students with a mix of art, singing, games and more to supplement the more formal language teaching they receive and this has proved very successful indeed. This, it should be noted, is particularly impressive since delivery is driven by a secondary Italian teacher who has made the usually difficult jump to teaching much younger students at Prep.

The upshot is that parents are very pleased about the experience their children are having and, in contrast with their usual view about languages, are keen to keep the program going in future years. Prep parents in particular have an expectation that the program will continue into Year 1 next year and then progressively flow through the school.

**Program Impact**

The most obvious impact to date is in the engagement the Prep students have with language learning and the fact there already is a viable Certificate 2 group in Year 9 with the potential for a Certificate 3 group at Year 10 in 2013. This, it was noted, not only is building a critical mass in the college for this particular VET program, but is also giving more kudos to VET since it’s a challenging program with real work, and not something that is seen as ‘Mickey Mouse’. What’s more, this is something the cluster expects to accelerate even further still with the planned visit to Italy, since it’s an opportunity that students in this area don’t usually have.

This in turn contributes to opening the eyes of the community, which the trip will only reinforce. Hamilton does tend to be somewhat ‘insular’ and disconnected from other cultures, and the cluster’s work has made a start in helping to break this down.

Beyond this, it appears as if the students are gaining some language skills and now want to continue languages at school. This is most clearly evident at Year 9 in the college, since language programs are electives and yet the school is attracting viable groups.

At the primary level, the program currently is limited to Prep but, as foreshadowed earlier, is expected to go to Year 1 and then up through the school. As this occurs, both schools expect that the students will be better prepared to continue a language into the secondary part of the college and more likely to choose it as an elective as a result. In addition, primary teachers are sharing stories about the experience, which influences each other’s thinking, and the school intends to run some cross-cultural celebrations and activities that will embrace all students from Prep to Year 6.

**Program Sustainability**

The work of the secondary Italian teacher has influenced both the Art and Prep teachers who stay in the classroom with him and, as a result of the teacher talk that occurs, others throughout the school. The upshot is that three or four primary school teachers are learning Italian with the support of the Language Assistant from the P-12 college after school.

That said, sustainability is an issue the cluster recognises it needs to address when ILPIC funding stops. It’s not a matter of will, since the schools definitely want languages retained, but rather of finances which present a challenge that needs to be overcome.

One thing that does help a little in this regard is the college decision to close its P-4 component from 2013 so it becomes just 5-12. This means that P-4 language provision will occur within the primary school, and then feed into Year 5 at the college, with the result that attention in this regard can entirely be on the primary school rather than shared between the sites.

## ILPIC3: Portland Cluster, Barwon South West Region

Interview conducted on 18 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The cluster’s purpose from the start has been to establish a sustainable Indonesian program across all of the primary schools in the Portland area with the support of a shared resource centre located at the secondary college, and using a blended delivery approach involving a mix of face-to-face teaching and videoconferencing to overcome the distances involved. The only change that has occurred is that the resource centre is sited at Portland Primary, rather than the secondary college. That said, Portland Secondary College is still involved, especially as Indonesian spreads through the cluster as a whole, compared with earlier years where some primary schools had no language offered at all, or a disconnected language such as French because of the teacher the school had.

**Program Design**

The program design has altered over time as it has been tested in practice by the schools.

The videoconference sessions initially started with students in Prep to Year 2 in each of the primary schools, supplemented by face-to-face teaching in some, though not all. Students in other year levels received their language teaching face-to-face. The videoconference sessions were delivered by a secondary college teacher who used an immersion approach whereby no English was used at all.

The cluster’s experience was that the face-to-face teaching proved more effective than videoconferencing, and students responded better to it, because the language assistant who works across the cluster could stop as needed and use English to explain things the students did not understand. Beyond this, the jump for a secondary teacher to taking students at the junior end of a primary school is very marked, with the result that initially lessons were too ambitious and arguably tried to cover too much. This often frustrated the primary classroom teachers and has had to be scaled back. The situation has been rectified through changes outlined in the discussion of delivery below, but it does suggest to the cluster that, in hindsight it might have been better to start with students in the senior, rather than junior levels of primary school.

**Program Delivery**

The level of face-to-face delivery varies according to the capacity of participating primary schools to put the cluster language assistant on their SRP. Those who cannot manage it receive face-to-face teaching once each three weeks through the ILPIC funding, while those who can do it get more. These sessions are conducted with the class teacher present and primarily involve direct language teaching for the students.

The Prep to Year 2 videoconferencing, as mentioned, involves an immersion approach. Initially, two classes received a 45 minute lesson at the same time, but the teachers found that often the students were more interested in watching the other class on the screen than paying attention to what the delivering (secondary) teacher had to say. Thus, the approach was restructured to enable the teacher to deliver to only one class, thereby reducing the distraction, and for only 30 instead of 45 minutes so the level of input was reduced. This has proven much more successful, with the result the students are much more engaged.

While the secondary college is not directly engaged in this language teaching, it does have significant input to the language learning of students in primary schools. For example, the college has gained sponsorship through another (non-ILPIC) program to host a trained teacher from Indonesia for 12 months who, as a condition of her sponsorship, spends time in primary schools where she has shadowed the language assistant for a term. This has proved particularly valuable since the assistant and the teacher have different religious backgrounds, which has exposed the students to more than just one view.

The college has also had student exchanges which have seen Indonesian students, teachers and parents visit the primary schools for a day to engage in a range of cultural activities and meet with the students in the school. And the college will conduct a language day in December where primary students are invited to spend a day at the college and the secondary students undertaking Indonesian will run part of the day.

**Responses to the Program**

While it took some time to iron out the approach and get teachers on board with videoconferencing, they are progressively getting used to the Polycom technology and becoming more comfortable with it. This has been helped by the changes to videoconference lessons outlined.

Parents are described as ‘thrilled’ with the whole program since most of them want their children to be able to study a language at school. Teachers have gone from an initial position of hesitation as they were confronted by an unknown approach, to substantial enthusiasm, evident in the fact they are supporting plans to keep the arrangement in place from next year.

The principals have been on board from the start and really led the program in the schools. This has proved critical, not only for generating the project and its approach, but also progressively bringing other people on board.

**Program Impact**

An important outcome of the ILPIC initiative has been the increase in alignment around language provision between the secondary college and its neighbouring primary schools. Indonesian has now been established as a common language across the cluster, provided in all cluster schools, which didn’t exist in the past when some schools offered no language and others offered languages such as French which detracted from students’ ability to pursue the same language into secondary school.

Stakeholders have been very positive about the shift, moving beyond some early reluctance born from concerns about how languages would fit. This in part reflects the key role the school leaders have played, not only promoting the importance of learning a language at school, but also demonstrating how it can effectively be done.

The schools have experienced what is referred to as a ‘wonderful’ level of student engagement in learning a language. They know the students are engaged because they have observed them repeating things in the playground they heard in their lessons, asking their parents to cook Indonesian foods, and generally discussing some of the issues that have been raised in class.

This, it was suggested, has even contributed to greater levels of respect for other cultures within and beyond the cluster schools. Parents too have been educated along the way as families discuss things in what really amount to some very mono-cultural communities in the case of some of the smaller primary schools.

Beyond this, all of the schools expect that the greater alignment of language learning across the cluster will mean that students enter the secondary college better prepared to learn Indonesian and with a background that equips them to study it at a higher level than previously was the case.

**Program Sustainability**

The primary school principals have all identified funding within their (very tight) SRPs to support languages in 2013, in contrast to the pre-ILPIC period when some schools had no language program at all. Collectively they have decided to employ a language assistant between them and are in the process of seeking someone for the role. While it is acknowledged a language assistant would need to work under supervision of a qualified teacher, this reflects the fact they prefer a face-to-face approach rather than going the videoconference route for the reasons already outlined. That said, they acknowledge it can be difficult to attract the type of staff member they seek to the area, and are open to videoconferencing provided it does not use an immersion approach, and preferably using someone already familiar to the students in their schools.

In other words, it is not so much a matter of the technology as such, as the style of delivery that is used, given the difficulty that was experienced by students in what amounted to this ‘trial’ phase.

The important thing, however, as far as the cluster is concerned, is that the ILPIC experience has helped create an imperative for the schools to do something about language provision and everyone is on board with that.

## ILPIC4: Monash-Waverley Cluster, Eastern Metropolitan Region

Interview conducted on 25 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The cluster has sought to increase student engagement in Japanese, especially in the Middle Years while identifying and sharing effective transmedia including web 2.0 technologies, interactive games and software to increase the opportunities for language use and development. A key purpose behind the cluster’s approach has been to increase the number of students continuing with Japanese from primary to secondary school and work towards increasing the time allocation for languages through the implementation of a CLIL approach.

**Program Design**

The cluster really sees the purpose in terms of a long term strategy with long term outcomes involved.

The key to achieving it was first to get the school leaders on board, and hence the program started with leadership teams. Principals are the gate-keepers to what happens in schools and the cluster believed that it had to invest in them and their leadership teams as the only way to sustainability as opposed to a program that is seen as a one-off event.

Only then could they move on to really build the student engagement by focusing on the pedagogy the language teachers adopt. An important realisation in this context was the cluster’s recognition that often language teachers are not particularly well-connected in their schools. They may not be a part of broader subject or year level teams, and hence work in isolation as a result. Given this, the cluster decided to link language teachers to a ‘significant partner’ in each school, such as a literacy coordinator or a year level coordinator, etc., and then expect this partner to attend professional learning activities with the language teacher with whom they worked. This meant that the schools broke down the isolation referred to above, and linked language teachers more to the general dialogue and professional learning that occurs in the schools. It also gave the partners themselves a greater understanding of language teaching and learning and its potential value to their school.

**Program Delivery**

The program was launched with a high-profile lunch for principals and leadership teams addressed by Chris Wardlaw from DEECD which proved to be a signature event for getting the principals on board with the importance of teaching a language at school. Then a range of professional development for language teachers and others, as outlined below, was able to proceed with more of a focus on how delivery can successfully occur.

With the principals behind the cluster’s work, a two-pronged approach was implemented in order to demystify language teaching for literacy and other (partner) leaders and link the language teachers to someone who can support the implementation and enhancement of the language program in cluster schools. This provided the context whereby the schools could then move into the more detailed aspects of delivery such as assessment, pedagogy, differentiation and the use of ICT tools with broader whole school support than otherwise would exist.

The lead school, which had previously lacked documentation related to language learning, and hence relied purely on the calibre of the language teacher at the time, used a teacher professional leave project to support a team in examining and unpacking the VELS as the precursor to filling this document gap. This in turn provided the basis for developing scope and sequence for language provision in Japanese, formative and summative assessment tools and more. With a whole school plan in place, the school was then able to provide professional development for other cluster schools.

More specifically, the school led a professional development day for cluster language teachers and their in-school partners which not only facilitated the sharing of processes and materials across the cluster, but also helped raise the expectations about what can be achieved in cluster schools. Principals attended the day after lunch to add to the kudos, and also to work with participants on planning their whole school language teaching approach. The regional language and Ultranet coordinators also provided input through workshops on the day.

Only when the schools had developed their whole school plan based on the input from this day, did the ILPIC funding start to flow. This reflected the strong cluster view that the schools should formulate their overall approach before starting to spend. What is more, the formulation of plans was able to proceed on the basis of seeing what one school had done, which demonstrated how it can happen and what can be achieved.

Beyond this, the cluster also introduced some accountabilities to the process for the very first time. For example, Year 5 and 6 teachers of Japanese are now expected to use common testing, there is a common understanding of how language teachers and their partners are to work together, and so on.

Now that all the processes and overall support structures are in place, the cluster has begun to use a CLIL approach for Japanese in the area of Science, starting from term three this year after CLIL training was completed in term two.

**Responses to the Program**

The response from the principals, on whom successful implementation ultimately depends, is described by the cluster as ‘overwhelming’. As a group they have moved in the course of the ILPIC project from some initial wondering about why it was being done (‘is it just to get the additional resources?’), to the point where they ‘really believe in the value and importance of teaching a language in their schools’.

Parents are starting to embrace the approach, in large part because some teacher teams have, as it was explained, ‘jumped on board’ with the result they are providing a better level of program that the students enjoy, and then take home when they talk to their parents about their day.

A guiding premise of cluster thinking from the start was to create an environment where students will say, ‘I want to go to school today to do Japanese’, in the way they sometimes do for other subjects they undertake. With the increased use of developmentally appropriate programs as a result of the professional learning and planning that has occurred, and the greater use of ICTs, this is starting to happen in cluster schools.

Beyond this, the structure for mutual staff support that was introduced has upped the ante on working together as partners, which has seen staff support for the approach consolidate and grow.

**Program Impact**

The cluster is seeing language programs gaining more support within the constituent schools, particularly at the leadership level, which then flows down through the schools.

This both derives from and supports the development of greater language teaching capacity and more effective language teaching teams. Working together within the partners’ arrangement means there is a two-way flow whereby the language teachers gain linkages and traction in schools where previously they had been somewhat isolated, and their partners gain a better understanding of the value of learning a language and how it can contribute to their own curriculum roles.

At its simplest level, the cluster believes that, even at this early stage of its longer-term plan, the schools are offering better programs in which students are better engaged.

**Program Sustainability**

In the past, principals in schools across Victoria have sometimes cut languages programs because the students have become bored. The sort of process that ensues is that programs are not developmentally appropriate, which manifests in behaviour problems in language classes and then complaints, culminating in cuts.

The cluster approach to sustainability is to tackle this systemic problem from the ground up, ensuring appropriate programs are in place and that language teaching capacity is improved, as part of a whole-school approach, so the quality of engagement, and hence student outcomes, are improved. This reflects the firm cluster view that ‘if the students are enjoying languages as is happening in the schools, then the schools will be loath to cut’. This in turn is underpinned by the ongoing efforts to raise awareness of why languages are important in a globalised world, building on the start that was made with the Wardlaw address.

## ILPIC5: Bairnsdale Cluster, Gippsland Region

Interview conducted on 12 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

To some extent, the breadth and depth of program purposes originally agreed and outlined in the interim evaluation report reflected the degree of enthusiasm the Lead Contact had for expanding languages in cluster schools. This arguably exceeded the level of enthusiasm held by others in cluster schools, including school leaders, and hence has had to be scaled back. This was only compounded by a degree of suspicion that existed about any attempt to organise a language-based cluster in a context where no other clusters really exist. Some at least felt there must be an ulterior motive from the lead, secondary school, with the result the initiative initially was seen by some as more of a threat than an opportunity on which they could draw.

This has tended to limit the extent of classroom sharing that has occurred, as people are less keen on this approach, though a range of new opportunities have been pursued as outlined in the discussion of program delivery below.

The upshot is that the program purpose has shifted from a more organised cluster arrangement being developed and pursued, to a situation where opportunities are provided that cluster schools can buy into when it is seen as meeting their needs.

**Program Design**

As indicated above, the program design has shifted towards the Lead Contact providing language-related opportunities to which schools then, independently contract in. While this reflects a strong desire for autonomy in the schools involved, it also is seen as a ‘good model’ for some funding arrangements for schools where a strong cluster does not already exist. It is, as the cluster itself describes, ‘a means of sharing and coordinating things like excursions while retaining the independence the individual schools seek’.

At a more active level, it can see some desirable practices spread through the schools. For example, an important learning strategy that increasingly has been adopted within the cluster, by virtue of modelling and thereby promoting the approach, is the use of IPads connected to interactive whiteboards, so the boards effectively become large touch screen pads. This is particularly effective for engaging students and using technology in manageable ways that are not dependent on time-consuming set-up before the class. In addition, it’s accessible and easy to fit into the classroom learning plan, regardless of year level involved and is equally applicable to primary and secondary schools.

**Program Delivery**

Delivery, it has to be acknowledged from the start, was impacted by significant staff turnover in the secondary college languages team, which was driving the cluster approach. Beyond this, a new principal was appointed to the school who was not involved when the ILPIC cluster initiative was first agreed.

Despite this, and the shift in purpose outlined above, a number of opportunities have been taken to assist in growing languages learning in cluster schools.

For example, the secondary college was able to leverage off an existing sister school arrangement it had with a school in Japan to broker the possibility of similar such arrangements being established for neighbouring primary schools and, in fact, with another ILPIC cluster from their region. This, it was noted, is part of broader efforts to establish relations in other countries to extend the horizons of people who live in a town where there are very few Asian faces indeed.

Consistent with the ‘buy-in’ approach outlined above, the Lead Contact increasingly creates the structure whereby opportunities such as excursions can occur, and schools then organise themselves within that. This has seen some major, language-oriented excursions such as one to the Latrobe Valley Art Gallery, which has a significant Japanese collection, and a whole-day visit to Melbourne which included seeing a Japanese film at the International Film Festival, shopping in Asian-oriented stores, and sharing a Japanese meal.

One important component of the program the secondary college provides is the conduct of its iEARN project which commences in the last weeks of the school year as part of transition to secondary school. Around 30 students attend the school for this Japanese Machinto Project which examines the aftermath of Hiroshima, and then work on it through the holidays before continuing it in their first year at secondary school. The students write and illustrate stories which are then incorporated into books they produce.

While the cluster does not really have any strong partners in the area with connections to either Japan or Germany, it does have its sister school relations through the secondary college, which see alternating annual visits to Germany and Japan from secondary students and visits from those countries to the school. This year, for the first time, the visiting Japanese students also went to some of the primary schools which created great excitement and was described as ‘a very big deal’.

Perhaps the biggest challenge that exists in terms of program delivery is the fact that languages are still not particularly valued in the area, which means that notifications sent home, including for example seeking involvement in the surveys for the ILPIC evaluation, yield only limited results. ‘It’s a slog’, though the other side of the coin is the fact that regular information is being provided to promote the value and importance of learning a language at school.

**Responses to the Program**

A degree of support exists for extending languages more through cluster schools, though it still exists within a context of languages being very much second to literacy and numeracy aimed at improving NAPLAN results.

This means that, despite the growing involvement of cluster schools in language-related activities, it can still at times feel as though schools are cherry-picking opportunities that are provided, and hence treating them as an accessory, rather than really integrating them into the overall programs of cluster schools.

That said, the secondary school has managed to maintain a languages program in both German and Japanese up to the end of Year 12, in a context where language essentially is an elective in the school and under significant competitive pressure to the point where it could have been easy not to do it. ‘Every time we get a Year 12 class’, it was observed, ‘it’s an achievement, and reflects a degree of support for language learning in Bairnsdale’.

**Program Impact**

In simple terms, the impact of ILPIC in the cluster, even given the difficulties described, has been to create more opportunities for students to engage in languages learning in some form. Next year, for instance, will see an extension of language classes at Lucknow Primary School from Years 5-6 where they currently run, to Years 3 and 4 as well. This not only brings them more into line with other primary schools, but also creates the likelihood that more students may retain languages into secondary school.

This sense of extra opportunity applies to teachers as well in a context where the school is comparatively remote and things are expensive as a result. Teachers, for instance, cannot readily go to Melbourne for professional development since it generally means staying overnight. The ILPIC initiative has enabled the cluster to provide language teachers with professional development opportunities that otherwise would not have occurred.

Beyond this, students and teachers are being exposed to a broader range of cultures and cultural experiences (e.g., visits to sister schools and their visits here, a visit to the school by some German dancers on the day the ILPIC interview occurred) which has helped tackle some residual racism that exists. This is not limited to ILPIC, but the initiative is a critical part of the mix.

**Program Sustainability**

Implementing such strategies as building the sister school relationships and extending them to primary schools is seen as an important means of broadening thinking in what otherwise could be a rather narrow community given the lack of multicultural, and especially Asian role models in the town.

The key advance made towards a more sustainable approach to languages learning in cluster schools is the fact it now is on the agenda more than hitherto was the case. This provides a base on which to build, especially when schools such as Lucknow Primary are extending provision further down the school.

## ILPIC6: Sale Cluster, Gippsland Region

Interview conducted on 19 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The cluster has consistently been seeking to trial and use a range of strategies to increase the content-based provision of languages in the area. This includes the use of a range of ICT initiatives to allow access to language learning outside of the classroom, delivery of Japanese through videoconferencing using Polycom, establishing a sister school relationship to support the learning of Japanese, and generally increasing the opportunities for authentic language use.

**Program Design**

Central to program design is the delivery of videoconference sessions to P-2 students at Cobains Primary, which has no language program, by the teacher at Sale Primary as she delivers her own class. In the first two terms of the year, the Japanese teacher visited Cobains to deliver face-to-face in order to introduce students to learning Japanese and develop a relationship with her. From then on, lessons have been delivered via Polycom, with the exception the Cobains students visited Sale for an hour and a half to spend time with their peer, Sale-based, videoconference class.

This, it should be noted, is unlike most other videoconference arrangements whereby teachers generally deliver online sessions to one or more classes, without actually teaching their own class on site at the same time. Hence it provides another model of potentially sustainable provision in areas where there are small primary schools that cannot provide a language on their own, and significant distances are involved.

**Program Delivery**

The Japanese teacher delivering the program readily acknowledges that initially it was difficult to establish and get running right. That said, the relationship is now established between the two classes, and sessions are run in a way that maximises the participation of students in each. For example, students recently were learning about weather and the teacher introduced a number of words related to the time of year and climatic conditions that can apply. One class was nominated as being in Australia and the other in Japan and then volunteer students used a range of clothing provided in each classroom to select appropriate gear to demonstrate to both their own class and the other students online. This illustrates the way in which interaction between the groups is promoted as well as the language teaching being shared.

The difficulties up front were in part related to really finding the right sort of approach, compounded by some early technology issues that needed to be overcome. At first this proved a little dispiriting, as substantial planning did not necessarily translate into the implementation that was sought, but these progressively have been overcome and the schools feel better equipped to not only deliver more effectively, but sustain the approach into the future as the heavy lifting has largely been done.

Actual delivery of classes is to students in P-2 in both primary schools based on the notion of getting the students early, when they are most receptive to learning a language and arguably better at doing so, and then having the impact flow through the rest of the school. The Sale-based Japanese teacher is supported by a Japanese assistant who has an important role not only in contributing to materials development and delivery, but also supervising and working with students in the classroom at Sale when the teacher on videoconference interacts with students at the other school. She constitutes an important adult resource for managing 45 students in two locations when there is only a single teacher at either end. The classroom teacher at Cobains also receives some language assistant support, initially through the region and subsequently from the ILPIC funds.

The whole approach, it was acknowledged, is very labour intensive and unsustainably expensive, but will help build the capacity and confidence of the classroom teacher at Cobains to support videoconference delivery in future on her own. And this in turn is part of developing not just a cluster solution to delivering languages where they otherwise would not be provided, but also constructing a model that potentially can be replicated by other clusters of schools.

One non-ILPIC aspect of language teaching at Sale that is worthy of note is the trialling of CLIL in physical education in Prep and social skills in Years 1 and 2. The Prep program is provided by the Japanese teacher on her own, while the social skills program is delivered together with the teacher in the class, and both have been very well received.

Beyond this, Sale Primary has also been working with its local kindergartens to seed the teaching and learning of Japanese. More specifically, Year 5 and 6 students periodically work with kindergarten children with benefits to all who are involved. In terms two and three, for instance, the senior primary students visited the kinders three times to introduce basic Japanese to the children and undertake some simple activities with them. In term four the kindergarten children will visit the school and the school also hosts a concert where the students present items drawing on their learning in Japanese and the kindergarten children sing Japanese songs they have learned in something of a celebration of the approach.

While the sister school arrangement has run into a range of logistical problems that slowed it all up, some connections made with the support of the Bairnsdale ILPIC Cluster are now yielding fruit and an arrangement is beginning to be forged.

**Responses to the Program**

The cluster has worked with both the primary schools and the secondary college to improve overall attitudes towards learning a language at school. This began with some expert visits at the start of 2012 and joint presentations to school staff which were very well received and extended the support for languages beyond just language teachers themselves. In contrast, however, a parallel information session for families and the community generated no real interest at all.

The main problem that has emerged is that the secondary college recently decided to change its language provision in 2013 from Japanese to Indonesian in a context where Japanese is the language undertaken in the primary schools. This reflects the nature of the community and the belief that a non-character based language is an easier sell, but does mean a discontinuity now will exist between the primary and secondary schools.

Primary parents whose students are receiving Japanese teaching are very positive about the program and the students are enthusiastic, and becoming more so as the teachers become more confident and experienced with the approach. The teacher delivering the program from Sale initially was concerned that her own students may be missing out, as she sought to engage the students at Cobains, but as they have all become used to the technology, and the language assistant takes on more of a role, it all appears to be working well.

**Program Impact**

The clearest impact of the program is the fact that students who otherwise would not be learning a language at school are studying Japanese. Beyond this, the cluster is developing a model of provision that potentially is appropriate to other, similar contexts, albeit taking some time to really work out. It’s a model which not only delivers to students in remote, and commonly small schools, but also helps build the capacity of local classroom teachers to support videoconference delivery in a subject for which they are not themselves trained.

Students in Prep to Year 2 are beginning to develop a range of language skills that can then flow through the two primary schools as they progress into later years.

**Program Sustainability**

The ILPIC funding, it was explained, could have been used to support teaching in both primary schools face-to-face. However, this was not sustainable in the long term when funding ceased, which is why videoconferencing has been used instead. The preparation needed to run a Japanese program is very intensive, and beyond the capacity of Cobains to support, which through videoconferencing they effectively get from the teacher in Sale.

The nub of sustainability, therefore, is the videoconferencing and teaching of joint classes by a single teacher, alongside the work to build the capacity of the classroom teacher at the ‘second’ site. The schools have indicated a desire to keep the videoconference sessions in 2013 when ILPIC funding ceases. They also would like to maintain the Japanese assistant’s visits to Cobains if possible, since she not only attends the 45 minute teaching session that occurs, but also stays for the day providing language related activities with a cultural base.

Setting the program up was very time consuming, but now the preconditions are in place, will be easier to maintain. Perhaps the main sustainability issue for the cluster to overcome, however, is the shift in secondary language provision referred to above, which means that students no longer will be able to continue Japanese from primary into secondary school.

## ILPIC7: University Cluster, Grampians Region

Interview conducted on 17 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The basic purpose of the cluster program has remained to enable Chinese and Japanese language courses to be offered in primary schools where only limited if any delivery has existed, using a mix of direct contact teaching and a virtual classroom. That said, together with funding that has been gained from the Confucius Institute to provide language programs to the community outside of school, the scope of program offered has arguably grown beyond the cluster’s expectations, as outlined in the discussion of delivery below.

**Program Design**

The program is designed to deliver a combination of:

* direct, face-to-face teaching from a team of Chinese and Japanese teachers based at the secondary college to a number of cluster primary schools; and
* videoconference lessons to three other primary schools using the Polycom system which the ILPIC grant helped fund.

This is supplemented by the Confucius Classroom the school is able to run. This is not a physical classroom as such, but rather, a prestigious grant from the Confucius Institute in China to conduct community language or language-oriented lessons outside of school hours in Chinese, to which the cluster has sought to add Japanese as well.

**Program Delivery**

The program provides a 40 to 60 minutes face-to-face lesson to cluster schools each week, though two only receive the classes each second week, supplemented by a videoconference lesson in the other week. Schools involved in the videoconference component of the program are visited about twice a term not only so the teacher can know the students, but just as importantly, so the students can know the teacher and see them as a real person and not simply a ‘TV-star’. The teachers also use the visits as an opportunity to take various artefacts, such as Japanese drums, which the students have seen on the video lessons they receive.

The Chinese language teaching that Year 7 and 8 students receive at the secondary college is supplemented by an immersion program through the Language Centre on site, though this has not been taken up by Japanese teachers in the same way. The immersion program provides an extension to language learning in class, with a cultural focus; for example, by supporting a class-based unit on food, with actual cooking the students can undertake. Primary students too can access immersion activities as a culturally-based adjunct to the face-to-face language lessons they receive.

On a typical immersion day, the students rotate through four cultural activities with their accompanying teachers, who also can see how well engaged they are. The program ensures the activities provided are not things that can be done in the ‘ordinary’ language class, but rather something that adds to the richness of learning experience the students can have.

What the cluster had not anticipated was the degree of interest the immersion element of their program in particular has generated beyond the cluster across the region as a whole. Schools outside of the cluster with limited or no language programs have heard about it, and subsequently sought to attend. They are, in effect, coming to see if Chinese or Japanese language constitutes a good fit for them, and spending a day to inform their own deliberations about future provision of languages in their school.

The upshot is that the demand for immersion activities within the Language Centre has grown markedly, not just at the primary level, but from secondary colleges as well. The result is that Mt Clear has really become more of a regional resource — or at least one in prospect — than envisaged when the cluster was first formed. And schools outside of the cluster have been ‘happy’ to pay for the resource.

The Confucius Classroom programs have been limited to community language classes this year due to insufficient demand for programs such as cooking the cluster wanted to run. Participants receive a weekly one hour class delivered by fluent native speakers who have been employed with the funds, after having been tested and approved as up to the standard required for effective delivery of the course. There are around three to four enrolments in each language course, though the cluster feels its publicity needs to improve to generate more enrolments from 2013.

An initial focus of program delivery was to get more information on the Ultranet to support teacher planning and student engagement in language learning. While very time consuming, it has now been done, though has not attracted the degree of involvement the cluster had sought. The collaborative and design spaces established are very well resourced and look ‘fabulous’, but have only gained around 340 members out of, potentially, thousands of students in the collaborative space, and no teachers outside of the language staff in the design space where the hope was that it would be used to supplement the things they do in class.

**Responses to the Program**

The response to the program differs according to different elements and hence audiences, but when looked at overall, is seen by the cluster as ‘overwhelming’. Put simply, there has been very positive feedback indeed to both the immersion program and the videoconference lessons in particular in the primary schools.

Particularly important in this regard is the fact that the videoconferencing provides language classes to schools and students that otherwise would not have them. There were some issues with technology to start, and the teachers had to learn their way through the approach, but they now are savvy with it find that, when they periodically visit the primary schools, the students are arguably as advanced as many of their own students in the secondary years. From the perspective of teachers involved, when they turn the videos on, they find students who are ready to learn and really engaged. They seem excited about the fact they are getting an opportunity they otherwise did not expect, and hence are seizing it with both hands.

It is described by the cluster as a ‘great success story’ for using the videoconference equipment, which is also seeing some spin-off professional development about language teaching and learning for the primary teachers who are with their students in the class.

**Program Impact**

Perhaps the most obvious impact observable to date is the incredible level of student engagement in the cluster primary schools. Beyond this, the growing interest from outside the cluster in the immersion program in particular means that the cluster effectively is seeding language learning more through the region as a whole.

In addition, it would seem that interest in languages is growing in the secondary college with its Language Centre on site. In 2013, Chinese is being extended for the first time into Year 9 and the college already has a viable class, which means that students are starting to hold onto languages for longer at school.

In common with a number of other clusters, the college also expects that one effect of the ILPIC initiative will be that incoming Year 7 students are better prepared to undertake a language in secondary school. In fact, there already is some evidence this year that students in Year 7 have a better knowledge of the language expectations at this level than their predecessors at the school.

The main impact on teachers to date is arguably on those outside the cluster who are gaining more interest in languages and how they can be taught. Those in the cluster generally are described as ‘comfortable’ with the approach because of the certainty around it that exists. Schools outside the cluster without any real language provision have approached the cluster through the Language Centre to find out how to start, and some have even undertaken a professional development day to examine how to kick start language learning in their school.

**Program Sustainability**

The ILPIC funding supported the purchase of videoconferencing technology and time for teachers to establish the program at the start. That said, sustainability of the approach is uppermost in the cluster’s mind and is an issue it recognises it still needs to fully resolve.

Presenting videoconference sessions is sustainable as long as a staff member exists who can deliver them; which may mean that schools will have to pay in the same way that some already have paid for access to the Language Centre as outlined above. The cluster view in this context is that, although user-pays can take it so far, it will need a dedicated coordinator to ensure it is not just something that occurs on a sessional basis, but rather a coordinated and planned approach.

## ILPIC8: Southern Mallee Cluster, Grampians Region

Interview conducted on 16 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

From the outset, the cluster has sought to incorporate ‘world’s best practices’ in the delivery of a blended approach to languages provision from a regional/network hub at Dimboola Memorial College to increase the number of students studying languages in the cluster and this has remained its goal. In doing so, it also seeks to establish a potentially sustainable model of provision that can be replicated not only in the region, but throughout rural and regional Victoria.

**Program Design**

The cluster, it should be noted, contains a number of very small schools, ranging from Yaapeet with only five students, to the much larger Dimboola Primary which is co-located with the secondary school.

The program has been designed to enable the secondary college to provide videoconference lessons to all of the off-site primary schools for 30 minutes a week, and one and a half hours of face-to-face language teaching to the school on site. The classes are provided to students in targeted levels in some schools (e.g., for Year 5-6 students in Dimboola and Hopetoun) and for all of Prep to Year 6 in others such as Rainbow Primary which also receives a weekly visit from a German Language Assistant the program employs. In addition Kaniva Primary School, which initially was not part of the cluster, heard about the program and has subsequently become involved on a trial basis. This reflects the fact the model is designed to facilitate future growth to support primary schools where otherwise languages would not be taught.

It is interesting to note in this context that the Lead Contact, who has really driven the approach, is not herself trained to teach German, which is the language taught across the cluster as a whole. Rather, she is someone with experience in videoconferencing and alternative models which have informed the overall approach. That said, since she did do German at school, she did become involved in delivery with the support of the DEECD-funded German Language Assistant and who has helped ensure the requisite degree of language knowledge was in place.

**Program Delivery**

**As indicated earlier, aside from the face-to-**face teaching at Dimboola Primary, the program delivers videoconference lessons to students in remote cluster primary schools for 30 minutes a week using the Polycom system the ILPIC funding helped to set up. Rainbow Primary also receives some on-site teaching from the Language Assistant each week, and an effort is made to visit the other schools once a term if possible so the students can see and get to know their online teachers in the flesh. This, it was observed, really excites them because, from their perspective, they are meeting someone who is on TV.

As well as delivering the videoconference lessons, the cluster has put a lot of effort into developing two important Ultranet spaces for teachers and students to use:

* A design space for teachers where they can download a full week-by-week course for the different VELS levels from Prep through to Year 6; and
* A collaborative space for students where the cluster is pioneering a new practice of pre and post activities to support the online lessons so students undertake an activity before the lesson, engage in the class and then work on a post-activity with the support of the primary teacher(s) in their school.

These spaces are especially important since the Lead Contact will not continue her position into 2013 (in part because she is not fully trained to teach German at the secondary level) and the cluster has yet to attract a teacher to take on a similar role. While the cluster schools are committed to collectively seek a teacher, it traditionally is difficult to attract someone to the area, and the existence of these important material supports can enable the primary teachers to maintain languages teaching next year.

The only real problem that has been experienced with the online delivery of lessons is the fact the internet at times can be unreliable. When this occurs, the teachers involved work through email to each other, and revert to online activities that exist; though it can be frustrating at the time. Fortunately the cluster does have the active support of the Virtual School Officer based in Horsham, which they suggest helps them a lot.

**Responses to the Program**

The primary school teachers involved, who participate in the videoconferences and, it was suggested, are empowered by observing the approach, regularly give feedback on the reactions of students in their class. All have observed how engaged the students are and despite some initial wariness about how they would manage to sit through a 30 minute session each week, how much they seem to enjoy the approach — perhaps reflecting how much more open the students are to learning online than the (older) people who teach them.

Beyond this, the students and their parents, particularly in the smallest schools, are reported to be ‘psyched’ about the fact they can learn a language at all; which in turn contributes to how well the lessons are received. This, no doubt, is one reason that all of the cluster schools are so keen for the program to proceed and committed to employing a shared teaching resource.

From the perspective of the secondary college in particular, the program contributes to ensuring consistency of language provision between primary and secondary school, and hence helps to ensure that incoming students are better prepared to learn a language at the secondary level.

Other (non-language) secondary teachers have conducted peer observations of the videoconferences and been amazed at how much can be accomplished through this means of delivery. In particular, some had not anticipated how much routine is required and therefore exists — e.g., the need for a seating plan initially so the teacher can learn the students’ names, or the set-up of the room to facilitate effective camera use — which may influence their own practices and the use of their classroom time.

**Program Impact**

Teachers involved in the program have noticed that the work they are doing with students in Years 4 and 5 is somewhat closer to the level and quality of work that is done by Year 7 and 8 students in the secondary school. While they are not entirely sure why, they speculate it may relate to one or more of the existence of 30 minutes a week of very intensive learning time, the level of engagement the students have, and/or the fact that younger students may be more open to learning a language at school. Regardless of the reason, the impact is expected to be that students entering Year 7 from 2013 on will be better equipped for language classes in the school. Secondary teachers are particularly looking forward to teaching students who have some familiarity with learning a language compared to the previous experience of always starting from scratch.

Aside from this, all of the teachers involved have a very strong sense of which levels of student engagement in something that otherwise they would not have or be able to do. Again this partly reflects the existence of opportunities they previously have not had, but also the way in which the program has structured activities that ensure active participation, such as play-based activities for students in Prep. From the teachers’ own point of view, they are constantly on screen for each 30 minute session, which means they have to be very conscious and well-planned about how they use that time. This in turn is seen as something that potentially could influence pedagogy throughout the cluster schools.

**Program Sustainability**

The fact the Polycom system already is established helps contribute to sustainability as it is an investment that does not have to be made again.

As indicated earlier, the program will not necessarily have a dedicated secondary-trained teacher providing videoconferencing next year, but can still continue to the extent that the primary teachers can pick up the Ultranet-based course and feel confident to deliver it. This is made more likely by the fact the primary teachers have been in the videoconference classes, albeit not directly delivering them, but still observing and learning from the online teacher’s approach. It also is helped by the addition of the pre and post lesson activities online which add further structure to teaching language lessons to students in primary school. That said, the hope is to collectively source a teacher who could be based in the secondary college and manage the program, including the videoconferencing arrangements and the ongoing development of the Ultranet space.

## ILPIC9: Central Grampians Cluster, Grampians Region

Interview conducted on 15 October 2012.

As a prelude to summarising the interview, it is important to note that the Lead Contact, unlike those in all other clusters, is a regionally-based person rather than a leader/teacher based in a cluster school. Her duties in this context that are relevant to ILPIC include a 0.2 language coordination role for the region as a whole and responsibility for the Ultranet/Virtual Learning Systems.

**Program Purpose**

The Central Grampians Cluster was a large and arguably over-ambitious group of 19 schools which needed to be restructured somewhat through the course of the ILPIC initiative so it could operate in more manageable ways. Thus, when the regionally-based Lead Contact came on board, the cluster was reorganised in order to pick up schools that had expected to be involved but had not to that point, based on four mini-clusters along the following lines:

* Pomonal and Great Western schools coming on board in offering Chinese using a blended learning approach with the support of a secondary teacher who came out of an Ararat school and who, coincidentally, is also doing some work with Mt Clear Secondary College;
* German provided to the Stawell area schools where two schools are working together which each have a German teacher who is using a blended learning approach to improve their collective offering;
* some Japanese teaching provided at Lake Bolac Primary School by a Japanese teacher based at Trawalla Primary and who also is going to work with Mt Clear Secondary to arrange immersion visits for Lake Bolac students, and supported with a shared Ultranet space; and
* the maintenance of a successful French program in Ararat schools and its extension to Avoca Primary School.

**Program Design**

The program design has been reoriented around the mini-clusters as outlined in the discussion of program purpose above.

**Program Delivery**

A range of blended learning activities have been organised around each of the languages covered by the cluster — i.e., Chinese, French, German and Japanese — to begin to meet the needs of outlying primary schools as envisaged in the original plans for the ILPIC initiative. In addition, resources have been developed to support this delivery in the Ultranet space, which are posted for teachers in the week before it occurs. Beyond this, the teachers delivering the program have been evaluating the experience and seeking feedback from other teachers involved and improving as a result. The new Trawalla/Lake Bolac partnership even sought feedback from the cluster schools offering French before actually establishing the relationship between their two schools.

Thus, blended learning and remote delivery are occurring across the cluster to around 7 or 8 schools in French (which arguably has been the most successful to date), a couple of schools in Chinese, one school in Japanese and four or five in German. The cluster has started doing podcasts to support delivery which means that teachers and students are experiencing an aspect of learning with technology they had not previously explored.

The experience to date is impacting on plans for 2013 and beyond. The schools involved in delivering French, for instance, are going to contribute funds to enable the teacher to continue in her role on a user-pays basis.

Consideration is underway about Mt Clear Secondary College becoming more entrepreneurial in terms of delivering Chinese and Japanese from next year. More specifically, the college has developed a flyer to send across Victoria as a whole aimed at extending the model of blended learning it has trialled this year. This would see it seeking to become a remote delivery/videoconference provider for other schools that could contract in to lessons according to their own local need. In effect, the school would market itself as a provider through its Language Centre in a way that has the potential to enable small schools to get access to Chinese/Japanese language teaching they cannot provide themselves, at an affordable price. This, it was noted, potentially could become a replicable model with schools purchasing packages of teaching and learning, such as a ten week course, a program in language and cooking, or whatever the provider schools can devise. In other words, developing a demand-driven approach to language teaching supply. The challenge in this context is to ensure that the college does not over-reach and only provides the services it can effectively resource and support.

Aside from the need to reorient the structure of the cluster itself, the main problems experienced have been logistical, such as the need to reconcile different lunch timings to enable classes to be run across schools. This illustrates the need for schools contracting into such programs to be flexible to enable the approach to work. That said, the logistical problems experienced have generally been worked through by the schools involved.

The other problem experienced was that teachers initially involved in program delivery arguably focused too much on simply emailing things to schools, so relations were very much one to one. With regional support, however, they have become more inclined to share on blogs and through the Ultranet space so that sharing now occurs with more teachers therefore involved. This reflects what was described as an approach of turning difficulties that emerged into opportunities to pursue.

The other lesson to emerge, which has relevance to any entrepreneurial approaches pursued, is the need for some face to face visits to supplement virtual delivery around once a term or so. This, it was suggested, could readily be built into any user pays approach, and leverages off the almost ‘rock star’ welcomes that language teachers received when they did it this year because the students had hitherto only seen them on TV.

**Responses to the Program**

To some extent the cluster is really awaiting the survey outcomes to know more about this. That said, such activities as primary student visits to Mt Clear Secondary College for immersion days have been seen as a ‘great success’. The students involved participate in language classes, and engage in such activities as cooking, dance and/or song and respond very positively indeed. This is strengthened when some schools do video lessons as an adjunct as well.

**Program Impact**

The primary impact of cluster activity to date is the fact that small schools for the first time have the opportunity to provide their students with a real language program in a context where they cannot have one of their own. Principals involved report that students are ‘hugely excited and enthusiastic’ not only about the opportunity it affords, but also about the content they learn.

The positive response to engaging students in languages learning for the first time reflects a growing awareness in these rural communities of the fact our economy (and especially the agricultural component of the economy) increasingly is global, and depends on other cultures, which means that learning a language can be an advantage for those concerned. It helps to cement the importance and value of learning a language at school.

One unexpected outcome of the cluster initiative has been the flow on impact to other, non-cluster schools. The region, for example, has had no difficulty getting schools to apply for start-up grants, in part because of the fact more schools and teachers have been engaged with a blended learning approach. The cluster’s work has generated interest in non-cluster schools that have heard about it and are interested in trying a similar approach. In addition, it has had the effect of providing the region with experience to point to as a potential model as well as personnel in schools who can be approached and spoken to by people from other schools.

**Program sustainability**

Sustainability centres on building the sort of user-pays arrangements that are being explored as outlined above. The way it is being envisaged it would seek schools tapping into virtual delivery of lessons at an agreed time each week where they know the nature of the content and then, having paid for the service, ‘dial into’ the class. Provided there is a local teacher with the class, who will follow up on what is pursued, the cluster sees no real limit to the number of classes that potentially could be involved; and the Lead Contact had experience through the year conducting lessons of this sort with as many as twelve groups.

## ILPIC10: Benalla Cluster, Hume Region

Interview conducted on 25 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The cluster is seeking to develop and implement a sustainable, long-term languages program for the Benalla and District School Community using a range of blended learning strategies that include the sharing of teacher expertise between the schools, the use of ICTs and the use of an existing Language Centre on the secondary college site as a venue for students to come together physically and virtually to learn languages.

**Program Design**

The cluster has designed a blended delivery approach, using the Language Centre as a hub, as a means of ensuring delivery across all of the cluster primary schools. This is supplemented by extensive professional learning to build the capacity of language teaching staff, as the cluster develops a sustainable model of provision that can be replicated in other clusters and regions around the state.

The program design arises from years of difficulty that primary cluster schools have had in attracting quality, trained teachers of Indonesian with the result the schools tended to put languages in the basket of too hard to address. By building capacity of their own, including through training other non-language staff to learn Indonesian as outlined below, the cluster schools are beginning to grow their own expertise.

**Program Delivery**

As part of growing its own, the cluster has encouraged and supported a group of two primary and one secondary teacher to undertake a Graduate Diploma of Education in Indonesian through Deakin University, funded by Department scholarships they receive. The group is given time each Friday, supported by the three fully qualified Indonesian teachers in the cluster and an Indonesian language assistant, to undertake their study and generally work together as a languages professional learning team. This means that the teachers involved are not only developing their Indonesian language skills, but all of the teachers involved are sharing their teaching experiences and hence developing their capacity to teach Indonesian as well. So successful has this been, that cluster principals view this team as one of the strongest professional learning teams across the cluster as a whole. It should also be noted that one of the ‘trainees’ in Indonesian is a secondary music teacher who is part of the college plan for 2013 to introduce a CLIL approach that will embrace music and humanities which already has a qualified Indonesian teacher on board.

As part of the training through Deakin being received, teachers will also have a four week intensive stint in Indonesia in January that not only will contribute markedly to their language capacity and the speed at which facility is gained, but also their cultural understanding which can inform their teaching in following years.

Aside from this, the cluster schools all share their trained staff. One qualified secondary teacher, along with an Indonesian Language Assistant visit two of the primary schools in Benalla to deliver Indonesian once a week in a way that really engages the students by drawing on dance, songs, games and more to facilitate the languages being learned. The primary class teacher also attends the class and is supported with follow-up activities to do during the week. The third town-based primary school has had a successful bilingual program in place for some time and has been able to continue this as part of the cluster’s approach.

The small primary schools out of town receive one virtual delivery lesson a week via Polycom, backed up by a similar visit to the town schools each week for some delivery face-to-face. Class teachers also participate, thereby reinforcing the learning during the week.

The secondary college, which continues its own Indonesian programs, is committed to this level of investment in primary schools because it aims to improve the attitudes towards language learning of its incoming Year 7 students and ensure they are better prepared to learn a language at this level.

What has been learned in this context is that the teaching at primary school must be engaging and fun. Hence the teachers use lots of ICT, such as a bank of IPads with relevant Apps that the teacher takes to the primary schools, and lots of singing, dancing and games.

**Responses to the Program**

While there has not really been much parent reaction to date, this may well be a positive result in a community where there have been some negative responses to languages in the past.

Students appear to be enjoying their Indonesian classes and are also sharing and celebrating it in public ways by, for example, singing songs at assemblies and generally demonstrated to parents and others what they have learned.

Other non-language teachers are gaining greater understanding of the overall approach, in large part reflecting the fact that their principals are on board and carrying the staff with them through the consistent message they send about the importance and value of learning a language at school.

**Program Impact**

The ILPIC project is described by the cluster as a ‘pilot that is seeing an absolute change in a number of schools’.

Central to this has been the growing understanding and commitment of all of the cluster principals to teaching a language in their schools. This has been underpinned by the cluster program design which, from the principals’ perspective, has made Indonesian easier to deliver so it has worked its way into the schools in a way that can manageably be supported and sustained. It is also underpinned by the development of what was described as ‘a really dynamic and exciting languages professional learning team’.

One spin-off from ILPIC the cluster had not anticipated is the fact that two principals and two humanities teachers will participate in a Department-funded study tour of Indonesia in January which, amongst other things, will contribute to the secondary school’s plans for humanities-based CLIL in 2013. It also means that, together with the Indonesian ‘trainees’, seven cluster personnel will be in Indonesia in January 2013.

One of the key impacts to date is the fact that Indonesian is being provided in cluster schools that either previously have not had it, or where it has been fragile at best. This is underpinned by work that has markedly lifted the collective language and teaching capacity of the cluster’s Indonesian team, with the result there are better lessons being delivered and more engaged students in all of the schools. What is more, the students are starting to take their learning home, because they are enjoying it more, which then impacts on the views of parents and the community as a whole. It is neatly illustrated by one principal’s own experience of how her grandchild in Prep came home singing an Indonesian song from a primary school that previously did not have Indonesian at all.

In time, the cluster expects this will mean both greater certainty about language provision in the area and better continuity between the primary and secondary schools. In addition, the students entering Year 7 can be expected to be better prepared for learning a language and Studies of Asia at secondary school, and the college expects it will build the pool of students who will continue with Indonesian through to Year 12.

**Program Sustainability**

Perhaps the key to sustainability in the cluster once funding ceases is the way in which it is working to grow its own language teaching expertise in an area where previously it has been difficult to attract qualified staff. As a result of the training already underway and supported by the schools, the cluster by 2014 will have three additional trained language teachers on which to draw.

Central to this has been the support the schools have provided to the teachers concerned to make learning do-able in their already busy working lives. Providing the Friday afternoon sessions mentioned earlier, and reducing teachers’ loads to enable their collective study to occur, means they are not ‘dragged kicking and screaming’ to an add-on to their work, but rather embrace the opportunities they now have. What is more, they all do their training together in the same site — the Language Centre in the secondary college for two terms and a primary school for two other terms so far — supported by the qualified teachers in their Indonesian professional learning team.

This is all underpinned by the strong and consistent support of cluster principals for the approach and the way in which they have worked together as a result.

## ILPIC11: Bendigo Cluster, Loddon Mallee Region

Interview conducted on 15 November 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The cluster program is aimed at developing strategies to improve language provision based on best practice and increased access to digital learning technologies to support and strengthen students’ language learning. This includes the use of such emerging technologies as IPads and Webex Videoconferencing facilities, as well as Ultranet Design and Collaborative Learning Spaces to ensure more time for language instruction than just face-to-face teaching has been able to provide.

Although the cluster was not able to introduce Webex Videoconferencing during the life of the ILPIC project, it remains a part of cluster plans, and hence the ongoing purpose the cluster seeks to achieve.

**Program Design**

The program design involves not so much a mix of face-to-face and virtual delivery, as the opportunity to learn through technology which is being built into the ordinary classroom instruction that occurs. Thus, time is provided within classrooms for IPads in particular, and Interactive Whiteboards to be used in both the primary and secondary schools.

This is proving important since the IPads not only engage the students in class, but sufficiently interest them that students are borrowing IPads at recess and lunchtime, which effectively increases the time they are learning a language, and even seek them when they have teachers absent and classes covered by CRTs. Beyond this, evenings have occurred within cluster schools where students have demonstrated the use of their IPads to their parents with a very positive response.

**Program Delivery**

German is being offered at Spring Gully Primary School from Prep to Year 6, while Indonesian initially and now also Chinese is being offered to Prep to Year 3 students at Spring Gully with the likelihood it will extend across the board in 2013 because of the success of the cluster approach. Both German and Indonesian are provided at Crusoe Secondary College.

The German program at Crusoe College covers Year 7 to 9 with most of the IPad use at Year 9. IPads are not yet used in Indonesian due to some logistical issues that emerged, including teacher illness, but already are prepared with Apps so they can be used from next year. It is interesting to note that classes occur in open classrooms with other, non-language groups, with the result that other students see the German students using their IPads and ask why they don’t have them as well. This then leads to an answer along the lines that ‘if you had stuck with German you would’.

The schools are also using a small-scale immersion approach whereby language teaching is integrated with art, in part because the teachers cover both subjects in the primary schools, with a flow on to secondary school practice as well.

Central to the use of IPads, which is one of the major outcomes of the cluster’s work, is the use of a range of Apps that teachers have found that make learning fun and somewhat easier for students undertaking German, Indonesian and, to a lesser extent, Chinese. The use of these Apps is supported by the focused use of downloaded podcasts, accessed from TV and other channel websites that produce news for foreign learners, kids’ programs and more which students are keen to hear, even when they address such areas as grammar that they traditionally avoid.

What is more, the schools are finding that Apps and podcasts the teachers use get downloaded by students at home, with the result they work on language learning activities out of hours with one student, for example, explaining how he listened to podcasts and though he didn’t understand much, he knew he benefited from getting used to how the language sounds.

One particularly engaging App that the secondary college German Language Assistant found and has shared with primary schools as well, relates to the German Football League. Students have readily downloaded it, which enables them to follow particular teams and then report back to the class as a whole, with the result it not only generates interest, but contributes to reading as a well.

Like other clusters in the ILPIC initiative, the plans to use the Ultranet have been put on hold due to industrial bans on its use, however, an online Drop Box has been established between the language teachers which enables them to share resources across the schools. This was achieved with the support of the region’s Ultranet coach who is also helping them to develop a web page to support and promote what they are doing, as well as working to build teacher confidence and capacity in using the technologies they now have.

**Responses to the Program**

The students have really embraced the whole approach and are described as being ‘engaged and excited’ by the possibility of using IPads and downloading their own Apps. Aside from an initial need to build confidence levels, the language teachers too are really excited about the pedagogical opportunities the technologies afford. This is helped by some professional development they have attended which has raised awareness of the ways in which these ICTs can be used.

What is really encouraging about the growing focus on using the IPads is the fact that, when the teachers find something challenging when first it is explained, they increasingly say things like, ‘we’ll take it back to the kids, since they’ll know how to do it and show us’.

Other teachers are beginning to express significant curiosity in the language teaching within the schools, especially about the IPads and how they are used, which is expected to lead to greater use of technology in other subjects as well.

The parent response is described by the cluster as ‘fabulous’. One of the primary schools, for instance, had an Oktoberfest function one evening where parents were invited to experience the program in the way the students do, and as shown by their own children, and simply ‘loved’ it. The secondary college had a similar experience with its parents, with the result the schools are ‘incredibly positive all around’.

**Program Impact**

The most notable impact at this still relatively early stage of implementation is the increased engagement the students demonstrate in learning a language at school. One of the key manifestations of this increased engagement in language learning has been that all 17 students undertaking German in Year 9 in the cluster will continue into Year 10, thereby creating a viable group for German at a level where the language was not taught in 2012. Similarly, the offering of language at the primary level is being extended to all students from Prep to Year 6 so the cluster is really building a constituency for languages in the schools.

The increased student engagement reflects the way in which the pedagogy of language teaching has changed across the schools, particularly because the repertoire of teachers has been opened up. They have, for instance, learned that the IPads can be used even when the internet is not available, for example, to take photos and then integrate them with stories the students write. This in turn has increased the range of strategies they consider using in class, and which now extends to other things they do and technologies they use.

Beyond this, there is some anecdotal evidence from the teachers involved that students are developing a better vocabulary, due to such Apps as flash cards where students hear the word and have to point to the appropriate picture it represents, which in turn contributes to better listening and reading skills.

**Program Sustainability**

The cluster does feel its approach is sustainable over time, in part because of the strong focus on leveraging off the use of Apps. There are always new Apps emerging and, since it did its first big multi-App download, it has found lots more it can use to support language learning in and beyond school.

As long as the IPads do not get damaged, which is one reason they cannot be borrowed and taken home, then they can be used in class, since there is no need to upgrade them for some time. Teachers are still learning lots about how they can be used so there is a lot of life in them still.

Beyond this, teachers are developing their capacity in collaborative ways just by applying the approach with the support of the Ultranet coach. And they now intend to start using the Polycom system to do cross-school mentoring which will further cement working as a cluster in place.

## ILPIC12: Inner North Cluster, Northern Metropolitan Region

Interview conducted on 15 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The cluster program has been designed to meet a mix of purposes that include increasing the time devoted to language learning, especially in P-6 though CLIL and other activities; increasing the number of non-background learners who continue studying a language until Year 12; enhancing the curricular and extracurricular offerings for language students in the inner north while establishing professional networks and collaborations across the cluster; rapidly and positively affecting the quality of teacher practice and associated student learning in language classrooms; and establishing rich programs that supplement and support the language programs of cluster schools.

**Program Design**

The cluster initially included three secondary colleges, one has not really been in a position to fully engage and effectively has withdrawn. The cluster in this context is effectively working in two groups according to the languages offered in the primary schools. The larger group involves all but one of the primary schools, which are teaching Italian, along with one secondary school, while the other group involves the outstanding primary with French and Mandarin and both secondary schools.

In the Prep to Year 6 area the cluster is really playing ‘a long game’ whereby it is seeking to skill teachers, especially in Italian, where the experience of language teaching has not been as strong, to adopt a new and ultimately more sustainable approach centred on CLIL. This is designed to ensure the schools can have confidence in their ability to offer Italian over many years.

At the secondary level, the objective of keeping students through to Year 12 is still some way off, and the focus therefore is on working lower down the school, especially at Years 7 and 8, in order to get a flow of viable classes moving up to VCE.

**Program Delivery**

Arguably most work within the cluster has centred on developing a collegial, whole of cluster approach particularly aimed at building language teacher capacity in such areas as CLIL. Thus, ILPIC funding has been used to support professional learning in CLIL and regular meetings between relevant cluster teachers for this purpose and also to share approaches and materials that work.

A feature of delivery that initially was solely intended for French and Mandarin is the use of the Accelerated Integrated Methodology (AIM) developed in Canada for teaching French. However the approach, which uses gestures, music, dance and theatre to help students learn, on the premise they learn and remember better when they do something that goes along with the words they are saying, has generated such interest among cluster Italian teachers that they are seeking to adopt it in time as well. This will require them to develop materials for Italian themselves, since they do not exist in this language at this stage.

This partly reflects the success of the approach at Clifton Hill Primary, and its progressive adoption at Northcote High, and the impact of teachers seeing it in action and hearing other teachers talk about its use. This, it should be noted, is an unintended outcome of the cluster project rather than something that was planned, but is described as ‘a no-brainer’, because speaking to students in this way gets them to a higher level of fluency so they can address reading and writing later on. For the teachers concerned it has some links to an immersion approach, while still allowing for English to be used for some instruction along the way.

Teachers do need to learn the methodology behind the AIM approach and ILPIC funding has been used to support training in this regard. Since all Year 7 and 8 students and Year 9 students in semester one at Northcote High and one class of Year 8 and 9 students are being taught in this way, it has been a big focus of the secondary schools. The reason it is limited to semester one in Year 9 is that, although it sets the students up well for oral fluency, it doesn’t sufficiently help to prepare them for exams; so a more ‘traditional’ approach then applies, but building on a better language base.

The primaries, apart from Clifton Hill which has used and demonstrated the approach to others, are coming to it somewhat later and are now looking at what is required.

As a reflection of the growing cluster-wide approach to teaching Italian, the relevant primary schools organised the first ever cross-school Italian camp for students in their senior years this year.

**Responses to the Program**

Parents haven’t really noticed much change because of the incremental way in which the cluster has implemented it. The only school where a sudden shift can really be observed is Merri Creek Primary where an after school Mandarin program has been introduced.

Similarly students, aside from those in Year 9 at Northcote, would not really have seen enormous change as yet. This reflects the fact that Year 7 and 8 students have only been taught using AIM, while Year 9 students have experienced AIM and a more traditional approach. These students did find it difficult at first because they were used to a different methodology, but increasingly have found it engaging and interesting since it is built around stories and plays.

**Program Impact**

While some programs, such as those at Clifton Hill Primary and Northcote High are long-standing and successful, with the result they tend to roll on, albeit starting to influence practice in other schools, some others have seen an increase in the degree of language teaching they can provide. Melbourne Girls, for example, has traditionally started language teaching in Year 8 and not provided it at Year 7, having a focus on literacy instead. Next year, however, the school has committed to introduce some language provision at Year 7 through the institution of after-school French and Mandarin clubs and classes that students can take. Even at Clifton Hill, perhaps as a flow-on from their successful AIM-based approach, the interest in languages has grown to the point where their after-hours program, primarily for Mandarin, has grown by 30% and now engages around 130 students who are taught by professionally trained teachers that the school employs.

Cluster principals who were interviewed by the Lead Contact observed that meeting others and being exposed to new approaches such as AIM has really improved the capacity of language teachers in their schools. The teachers themselves confirm this and both the Lead Contact and principals have observed that practice has changed and some more innovative and engaging approaches are being used.

There has not really been much impact in terms of increasing the number of hours of language teaching in most primary schools, but the potential now exists for it to occur because the training in CLIL and AIM has provided a different means by which the increased hours can be achieved.

Arguably the biggest impact of the program to date, consistent with the cluster purpose and design, has been to make teachers feel supported, confident and able to do more in relation to teaching Italian in particular, so this language can be offered to students in a consistent way. Put simply, the cluster describes how teachers are ‘more into language teaching, doing more interesting things in class and generally sharing more’. This in turn means that students are more engaged, with anecdotal reports that this especially is the case in Year 6 when commonly many of them have disengaged in the past.

**Program Sustainability**

As evident from the foregoing discussion, the situation in relation to sustainability may be a bit mixed, in large part because of the training needed to apply the AIM approach. At schools already using it for French and Mandarin there is no real problem and it progressively is becoming the primary means of delivery up to the second half of Year 9. The situation for the Italian teaching schools, however, is more problematic since they came to it later and no resources for Italian exist.

That said, even though it was not a part of the original focus of the cluster, the teachers and schools involved want to do it, and have committed to developing materials themselves. While the absence of funding, and hence dedicated time may hamper them in the task, the sustainable outcome as far as the cluster is concerned is the increased interest in how you teach a language and working collegially to improve professional learning and teaching across the cluster as a whole.

## ILPIC13: Somerville-Dromana Cluster, Southern Metropolitan Region

Interview conducted on 15 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

Since the cluster established a set of realistic goals from the start, which it could effectively manage and resource, it has been able to stick with them throughout. Central to this, it was explained, is the fact it ‘did not try to do too much’. This has been so successful that the approach will be continued into next year, when the ILPIC funding has ceased, with the same schools involved. The only change will be an effective extension of the program whereby some primary schools may do two languages in 2013 rather than one as in 2012.

**Program Design**

The program design is based on the use of technology, as described in the discussion of program delivery below, to provide languages to primary schools across the cluster using secondary school teaching expertise, in a way that otherwise would not be possible because of the distances (and hence time) involved.

More specifically:

* the four primary schools linked to Somerville Secondary College have undertaken Indonesian and will do so again in 2013; and
* the four primary schools linked to Dromana Secondary College have undertaken either Indonesian (1) or Japanese (3), reflecting the languages on offer in that school, and in 2013 will be urged to undertake both.

These languages have been offered at either Year 5 or Year 6, and in some cases to both year levels, depending on the size and resources of the primary school.

While the cluster effectively has operated as two sub-clusters for delivery purposes, the secondary language teachers have planned together as a team. Thus, even though they do have separate technology-based teaching arrangements with their respective primary schools, they design curriculum together and thereby ‘share the load’.

**Program Delivery**

The primary mechanism for delivering language lessons to students in the primary schools is the use of ICTs. The schools have used their ILPIC funding to support the purchase of Polycom systems that enable lessons to be taught via what amounts to a ‘giant TV’ on a system that’s closed to just the partners involved.

Thus, the Lead Contact (secondary language teacher), for example, may teach 60 students in a school who are split into two groups. In week one he would teach one group on webcam with a focus on Indonesian language, using the curriculum he and his colleagues have designed. In the second week, this same group would do a cultural activity with their own primary school teacher, which the secondary teachers have designed and resourced to ensure it complements the language lesson the week before. And the two groups alternate a week about.

The ‘remote’ secondary teacher effectively is sitting in front of a TV where he can see the primary students and interact with them, but is not physically present. He still manages to work with small groups, undertake speaking practice and more with the support of the primary teacher who is in the room. For all intents and purposes, the teachers have found it is just like teaching a normal class, but without being in the room. The primary teachers are there and, in some ways, are getting some de facto language learning professional development as well.

The technology-based teaching outlined is periodically supplemented by secondary visits to the primary schools with older students involved. For example, once a term or if possible once a month, the Lead Contact takes a group of Year 9 students to a primary school to undertake peer teaching of individuals and groups. It is, he has found, an excellent way of engaging students in Year 9 as well as a benefit for primary students involved. The students all enjoy it and want to keep going back, but it’s difficult to organise, which is why it only infrequently occurs.

Looked at overall, the approach being used means that the secondary teachers effectively have become the heads of language learning in eight primary schools. The ILPIC funding enabled them to have some time for planning at the start of 2011, and it is part of their load which the secondary colleges resource because of the contribution it makes to student transition to secondary school. The schools expect that over time the program will mean that incoming students are better prepared to learn a language at school and will be more familiar with expectations at the secondary level, having already experienced some secondary teaching through the virtual lessons they receive.

**Responses to the Program**

The primary teachers are very enthusiastic as their students receive curriculum they otherwise would not have and they can see the students learning as a result. Some initially were unsure about how it all would work, but now that students are performing well, and are enthusiastic about the lessons they receive, they are far more positive about the approach. It has even been reported that some students find their language classes to be ‘the best time of the week’.

Similarly, the Year 9 students involved in visiting primary schools are very enthusiastic about this because they enjoy the experience and feel they are learning something themselves.

Some information sessions have been conducted with secondary staff and those who are closer to the program are generally very positive. Others who are less familiar are yet to be really engaged.

It is too early at this stage to comment on what parents think, but perhaps some information will emerge through the evaluation surveys being conducted late in 2012.

**Program Impact**

Certainly the Year 9 students are benefiting in part because their primary visits provide a different way of engaging them in language study at school, and in part because they need to learn the language more effectively to be able to help other, younger students to learn it as well. This, it is interesting to note, conforms to the findings of broader peer tutoring research. In addition, the teachers involved feel that it helps ‘to overcome the difficulty of making language teaching interesting and demonstrating the value of learning a language at school’.

Year 5 and 6 students are learning a language they otherwise would not because their primary schools could not staff and resource it, and from next year the secondary schools would expect to start seeing an impact in terms of how well prepared the incoming Year 7 students are to learn a language at school. On the other side of that coin, it constitutes a strategic and successful means of making the best use of the secondary staffing resources that exist. In addition, it is also proving to be an effective means of using technology for teaching and learning which helps prepare students better for the digital world that potentially can spread to other domains.

**Program Sustainability**

The ILPIC funding supported the schools to meet the big up-front technology costs which now are in place and need not be repeated again. This contributes to the sustainability of the approach. Beyond this, the two secondary college principals have been very supportive of languages and have given time to it as a result. This reflects a vision they have for languages in their schools, including the contribution they can make to better transition into secondary school, and is worthy of credit since it too contributes to the likelihood the approach can be maintained.

Put simply, the cluster feels it has developed a model that works, though it requires a lot of time, effort, resources and leadership support up-front, including to get the relationships right. It is important, the cluster advises, to ‘not cut corners along the way’, but to set the system up right. This partly means ensuring the relations are built whereby a real cluster team exists, with the same objective and shared sense of how to proceed, and partly setting a system in place where one teacher relates to each class, rather than trying to deal with too many classes at once.

The sustainability of the approach is evident in the fact that all of the cluster schools are committed to 2013, and discussions are underway to extend the languages taught from one to two where the secondary capacity exists.

## ILPIC14: Moonee Valley-North Melbourne Cluster, Western Metropolitan Region

Interview conducted on 17 October 2012.

**Program Purpose**

The purpose the cluster established was to provide high quality language programs by: building on the existing quality programs in cluster schools; providing opportunities for teachers to collaborate and share knowledge, skills and ideas to improve their classroom practice; providing opportunities for students in cluster schools to work together to improve their language acquisition; and ultimately developing a ‘model for quality language provision in the government school sector’.

This highly ambitious purpose reflects the fact that the lead, secondary college had been a Centre of Excellence in LOTE for three years in the past, and hence had substantial experience on which to build, including having identified pitfalls that this time it and its cluster partners could avoid.

**Program Design**

The cluster effectively runs two parallel, but also interlinked, programs:

* Japanese which is led by the Lead Contact at the secondary college, involving two primary schools; and
* Italian led by a key teacher at one of the primary schools with one other primary having lost a third which withdrew from the cluster due to some waning leadership, if not whole-school support.

The program is built on some very good language programs overall in participating schools, with lots of immersion activities and CLIL-type approaches already in place. The focus in this context has been for the secondary college in particular to support the primary schools to ‘up the ante’ in terms of really broadening out the range of out of school opportunities the students can experience and the primary schools can provide.

It should be noted in this context that unlike all other clusters, this cluster spans regional boundaries with schools in more than one region and hence not all directly connected to the lead, secondary school.

**Program Delivery**

Some good examples of the sorts of activities the secondary college has been able to extend to its cluster primaries, because of its prior experience and range of contacts gained, include an immersion camp that involved primary students early in 2012, secondary teacher visits to provide immersion activities to students and a plan to set up a combined primary/secondary student tour to Japan.

The tour, which builds on secondary school visits in the past but is new to the primary schools, leverages off relations established with the Japan Foundation when the Lead Contact visited as part of a Japan Study Tour with Year 10 students, and will include a primary student visit to a Japanese primary school. From the cluster perspective, it was explained, it is part of a broader effort designed to get ‘real contact with real contact with people of the same age, to lift the profile of languages in the cluster schools, and to just make it all more realistic to the students’.

While a range of immersion activities also occur in the Italian-focused schools, they have not been as successful to date, in part because of the loss of one cluster school and in part because illness impacted delivery in another. That said, some immersion activities in Italian have been arranged between one primary and the secondary college, starting with students doing cooking at one of the secondary sites, and the school has also initiated some joint Italian-focused excursion activities with a school in the inner-north ILPIC cluster which is in the region to which it belongs.

The cluster established structured classroom observations between the primary and secondary language teachers around the E5 and between the primary school teachers themselves. These have occurred on several occasions, and will continue into the future, and have been very well received. They specifically were designed to be non-threatening, and have resulted in substantial sharing between the teachers involved and an increased take-up of new ideas that have been observed.

Aside from the fact that one secondary college Japanese teacher is undertaking CLIL training, the use of a CLIL approach in the cluster primary schools has helped spur the secondary college more towards also adopting the approach. More specifically, it has made its way into junior language teaching in the college and, from 2014, will effectively become the primary means of delivering languages in the school.

Working together more as a cluster has seen secondary students going to primary schools, sometimes as whole classes, sometimes in smaller groups, and primary students attending the secondary school. There even was one occasion where almost a whole year level went to a primary school and, on the other side of the ledger, the entire Year 5 and 6 cohort from the two Japanese-teaching primary schools attended the secondary college on mass.

While the cluster did struggle with getting the Polycom system up and working, it does now have it in place and anticipates it being used for joint activities over the coming years.

**Responses to the Program**

Both the primary and secondary students appear to really enjoy working together when the visits across cluster schools occur for such things as cooking, sports and a whole range of activities including serious, structured language learning work. In some ways, the reaction has been even better than the teachers anticipated, and one important spin-off has been that some older secondary college boys have provided role models for primary students in an environment where they are not necessarily exposed to many older males.

Since the secondary college has been providing languages effectively for some time now, the teachers there are described as ‘used to us and what we do’. Put simply, languages have been an important subject in the college for many years and both Japanese and Italian are well established in the school. For all of that, it does seem as if, in the wake of cluster work and exposure to the primary schools’ approach, the secondary language teachers have been experimenting more and coming up with some ‘impressive ways’ of really engaging the students they teach. They appear to be doing more innovative units and working with primary teachers to develop their approach.

Aside from this, the secondary college principal regularly works with feeder primaries in particular to encourage them to pursue languages learning, albeit with only mixed success to date.

**Program Impact**

It is important to acknowledge that the cluster sought to build and consolidate this way of working as much as to focus on languages in the schools. Thus, it not only has helped to broaden the nature of languages pedagogy, but has strengthened the cluster as well.

Students have responded particularly favourably to the exchanges that have occurred between the schools and the opportunities primary school students in particular have had to experience activities they otherwise would not have.

From the secondary college perspective the teachers, as indicated earlier, have been more inclined to try out new things, and the whole experience has arguably had the effect of pushing the college towards a different and better model of teaching to meet its students’ needs.

At the primary school leading Italian activity within the cluster, the whole experience has helped to raise the profile of both the program in the school and the people leading it, thereby also contributing to building staff leadership skills.

**Program Sustainability**

The secondary college in particular has recognised that students entering Year 7 have a range of language levels, from no Japanese to quite levels of understanding, depending on their experience in primary school. Simply having an advanced class hasn’t worked to address this, and hence the school is pursuing the twin strategy of working to improve provision in primary schools and using CLIL to support a more differentiated, secondary learning approach. In this way, it is seeking to shore up its future intake in a sustainable way. Beyond this, it has established a range of partnership arrangements it will maintain, such as links that flow from the fact it organises the region’s Japanese camp. The primary/secondary teaching teams forged will be maintained and some unused funds will support repeating and adding to successful activities next year.

# Appendix 5: The 2012 Interim Evaluation Report

## Context for this report

An interim evaluation report (ILPIC Evaluation Report 1) for the Innovative Language Provision in Clusters (ILPIC) initiative was prepared in December 2011 and the final evaluation report will be developed by December this year. The interim evaluation was based on an analysis of the program documentation provided by each cluster, online interviews conducted with cluster lead contacts and others, and a survey administered in late 2011 to principals, teachers, parents and students in the ILPIC clusters.

Since the interim evaluation, the survey has been administered a second time to the key stakeholders in each cluster. Since this iteration of the survey covers different classes of students, and hence parents, to those involved in 2011 (albeit with a degree of overlap but with students in different year levels), and also relates to the first full year of cluster program implementation, it is not comparable to the survey administered last year. It will, however, provide a baseline of data against which a further survey round towards the end of 2012 can be compared.

## Purpose of this report

The project schedule for the ILPIC evaluation does not include the preparation of a 2012 interim evaluation report. However, the consultants have decided to develop this short interim report (ILPIC Evaluation Report 2) to:

* Provide the Languages, ESL and Multicultural Education Project Team with an update on cluster project implementation as reflected in stakeholder views; and
* Inform the development of the final evaluation report and, in particular, analysis of the similarities and differences between stakeholder views towards the beginning and end of the first full year of project implementation.

Given this, the report does not include substantial detail that will appear in the final evaluation, such as the detailed background to the ILPIC initiative and discussion of the input that a further round of online interviews with stakeholders will provide.

## Survey completion

The consultants, in conjunction with the Languages, ESL and Multicultural Education Project Team developed online surveys that were administered at each key stage. Separate but overlapping surveys were developed for principals, language teachers, parents and students, and Lead Contacts in each cluster supported the administration of the surveys to these stakeholder groups. Given the diversity of partner organisations involved in the initiative in different clusters, they were provided with a short questionnaire rather than completing a survey online.

The discussion in this interim evaluation report is designed to supplement the detailed summaries of survey responses by principals, language teachers, parents and students to the second round of surveys provided as separate Excel files to the Languages, ESL and Multicultural Education Project Team.

As was the case in the interim evaluation phase (and outlined in ILPIC Evaluation Report 1) a range of logistical issues occurred in baseline administration primarily related to getting the necessary contact details for survey respondents in the required time. The upshot was that this baseline survey administration was delayed beyond the original intention, with the result there will be less time between the two administrations of the survey than planned, and hence less opportunity for the impact of project implementation to be felt.

The second round of surveys was complete in the period 12 March to 4 May 2012. The number of respondents by category in each cluster to the first round survey administration in 2012 is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Responses to the Round 1, 2012 ILPIC evaluation surveys[[7]](#footnote-7)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Principals** | **Teachers** | **Parents** | **Students** | **Total** |
|  | 3 | 4 | 33 | 28 | 68 |
|  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 12 | 19 |
|  | 6 | 5 | 12 | 21 | 44 |
|  | 9 | 15 | 76 | 155 | 255 |
|  |  | 1 | 5 |  | 6 |
|  | 4 | 4 | 31 | 10 | 49 |
|  | 3 | 7 | 5 | 22 | 37 |
|  | 5 | 6 | 30 | 18 | 59 |
|  |  |  |  |  | 0 |
|  | 7 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 15 |
|  | 3 | 5 | 19 | 4 | 31 |
|  | 6 | 2 | 7 | 70 | 85 |
|  | 5 | 5 | 3 | 18 | 31 |
|  | 4 | 11 | 27 | 12 | 54 |
| **Totals** | **57** | **69** | **253** | **374** | **753** |

Note that one cluster did not complete any surveys and one cluster only completed some teacher and parent surveys.

Given their interaction with the Cluster Lead Contacts, the consultants believe that the number of surveys completed is a proxy for how organised the cluster is, and consequently, how well ILPIC is operating in that cluster. Using this proxy measure, the shading in the above table would indicate that there are four clusters where the take up of ILPIC is not progressing well.

## Survey data analysis

Since the number of respondents in each category per cluster is relatively small, it is not possible to draw statistically valid conclusions from the results. Nonetheless, sufficient data exists to identify some trends and, in particular, similarities and differences between the views that different stakeholders have at this stage.

The data gained have been analysed by the consultants and are reported below in terms of the five key categories of:

* program purpose;
* program design;
* program delivery;
* responses to the program;
* impact of the program; and
* program sustainability.

### Partner organisation surveys

It should be noted that only two partner surveys were returned, both from the same cluster and both from kindergartens. In each case, the respondents indicated a clear understanding of the project being implemented by cluster schools and their role in it, as well as the benefits they would gain from participating themselves. They each also felt there was sufficient acknowledgment in the project of their own partnership role. Since these were the only responses received, partner organisation surveys are not discussed any further in this interim evaluation report.

### Program Purpose

Principals and teachers tend to have a very positive view overall about the purpose of programs being implemented in their clusters of schools as evident from Table 2. Both principals and teachers are particularly strong in their view that learning a language is important for students at school, rating these well above 4 on a 5-point scale. This also applies to their view of the extent to which learning a language will benefit students later in their lives.

Principals also rate highly the extent to which language classes help students to make valuable connections, the language program in their school aims to improve students’ understanding of other cultures, and language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school. While teachers also are generally positive about these variables, they are less so than their principals perhaps, as suggested in the 2011 interim evaluation report, reflecting the fact that the early focus clusters tended to have on getting their principals on board has yielded fruit. It also suggests, as referenced then that, although the work undertaken to gain teachers’ understanding and support has been relatively successful, it remains a work in progress that needs continued attention throughout program implementation, especially since turnover of personnel will occur.

Both principals and teachers tend to believe that their schools’ language programs are designed to help students become fluent in a language other than English, though less so than for other variables cited above. They also view these programs as being aimed at improving students’ employment prospects, and this is one variable where the teachers have rated higher than their principals.

Two variables where teachers are noticeably less positive than their principals relate to the degree to which:

* language classes help students make valuable connections, which may partly relate to the citing of sister school arrangements as an example, which is one case where principals are likely to have stronger connections than most of the staff; and
* language teaching contributes to global understanding where teachers are almost neutral compared to a very positive response from their principals.

Table 2: Principal and teacher responses to program purpose (Average)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Principals* | *Teachers* |
| It is important that students learn a language at school | 4.29 | 4.13 |
| Language classes help students to make valuable connections (e.g., sister schools, e-pals, cultural events) | 4.31 | 3.22 |
| The language program is designed to help students to become fluent in a language other than English | 3.85 | 3.88 |
| The school has a clearly stated purpose for its language program | 3.89 | 3.81 |
| The language program aims to improve students’ employment prospects | 3.42 | 4.00 |
| The language program aims to improve students’ understanding of other cultures | 4.71 | 3.88 |
| Learning a language will benefit students later in their lives | 4.44 | 4.13 |
| Language teaching contributes to global understanding in the community | 4.55 | 2.85 |
| Language teaching is relevant to other subjects in the school | 4.07 | 3.74 |

Parents from all year levels up to Year 11 responded to the survey, but the number of parents responding in all year levels except Years 6 to 8 was so small that it was not representative of the clusters across the initiative, and risks the results being influenced by the views of very few. Similarly, the only years where substantial numbers of students responded (i.e. more than 40 in total) were Years 5 to 8. Given this, along with the value of being able to compare student and parent results, the following discussion and Table 3, along with the discussion and tables throughout this interim evaluation report, are limited to parents and students in Years 6 to 8.

Parent opinion about the six statements listed is generally quite stable across the three year levels, while the student survey results, perhaps unsurprisingly, bounce around somewhat more. That said, the results tend to mostly be positive to very positive, with the possible exception of some more neutral results for:

* parents about the extent to which the language programs are designed to help students become fluent in a language other than English, which could reflect different understanding and expectations among stakeholders about how much fluency is possible from the language program in any school; and
* students about the extent to which language classes help them to make valuable connections, which may possibly relate to their expectations about the use of technology to connect compared with the time for this the programs allow.

Parents are particularly positive about the importance of learning a language at school, and certainly much more so than their children in Years 6 to 8. The students are most positive about the relevance language teaching has to other subjects and, to a lesser extent, the way in which the languages programs aim to improve both their chance of getting a job and their understanding of other cultures.

Table 3: Parent and student responses to program purpose (Average)[[8]](#footnote-8)

*Statements:*

1. It is important that I learn a language at school
2. Language classes help me to make valuable connections (e.g., sister schools, e-pals, cultural events)
3. The language program is designed to help me to become fluent in a language other than English
4. The language program aims to improve my chance of getting a job
5. The language program aims to improve my understanding of other cultures
6. Learning a language will benefit me later in life
7. Language teaching is relevant to other subjects I study in school

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Parents by year level* | | | *Students by year level* | | |
|  | 6 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1 | 3.93 | 4.07 | 4.08 | 3.07 | 3.12 | 3.11 |
| 2 | 3.90 | 3.95 | 3.81 | 2.59 | 3.33 | 2.96 |
| 3 | 2.89 | 2.85 | 2.92 | 3.22 | 3.36 | 3.39 |
| 4 | 3.56 | 3.54 | 3.50 | 3.94 | 4.07 | 3.81 |
| 5 | 3.56 | 3.70 | 3.56 | 4.13 | 3.95 | 3.89 |
| 6 | 3.59 | 3.39 | 3.36 | 3.48 | 3.31 | 3.15 |
| 7 | 3.43 | 3.67 | 3.03 | 4.02 | 4.05 | 4.09 |

### Program Design

As can be seen from Table 4, principals and teachers are very much on the positive side of the ledger in relation to program design, with the exception that:

* teachers are somewhat neutral about the extent to which teaching of languages is an important element of school policy, in contrast with principals who are very positive about this; and
* principals are not as convinced that parents and others are involved in language learning in the school, in contrast to teachers who gave this their highest score in this scale.

It is difficult to speculate about the reasons for these significant differences and the answers may only emerge from the online interviews to be held later in the year.

Principals and teachers are equally positive in their belief there is sufficient information about their school’s language programs, that students have the opportunity to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful situations and there is a mix of face-to-face teaching and online learning in language classes. Their results are near the top of the scale about the collaboration between the cluster schools the initiative fosters and, to only a slightly lesser extent, the fact that languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers.

Somewhat surprisingly perhaps, given the fact that teachers are usually expected to want more time for their subject, the teachers have a stronger view than principals that sufficient time exists for language teaching in their schools, albeit still well within positive territory. In contrast, principals are more likely to see the teaching of languages as being supported by extra-curricular activities, and teachers are more muted in this view.

Both principals and teachers are strongly positive about the likelihood that students will have continuity of language provision between primary and secondary school, and inclined to the view, although somewhat less positive about it, that languages teaching depends on some virtual delivery to run. Where they differ more is in terms of sufficient access to technology where teachers, who arguably want it more to support their work in class, are positive but much less so than principals who overwhelmingly seem to see it as enough. The same applies to access to native speakers where the difference is similar though the rating a little lower down the scale in each case. Principals and teachers also differ about the extent to which mechanisms are in place in the school to retain language teachers for program continuity where, surprisingly, the teachers themselves are significantly more positive then the principals who generally would be responsible for putting the arrangements in place.

Table 4: Principal and teacher responses to program design (Average)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Principals* | *Teachers* |
| There is sufficient information about the language program in the school | 3.69 | 3.65 |
| There is sufficient time for language teaching in the school | 3.35 | 3.76 |
| The teaching of languages is an important element of the school program as a whole | 4.04 | 2.91 |
| Opportunities are provided for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful situations | 3.85 | 3.65 |
| The teaching of languages is supported with other extra-curricular activities | 3.85 | 3.19 |
| Parents and others are involved in the learning of languages in the school | 3.00 | 4.66 |
| Students know they will be able to study the same languages in secondary as in primary school | 3.96 | 3.59 |
| The program is designed to foster collaboration between cluster schools in delivering languages | 4.25 | 4.34 |
| There is a mix of face-to-face teaching and on-line learning in language classes | 3.83 | 3.91 |
| There is sufficient access to technology (e.g., online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) for language learning | 4.22 | 3.56 |
| There is access to native language speakers to support language learning in the school | 4.04 | 3.47 |
| Languages are taught by appropriately trained teachers | 4.50 | 4.06 |
| Language teaching in the school depends on some virtual delivery for the program to run | 3.24 | 3.44 |
| The school has mechanisms in place to retain its language teachers for program continuity | 3.81 | 4.25 |

Parents and students, as indicated in Table 5, are much less inclined than principals and teachers to think sufficient time exists for language teaching in the school, across all of Years 6 to 8. While the outcomes at Year 8 are a little better for both groups, they generally feel quite neutral about it, perhaps in part reflecting the fact that fluency may not be developing to the extent they would hope or expect.

A much more positive view exists about the extent to which language teaching is supported by activities outside of class and the belief that continuity of language provision will exist from primary to secondary school in common with principals and teachers. Both stakeholders, however, are somewhat ambivalent about whether or not technology is used enough to support language learning, possibly reflecting the greater connection students in particular have to the digital world.

Table 5: Parent and student responses to program design (Average)[[9]](#footnote-9)

*Statements*:

1. There is enough time for language teaching in the school
2. The teaching of languages is supported with other activities outside of class (e.g., cultural days)
3. I know that I can learn the same language from primary school through to secondary school
4. There is enough technology (e.g., online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) for language learning

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Parents by year level* | | | *Students by year level* | | |
|  | 6 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1 | 2.27 | 2.02 | 2.91 | 2.27 | 2.02 | 2.91 |
| 2 | 4.02 | 3.93 | 4.00 | 4.02 | 3.93 | 4.00 |
| 3 | 3.81 | 3.67 | 3.52 | 3.81 | 3.67 | 3.52 |
| 4 | 3.00 | 2.98 | 2.98 | 3.00 | 2.98 | 2.98 |

### Program Delivery

As Table 6 shows, both principals and teachers have a positive view of classroom-related elements of program delivery, especially in relation to the variety of activities in language classes (where, interestingly, the principals are even more positive than the teachers who take the classes) and, to a lesser but still positive extent, the opportunities students have to experience traditional cultural activities in the relevant language and to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways.

Somewhat surprisingly in this context, the principals are much more positive about the extent to which regular assessment of progress occurs in language classes than are the teachers themselves. This, and other classroom-related differences, may reflect the fact that some of the principal views are gained second hand — albeit suggesting they are getting some positive feedback about language teaching in their schools — which may change and equalise more (in either direction) as more direct evidence, including possibly classroom observation, starts to be gained.

Where a difference tends to open up more between the principals, who basically oversee and support delivery, and the teachers who do it, is in relation to the extent to which:

* the school’s leadership supports implementation, which principals on average have rated near the top of the scale and their teachers have seen in more neutral terms; and
* technology is used to support language teaching where almost a one point difference on a five point scale exists, perhaps because the principals are focused on how much technology is available and the teachers are focused on how much more they would like.

Principals and teachers both have a positive view, with only small-scale differences, of the degree of planning time and support provided for language teachers, the work that language teachers undertake with other subject teachers to align/reinforce content, and the use of cultural days to celebrate global education, languages and cultures. They also have a very positive view of the subject knowledge of language teachers and the contribution of language assistants and native speakers to the program; though teachers are less inclined to see the language assistants as promoting the language beyond the classroom itself.

Somewhat surprisingly, given the expectation the principal would have a more direct connection to partner organisations than teachers, the teachers are very positive about the involvement of partners and their contribution to the program, while the principals on average are fairly neutral in this regard. Both, however, are very positive about the work of the cluster itself, and especially the teachers who presumably are involved.

Table 6: Principal and teacher response to program delivery (Average)[[10]](#footnote-10)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Principals* | *Teachers* |
| The school leadership supports the implementation of language teaching | 4.57 | 2.99 |
| Languages are taught by teachers who know their subject matter well | 4.38 | 3.82 |
| Students have the opportunity to experience traditional cultural activities in the relevant language(s) | 3.98 | 3.69 |
| There is a variety of activities in language classes | 4.05 | 3.85 |
| There are opportunities for students to apply their language skills in authentic and meaningful ways | 3.73 | 3.46 |
| There is regular assessment of progress in language classes | 3.84 | 2.99 |
| Technology (e.g., online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used to support language teaching | 4.35 | 3.45 |
| Native language speakers are used to support language teaching | 4.11 | 3.89 |
| The involvement of partners (e.g., business, community organisations, tertiary institutions) contributes to language teaching in the school | 2.89 | 4.40 |
| Partners are sufficiently involved in the program | 2.85 | 4.06 |
| There is sufficient planning time and other support for language teachers | 3.87 | 3.46 |
| Language teachers work with teachers of other subject areas to align and/or reinforce their content | 3.60 | 3.73 |
| There are cultural days when schools celebrate global education, languages and cultures together | 3.85 | 3.30 |
| The cluster schools collaborate closely to provide languages to their students | 3.82 | 4.37 |
| The school’s language assistant enriches the language program, by providing learning opportunities that would otherwise not be available (if applicable). | 4.02 | 4.28 |
| The school’s language assistant helps to promote the language within the school and broader community (if applicable). | 3.64 | 3.06 |

Students, as evident from Table 7, are very positive about their teachers’ subject knowledge, especially in Years 6 and 7 and, although a little less effusive, their parents are as well. They also both have a strong, positive view about the opportunities that students have to experience traditional culture and language and, apart from students in Year 8, the range of things they do in their language classes. Parents across the three year levels, like principals in particular, seem to strongly believe that regular assessment of progress occurs, as do the students themselves though, like the teachers compared with the principals, not to the same degree.

Students are neutral, or even slightly negative, when it comes to the use of technology in class, again perhaps reflecting their greater connection to the online world and a consequent desire for more. Parents too are less positive about this variable, but still positive overall. While parents have a very strong belief that they can take part in language program activities, their children are much less sure. This may reflect a difference in interpretation about what ‘program activities’ means (e.g., cultural days versus classroom participation) and/or be a consequence of using the word ‘my’ in the statement so that students respond in terms of their own parents as opposed to parents in general and their presence at school/in class.

Both parents and students tend to be somewhat neutral about the cultural days, which were generally seen more positively by principals and teachers surveyed, perhaps reflecting some desire for even more. The students are relatively positive about the chances they have to practise using their language learning in real ways.

Table 7: Parent and student response to program delivery (Average)

*Statements*:

1. My language teachers know their subject matter well
2. I have the opportunity to experience traditional culture and language activities in the language(s) I am learning
3. There are enough different things to do in language classes
4. There is regular assessment of how well I am learning the language
5. Technology (e.g., online resources, interactive whiteboards, videoconferencing and virtual classrooms) is used in my language classes
6. My parents can take part in some of my language program activities
7. There are cultural days when we celebrate global education, languages and cultures together
8. I have the chance to practise using my language learning in real ways (e.g., writing an email to another student in an overseas school) — Students only

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Parents by year level* | | | *Students by year level* | | |
|  | 6 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1 | 3.44 | 3.42 | 3.25 | 4.12 | 4.22 | 3.83 |
| 2 | 3.48 | 3.27 | 3.94 | 3.87 | 3.79 | 3.28 |
| 3 | 4.15 | 4.30 | 3.83 | 3.72 | 3.62 | 3.04 |
| 4 | 4.00 | 4.12 | 4.00 | 3.22 | 3.60 | 3.87 |
| 5 | 3.18 | 3.10 | 3.20 | 2.53 | 2.67 | 2.37 |
| 6 | 4.29 | 4.37 | 4.29 | 2.70 | 2.50 | 3.15 |
| 7 | 3.00 | 3.17 | 2.57 | 2.87 | 2.88 | 3.06 |
| 8 |  |  |  | 3.32 | 3.57 | 3.37 |

### Responses to the Program

As evident in Table 8, both principals and teachers are very positive about the extent to which students enjoy their language classes and generally enjoy learning a language at school, as well as how well-behaved the students are in classes and how much the parents value the opportunity for their children to learn a language other than English at school.

While still positive overall, teachers are much less positive than principals about how hard the students work in language classes and how interesting the students find the class which, interestingly, are both variables where the observations of teachers is arguably more direct than those of their principals. In contrast, teachers are significantly more positive about the extent to which partners are sufficiently acknowledged in the program where, in this case, their connection would be expected to be less direct than that of their principals.

Principals and teachers are equally positive about students’ willingness to do languages homework, though less so than the other items cited above and, even more strongly about the extent to which there is growing interest in languages learning in the school.

Both principals and teachers tend to believe that the students feel they are developing greater proficiency in languages, though principals are more positive than teachers about this being the case. Where a significant difference exists is the extent to which they each would recommend the language program their school provides. Principals have a very strong, positive view that they would, while teachers are more neutral, perhaps reflecting their different roles in terms of promoting the school and its programs.

Table 8: Principal and teacher responses to the program (Average)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Principals* | *Teachers* |
| Students enjoy language classes | 4.09 | 4.00 |
| Students are well-behaved in language classes | 4.06 | 4.12 |
| Students work hard in language classes | 4.04 | 3.55 |
| Students willingly do homework for language classes | 3.43 | 3.48 |
| Students find their language classes interesting | 4.04 | 3.55 |
| Students enjoy learning languages in this school | 4.09 | 4.29 |
| Students feel they are developing greater proficiency in one or more languages | 3.80 | 3.28 |
| Partners are sufficiently acknowledged in the program | 3.19 | 4.58 |
| Parents value the opportunity their children have to learn a language other than English | 3.84 | 4.02 |
| There is growing interest in language learning in the school | 3.87 | 3.61 |
| I would recommend the language program in this school | 4.16 | 2.97 |

Students, as evident in Table 9, strongly appear to enjoy their learning in language classes, which is reflected (albeit slightly less) in the positive view their parents also hold. They, like their teachers and principals, see themselves as well-behaved in class, with their parents again positive but a bit less sure. Students are less inclined to suggest that they work hard in class though, somewhat ironically given the source of their information, their parents are more inclined to think that they do. Similarly the parents are more positive about their children’s willingness to do homework than are the students themselves. Despite this, the students strongly believe that they practise their languages at home and certainly much more so than their parents who are neutral in this case.

Students are generally positive about how interesting they find their language classes, as are the parents to an even greater degree, but they are more neutral about how much they enjoy learning a language at school, while parents are very positive that they do.

While the students, again in common with principals and teachers, appear to strongly feel that their parents are pleased they can learn a language at school, the parents themselves are noticeably less positive, perhaps reflecting some competing demands (e.g., for literacy, numeracy or other subjects in some cases) that students themselves do not feel. Both parents and students alike would recommend the language program in their school and even more so than the teachers who teach it.

Table 9: Parent and student responses to the program (Average)

*Statements*:

|  |
| --- |
| 1. I enjoy language classes |
| 1. Students are well-behaved in language classes |
| 1. Students work hard in language classes |
| 1. Students willingly do homework for language classes |
| 1. I practise the language I am learning at home |
| 1. I find my language classes interesting |
| 1. Students enjoy learning languages in this school |
| 1. My parents are pleased I am able to learn a language other than English |
| 1. I would recommend the language program in this school |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Parents by year level* | | | *Students by year level* | | |
|  | 6 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1 | 3.61 | 3.66 | 3.37 | 4.16 | 3.93 | 4.07 |
| 2 | 3.69 | 3.43 | 3.74 | 4.09 | 4.02 | 3.76 |
| 3 | 3.78 | 3.82 | 3.43 | 3.12 | 3.10 | 3.72 |
| 4 | 3.84 | 3.78 | 3.63 | 3.26 | 3.24 | 3.24 |
| 5 | 2.82 | 3.05 | 2.77 | 4.19 | 4.02 | 3.94 |
| 6 | 4.28 | 4.18 | 3.86 | 3.84 | 3.76 | 3.35 |
| 7 | 3.79 | 3.92 | 3.31 | 2.91 | 2.95 | 3.07 |
| 8 | 3.02 | 2.98 | 2.63 | 3.52 | 3.50 | 3.50 |
| 9 | 4.05 | 4.03 | 3.60 | 3.77 | 3.86 | 4.00 |

### Impact of the Program

Any results in relation to program impact must be tempered by the fact the programs are only at a very early stage of implementation, with the result that any substantial impact in some variables can only start to be felt at best.

That said, as can be seen from Table 10, both principals and teachers, but especially principals, are very positive in their views that:

* languages are a valued subject in the school;
* the teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school; and
* there is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school.

Each of these variables, it is noted, does not entirely depend on implementation of programs in full, and could also reflect the elevation of languages within cluster schools during the 2011 planning phase.

Despite the early stage of implementation, principals and teachers both are highly positive about the degree of language proficiency students are developing, the extent to which language programs are achieving their aims, and the contribution that teaching languages makes to learning in other domains.

Both hold a positive view about the extent to which language teachers are valued by the school community and the links that students are establishing with their peers in other countries. Principals tend to be more positive than teachers about the former, while the latter sees this situation reversed.

Table 10: : Principal and teachers response to program impact (Average)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Principals* | *Teachers* |
| Languages are valued as a subject in this school | 4.25 | 3.94 |
| I believe the language program is achieving its aims | 4.02 | 3.76 |
| Students’ language proficiency is improving in this school | 3.96 | 3.85 |
| The teaching of languages contributes positively to student learning in all subjects | 3.96 | 3.40 |
| The teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school | 4.11 | 3.94 |
| There is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school | 4.13 | 3.84 |
| The role of language teachers is valued by the school community | 3.96 | 3.50 |
| Links are being established between students in this school and students in overseas schools (e.g., exchange visits, on-line communication) | 3.44 | 3.87 |

Students are very positive about the progress they are making in language learning, especially at Year 6, and their parents are also positive in this regard, but less so, again particularly at Year 6.

Both appear to have a strong belief that the teaching of languages contributes positively to learning in all subjects, albeit with ratings declining a little between each of Years 6, 7 and 8. Parents, like principals and teachers, are strongly of the view that teaching languages is recognised and celebrated by the school, and that languages are valued as a subject to teach.

While parents very strongly feel that the students make links with other students overseas, the students themselves are positive, but less effusive in this regard. Once again, this may reflect the greater connection the students have to the digital world, and a consequent desire for more of this than they get.

The lowest rating of both students and parents in this scale attaches to the extent to which they perceive there is growing understanding of the importance of languages learning at school; albeit with positive ratings at each year level.

Table 11: Parent and student response to program impact (Average)

*Statements[[11]](#footnote-11)*:

|  |
| --- |
| 1. My child is making good progress in language learning |
| 1. The teaching of languages contributes positively to my child’s learning in all subjects |
| 1. There is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages in the school |
| 1. My child is making links with students in overseas schools (e.g., exchange visits, on-line communication) |
| 1. Languages are valued as a subject in this school |
| 1. The teaching of languages is recognised and celebrated by the school |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Statement* | *Parents by year level* | | | *Students by year level* | | |
|  | 6 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1 | 3.14 | 3.38 | 3.74 | 4.02 | 3.79 | 3.76 |
| 2 | 4.10 | 3.95 | 3.91 | 4.03 | 3.79 | 3.54 |
| 3 | 3.39 | 3.48 | 3.23 | 3.19 | 3.45 | 3.44 |
| 4 | 4.21 | 4.16 | 3.71 | 3.21 | 3.29 | 2.98 |
| 5 | 4.00 | 3.92 | 3.83 |  |  |  |
| 6 | 4.27 | 4.28 | 4.29 |  |  |  |

### Program Sustainability

Program sustainability was not addressed by the surveys and was not the subject of comments included in survey responses, other than being nominated by some as a challenge to be met.

## Observations

### Some comparisons

In a very real sense, the survey data gathered in 2011 cannot be compared with that outlined in this interim evaluation report, since different cohorts of parents and students have been surveyed, and turnover of staff and the fact the surveys were voluntary means the principal and teacher respondents may also be significantly different on each occasion. In addition, the surveys were administered at different times of the school year which may have an impact on the results.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to make some comparative observations between the two administrations of the surveys, if only to surface areas of difference which may (or may not) reoccur when the surveys are taken again later in the year to identify any shifts.

All of the following observations should be read with the above mentioned caveat in mind.

***Program Purpose***

It may be noteworthy that the results for principals and teachers about program purposes are generally a little less positive this time round than when the surveys were first administered late in 2011. This could possibly reflect a halo effect around rating ‘new’ programs the first time around, which applies to each category discussed in this section of the report.

Areas where significant differences can be observed are:

* A drop of 0.4 or more for both principals and teachers in relation to the importance of learning a language at school, albeit from a very high base.
* An improvement in teachers’ views about the connection learning a language has to improving employment prospects.
* A significant decline in teachers’ perceptions of the extent to which programs aim to improve understanding of other cultures.
* A very big drop in teachers’ views about the contribution that language programs make to global understanding.

While no particular conclusions are drawn from these findings for the reasons already outlined, along with the fact this would be premature, it does provide a baseline measure of perceptions around particular variables which now can be monitored and investigated as further program implementation unfolds and stakeholder feedback on it is gained.

It is difficult to say anything meaningful in a comparative sense about parent and student responses to the surveys for this and the other categories discussed because:

* they are more likely than principals and teachers to constitute quite different sets of respondents each time round; and
* we are not comparing like with like since, even if there was significant overlap between the parents and students concerned, they would be responding on the basis of quite different experiences from year to year — for instance, the Year 6 students and parents from 2011 would now be responding to a secondary rather than primary school experience which cannot reasonably be compared.

That said, it is notable that students and parents are both significantly less positive about almost all variables in 2012, except for a substantial upward shift in their views about the extent to which language teaching is relevant to other subjects. This contrasts with other variables discussed below, where results and shifts are more mixed, and it is unclear why this should be the case at this stage.

***Program Design***

In contrast with the program purpose outcomes, the survey results for principals and teachers about program design tend to be better than in 2011. Teachers in particular have a markedly more positive view about the time available for language teaching, the involvement of parents and others where they have shifted from a position of neutrality to near the top of the scale, the extent to which the program is designed to foster collaboration between cluster schools to deliver languages, and the existence of mechanisms in the school to retain language teachers for program continuity. Most other results are relatively on par or marginally better for both principals and teachers over the two years, though the principals are much more positive in 2012 about access to technology, while the teachers are slightly less positive about their access to native language teachers, and have a significantly less positive view of the importance that language teaching has in their schools.

Some of these results may reflect the impact of initial implementation of cluster school programs, when the design and planning are tested in practice, though there is insufficient information to draw any hard and fast conclusions, especially in advance of the qualitative interview information yet to come.

Keeping in mind the caveat about any interpretation of parent and student results in particular across the two years, it can be seen that parents and students in 2012 are:

* less positive about the time available for language teaching;
* more positive about the way in which language teaching is supported with activities outside of class;
* firmer in the belief there will be continuity of provision between primary and secondary school except for students in Year 6; and
* less positive about the extent to which technology is available for language learning.

***Program Delivery***

The comparative results for principals and teachers in relation to program delivery are a bit all over the place, with some instances where principals and teachers are more positive in 2012, somewhat more instances where they are less positive, and some where one group is more positive and the other less so than in the previous year. This in part may reflect the different composition of survey respondents already noted and/or the different time of year in which the surveys were undertaken. It may also relate to the actual early successes and difficulties experienced in program implementation, as opposed to the expectation of these in the planning phase. With this contextual comment in mind, the major differences observed are that:

* principals and teachers are both more positive in 2012 about the involvement of partners and their contribution to the program, the work that language teachers do with teachers of other subjects, the collaborative work of the cluster, and the role and contribution of language assistants;
* they are both less positive in 2012 about the support the school leadership provides for implementation (especially the teachers), the subject knowledge of teachers involved, the opportunity for students to experience traditional cultural activities, the variety of activities in language classes, the opportunity for students to apply their language skills in authentic ways, regular assessment of progress in classes (with teachers much more negative than in 2011), and the use of technology and native speakers to support delivery; and
* teachers are much more positive about the time they have for planning while principals are a little less so, and principals are more positive about cultural days and the promotion of languages beyond the classroom by language assistants, while teachers are less so.

In the context already referenced about parent and student comparisons, the major differences that can be observed between 2011 and 2012 are that:

* parents are significantly more positive in 2012 about teachers’ knowledge of subject matter, as are students, though to a lesser extent;
* parents are a little less positive about the opportunities students have to experience traditional culture and language, while students are a little more positive, and both are a little less positive about the existence of cultural days;
* parents are more inclined to see a variety of things happening in language classes and regular assessment in class while the students are relatively on par;
* parents and students are both much less positive about the use of technology, particularly the students;
* parents are much more positive about their own involvement in language program activities, while the student results are on par; and
* students are noticeably more positive about the chance to practise using their language learning in real ways.

***Responses to the program***

The responses from principals and teachers about the extent to which students enjoy their language classes and there is growing interest in language learning in the school are both very positive and relatively on par across 2011 and 2012.

A stronger feeling exists among principals and teachers in 2012 that students willingly do homework, enjoy learning languages at school and, especially for teachers, that parents value the opportunity their children have to learn a language. In addition, both these stakeholders, but especially teachers, feel that partners are sufficiently acknowledged in the program.

While principals have a stronger view in 2012 that students work hard in language classes and find their classes interesting the view of teachers, while still positive, has declined. Similarly, teachers are less inclined in 2012 to express the view that their students feel they are developing greater language proficiency, while the view of principals has slightly increased.

One quite noticeable shift between 2011 and 2012 is the decline amongst responding teachers, from a very positive view in 2011 to a neutral view in 2012, that they would recommend the language program in their school. This compares with a relatively static and high rating response from principals. Aside from the ongoing caveat about different respondents to the surveys over the two years, and the different timing of their administration, this and other differences noted above may also partly reflect the difference that exists between a program in prospect, when it is planned, and its implementation in practice when some early successes may occur, but also some difficult challenges may emerge.

Keeping the oft-referenced caveat about the surveys of students and parents across the two years in mind, the significant differences that can be observed are that:

* students are more positive in 2012 about how much they enjoy their language classes, while their parents’ results are on par with the previous year;
* students and parents are much more inclined to believe they are well-behaved in class, but slightly less inclined to feel they work hard, albeit countered somewhat by the view they are more likely to do homework in 2012;
* students are much more positive in the view that they practise their language at home, though the view of parents has not particularly shifted in this regard;
* both students and parents have a significantly more positive view in 2012 that the language classes are interesting, yet paradoxically perhaps, are noticeably less positive about the extent to which language learning is enjoyed at school; and
* similarly paradoxically, the students are noticeably more positive about how pleased their parents are that they learn a language at school and less positive about whether they would recommend the school’s language program, while the ratings of parents are the reverse.

The fact that some of these, and for that matter other parent and student ratings cited in this report for 2011 and 2012, are labelled as paradoxical, emphasises the need for caution when interpreting the survey results — especially since, as stressed throughout, like is not being compared to like. It is noted in this context that the next round of surveys in 2012 may provide more comparable outcomes since the surveys will at least be completed by cohorts across the same calendar year.

***Impact of the program***

Perhaps not surprisingly, since implementation has now commenced, the ratings of principals and teachers in all but two variables related to program impact have increased between 2011 and 2012. In some cases the change was relatively small — e.g., their views of the extent to which links are being established between students and their counterparts overseas and students’ language proficiency is being improved — while in others it’s quite marked — e.g., the extent to which languages are seen as being a valued subject in the school and, somewhat connected to this, that a growing understanding exists about the importance of learning a language in school.

The two variables that do not reflect this trend are the belief that the languages programs are achieving their aims and contribute positively to students learning in all subjects. While principals are more positive in 2012 than in 2011, teachers are less so, albeit still positive, in each case.

It is unclear why this might be the case, and further information may emerge when qualitative online interviews are held and the surveys repeated later in the year.

Students are slightly less positive about the progress they are making in languages learning in 2012 than in 2011, and their parents even more so, but this is tempered by the fact that the cohorts are different at each year level concerned.

In contrast, they are both significantly more positive about the contribution that language teaching makes to learning in other subjects, and the links the students can make to peers in other, overseas schools.

Students are a little more positive in 2012 about the extent to which there is growing understanding of the importance of learning languages at school, while their parents, albeit from different cohorts over the two years, are slightly less positive this time around.

Parents, in common with principals and teachers to some extent, are noticeably more positive in 2012 about both the degree to which languages are valued as a subject and its teaching is recognised and celebrated by the school.

### Highlights and Challenges

The surveys provided the opportunity for respondents to make comments on a range of issues associated with implementation of the ILPIC initiative in cluster schools. A large number of comments were made, many of which were purely individual, and hence not the subject of this report, albeit potentially of interest to the schools concerned and to whom they have been conveyed.

It was, however, possible to identify a number of commonly-expressed highlights and challenges that emerged across the cluster, which are worth recording in this interim evaluation report.

***The main highlights***

The main highlights that emerged from across the cluster survey responses, in no particular order, are listed below.

* Many students are engaged with and enjoying learning a language at school.
* There is emerging evidence of staff teams working collaboratively in schools and across clusters to build their collective language teaching capacities.
* The prospect now exists for more continuity of language provision in clusters from primary into secondary school.
* There are opportunities for students to engage in such practical language learning activities as cooking, using laptops, singing and more.
* There is now access within a number of clusters to native speakers who can support language learning at school.
* The take-up of language learning is particularly encouraging in Prep in a number of cluster schools since this provides a basis for languages to then flow through the school.
* Students and their parents appreciate learning about other cultures.
* A number of schools have access to a trained language teacher and/or assistant because of the cluster arrangement, that they otherwise would not have.
* Resources generally are being shared across clusters, thereby maximising the potential to ‘do more with less’.
* Teachers, students and parents appreciate the access they have to technology, including videoconferencing, to support language learning.
* Students enjoy engaging with students in other countries, while some sister school arrangements facilitate activities for students in Australia and overseas.
* The value of an immersion approach is being demonstrated in a number of schools.
* There are many examples of language learning being linked more clearly to extra-curricular activities in schools.

***The key challenges***

A range of common challenges that clusters face were cited, including the following.

* The frustration that emerges, particularly from parents, when they do not see ‘sufficient’ language fluency develop, especially when there is only limited time for language classes in the school.
* The fact the technology is not always available when and where the teachers and students want it.
* Some behavioural problems in some classes are detracting from the effectiveness of teaching and hence how much students learn.
* There remains some difficulty convincing some parents of the value of learning a language, albeit a shrinking group.
* Some more mono-cultural communities lack the range of language learning support resources that other communities may enjoy.
* It can be difficult to schedule videoconferencing sessions and hence gaining staff buy-in for the process.
* Some difficulties are being experienced by teachers in catering for the range of abilities within some language classes.
* Some teachers are described as ‘hard to understand’ by the students.
* It can be difficult to ensure viable language class groups in secondary colleges beyond Year 9.
* Some clusters have not been able to achieve continuity of language provision between all their primary and secondary schools.

•••••

The range of common highlights and challenges surfaced by the surveys are, to some extent, all implicit within the survey responses that are outlined in detail in this interim evaluation report. As such, they all constitute issues which can be followed up to some extent as the next round of surveys are undertaken towards the end of 2012, supplemented by the qualitative data the second round of online interviews will provide.

1. Formerly known as the Languages, ESL and Multicultural Education Project Team. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The dot point summary is quoted from the Interim Evaluation Report of December 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. It should be noted that this and the other quotes included in this evaluation report are taken from the summary of interviews conducted, rather than the actual words of individuals who were involved. Each summary was approved by the Lead Contact of the relevant cluster. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The same statements apply to the aggregate and matched cohort tables through the remainder of this report and hence are only listed once each time. Some wording differences did exist between surveys and the principal statements have been used in each case. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The statements answered by both parents and students were worded slightly differently between the survey with the words ‘me’ and ‘my’ in the student survey being replaced by ‘my child’ or ‘my child’s’ with consequent grammatical changes. In addition, parents responded to some statements the student surveys did not contain and vice versa in later survey variables. The statements listed for Table 6 are from the parent survey. This same comment applies to the other parent and student tables included in this report. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Since, it was suggested at the time, ‘the clusters are still very much in the planning stage where design details are being worked out for implementation next year’. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The data by category is indicated for each of the clusters, but the identification of the cluster is deleted for reasons of anonymity in each case. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The table only includes statements common to both surveys. There were two additional statements in the parents’ survey related to a clear statement of purpose for the school and the contribution languages make to global understanding. The common statements were worded slightly differently between the survey with the words ‘me’ and ‘my’ in the student survey being replaced by ‘my child’ or ‘my child’s’ with consequent grammatical changes. The statements listed for Table 3 are from the student survey. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The table only includes statements common to both surveys, which in some cases were worded slightly differently as for Table 3 above. The statements listed for Table 5 are from the student survey. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Some small-scale differences exist in the wording of questions to reflect the different status of the respondents. Table 6 includes the statements from the principal survey. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. In this case the statements are taken from the parents’ survey since this has two statements the students did not answer. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)