

# LITERACY AND NUMERACY STRATEGY

VERSION 1



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# Secretary's Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the *Education State: Literacy and Numeracy Strategy*. This Strategy has been developed to respond to your needs, and at the request of the Minister for Education, The Hon. James Merlino, MP.

Across Victoria, you have been working hard to lift the literacy and numeracy achievement of the children and young people in your classrooms and communities. Your excellent results are making a real difference to their lives.

As you know, literacy and numeracy are foundational to engagement in education and lifelong achievement. Strong literacy and numeracy help us to learn, experiment, reason and create, to be active and informed citizens, and to contribute socially, culturally and economically.

Our understanding of, and the demands of, literacy and numeracy teaching and learning are greater today than ever before. Success in literacy and numeracy for our students involves creating, interpreting and communicating. It also requires understanding, reasoning, authentic problem-solving and building resilience and persistence.

Our collective challenge is to ensure that every student in Victoria is able to benefit from this focused effort. We want all of our young people to reach their full potential, including in literacy and numeracy. This means lifting as an entire system.

In every classroom, in every school, every teacher and every principal has a role to play in this Strategy. So too do networks, regions and central office. We will work together to join the system up to support you. This is what it will take to lift outcomes for every student.

We know this is possible from looking at successful local and international examples. And we know we have significant strengths in our system to build on, as articulated by people at every level of that system.

You have told us that to help you in your work with all of your students, you want easily accessible, high quality, and differentiated literacy and numeracy support. This includes the provision of evidence-based, detailed guidance on literacy and numeracy leadership and teaching. This is why we are introducing the *Excellence in Teaching and Learning: A School Leaders' Guide to Improving Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes*. Detailed but not prescriptive, the Guide sets out the structures, processes, and deliberative practices that have already been shown to work in Victoria and elsewhere to lift literacy and numeracy outcomes.

For leaders and teachers, we are also providing *High Impact Teaching Strategies* - to further support

excellence in teaching and learning. These strategies are recognisable, key instructional practices used in every day teaching, which will support stronger outcomes across all learning areas, including literacy and numeracy.

This Strategy sets out how system-wide success in literacy and numeracy will come from fully drawing on our existing Education State foundations including the FISO. This means having a strong focus on literacy and numeracy at all levels of the system; delivery of detailed information and guides for schools and teachers to help them assess and teach most effectively; and additional support tailored to school need.

The Strategy is all about bringing together the ability to assess students' progress with evidence-based teaching and whole-school actions. Through the Panorama reports and other school-based data, we now have the capacity to work out where students, classes and schools can improve.

There are children and young people in classrooms and schools across Victoria who urgently need us to work together more effectively to support their literacy and numeracy learning. For them, the window to realising their full potential is either opening or closing, right now.

I commit that as part of this Strategy we will maintain this sense of urgency. We will draw on and learn from the great work that is already happening in Victoria and elsewhere. We will continue to refine this Strategy and develop its implementation with you. And we will keep bringing ourselves back to the critical question: what can we each do to make the biggest difference to the learning of children and young people?

We will develop and implement this strategy with you. The support outlined in this document will be tested in practice – through engagement forums, networks, and regional teams. Your ideas and knowledge will shape both the implementation and further iterations of the Strategy. I thank you for your professionalism and your hard work.

I am pleased to be able to offer you this strategic approach to literacy and numeracy to accelerate the work we are all doing for the benefit of Victorian children and young people.

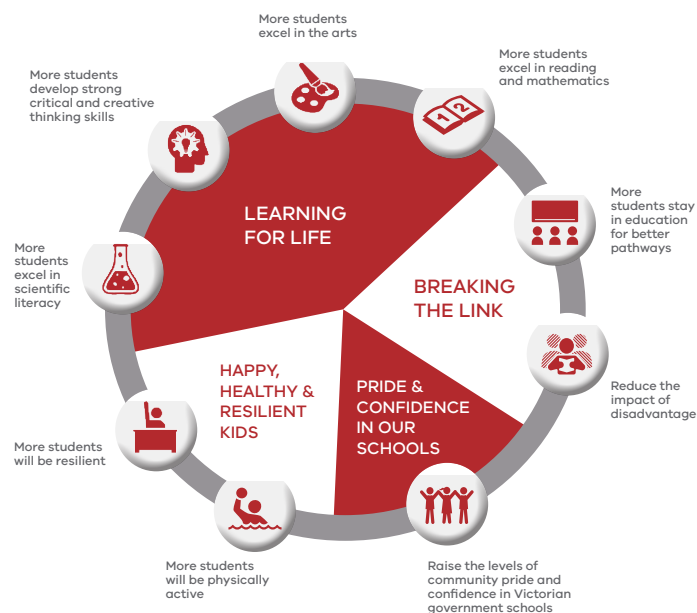


Gill Callister  
Secretary

# Why literacy and numeracy?

A strong foundation in literacy and numeracy is vital for every child and young person, and underpins their ability to engage in education, reach their potential, and to participate fully in the community. This contributes to a virtuous circle, in which characteristics such as the ability to reason critically, to experiment, and to be resilient and persistent also support the development of literacy and numeracy.

This is why strong literacy and numeracy outcomes for all children and young people are a key part of the Education State goals and targets, including *Learning for life* and *Breaking the link*, alongside and supporting *Happy, healthy and resilient kids* and *Pride and confidence in our schools*. In the Education State, we care deeply about literacy and numeracy, but we don't care *only* about literacy and numeracy.



Children and young people need increasingly sophisticated levels of language and mathematics in order to take care of their health and wellbeing, participate in the workforce and make a positive contribution to a democratic society. Mathematics supports us to analyse and reason about the nature of the world. Language enables us to communicate effectively, which is vital to feeling connected to the people around us.

Literacy and numeracy underpin the acquisition of more complex skills. For example, making the transition from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' provides children with opportunities to engage with the entire school curriculum, including critical and creative thinking, social sciences, STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and the arts. This is also the case for children who make the transition from 'learning to write' to 'writing for academic success'. An understanding of numbers and a robust knowledge of mathematical concepts enables children and young people to make connections between related ideas and to progressively apply their understanding in new and unfamiliar contexts.

As young people enter high school, they need to develop more specific literacy and numeracy capabilities so that they can access the curriculum across the disciplines they study.

We all know that there is a world of difference between the life and prospects of a student who is not meeting minimum standards, a student who is in the lowest bands of NAPLAN, and a student who is in the top two bands. Strong literacy and numeracy supports student engagement and achievement, completion of Year 12 and tertiary education, and employment and higher income – all of which are also associated with better health and less involvement with the justice system.

Today, more than ever before, the consequences of not having strong literacy and numeracy are substantial. The ability to tell opinion from fact, to understand a changing environment, to connect with others within and beyond our community, and to do meaningful work in a global and increasingly automated economy – all require a citizenry with higher levels of literacy and numeracy.



That's why, as part of a suite of holistic targets, we have committed to ambitious literacy and numeracy targets as part of the Education State reforms:

- 25 per cent more Year 5 students will reach the highest levels of achievement in reading and maths by 2020;
- 25 per cent more Year 9 students will reach the highest levels of achievement in reading and maths by 2025; and
- a 15 per cent reduction in the gap in average achievement between disadvantaged and other students in Year 5 and Year 9 reading by 2025.

We know that lifting literacy and numeracy achievement across our system is possible, based on past experience here in Victoria, and internationally. Analysis of Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results suggests that a number of jurisdictions have successfully 'raised the bar and closed the gap' in learning outcomes. Students in places such as Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, Korea and New Zealand, for example, have achieved a significant improvement in their reading outcomes between 2009 and 2015, compared to Australia's results over the same period. Other jurisdictions such as Singapore, France, Norway and Germany have significantly improved their percentage of students in the top two performance bands during this time.

Literacy is defined as students' ability to interpret and create texts with appropriateness, accuracy, confidence, fluency and efficacy for learning in and out of school, and for participating in the workplace and community. Texts include media texts, everyday texts and workplace texts from increasingly complex and unfamiliar settings, ranging from the everyday language of personal experience to more abstract, specialised and technical language, including the language of schooling and academic study. Students learn to adapt language to meet the demands of more general or more specialised purposes, audiences and contexts. They learn about the different ways in which knowledge and opinion are represented and developed in texts, and about how more or less abstraction and complexity can be shown through language and through multimodal representations. This means that print and digital contexts are included, and that listening, viewing, reading, speaking, writing and creating are all developed systematically and concurrently (VCAA, 2017).

Numeracy is the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that students need in order to use mathematics in a wide range of situations. It involves recognising and understanding the role of mathematics in the world and having the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully. Number, measurement and geometry, statistics and probability are common aspects of most people's mathematical experience in everyday personal, study and work situations. Equally important are the essential roles that algebra, functions and relations, logic, mathematical structure and working mathematically play in people's understanding of the natural and human worlds, and the interaction between them. Students are exposed to increasingly sophisticated and refined mathematical understanding, fluency, reasoning, modelling and problem-solving. These capabilities enable students to respond to familiar and unfamiliar situations by employing mathematics to make informed decisions and solve problems efficiently.

There is now also good evidence that other areas of development – such as resilience and perseverance – support achievement in numeracy as well (VCAA, 2017).



# Literacy and numeracy in the Education State

In September 2015, the Minister for Education, the Hon. James Merlino MP, launched the *Education State: Schools* agenda. This comprehensive reform agenda includes record investment in equity funding with the aim of building an education system that produces excellence and reduces the impact of disadvantage.

Excellence and equity are the twin pillars of the schools reform agenda. Through these reforms, we have launched a suite of initiatives including: the Victorian Curriculum, 200 Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists, LOOKOUT, Navigator, and leadership programs for emerging leaders, aspiring principals and system leaders.

Each of the initiatives is based on evidence and has been designed to support you to deliver better teaching, stronger leadership, and increased support for every child and young person in Victoria. The extra support being provided to principals and school communities through revitalised Regions and Areas signals the importance of collaboration and collective responsibility for all students.

The Education State school targets are ambitious. They acknowledge the learning and development of the 'whole child' and the knowledge, skills and dispositions that children and young people need to thrive today and into the future.

The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) was introduced to provide a common language across our system to facilitate collaboration and the adoption of evidence-based strategies to lift student achievement across the State. In addition, it supports you to plan how to allocate Education State school funding to get the best results for your school, and to lift student achievement.

Since the commencement of the Education State reforms, together we have made significant progress by working collaboratively at each level of the system to bring about improvement. Building on the strengths in our system and the momentum achieved through initiatives, we are well positioned to sharpen our focus and to work with greater precision on ensuring consistent quality of teaching and learning in all classrooms and schools. We know that you are capable and caring professionals, who want to support and strengthen a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning throughout our system.

The current FISO focus on *Excellence in teaching and learning* is already well underway through school Annual Implementation Planning, Area Principal Forums, Communities of Practice and the Regional Principal Forums. To support these efforts, and in response to your feedback, we are introducing this *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy* to support you: principals, school improvement teams, teachers, and education support staff.

The Strategy outlines the ways in which key features of the system will work together within the FISO structure to support teachers to engage in high quality teaching and learning practices, enabled by quality professional leadership.

To support *Excellence in Teaching and Learning* and *Professional Leadership* in literacy and numeracy, this Strategy provides:

- school leaders with **access to high quality data sets and professional development to assess school and student achievement** – so you can understand and diagnose your school's performance, as the basis for formulating approaches to strengthening practice;
- school leaders with **clear, detailed guidance on actions that improve literacy and numeracy performance** (where needed) within the FISO improvement cycle;
- teachers with **high quality, evidence-based guides and professional learning** – to inform practice across curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment (including formative assessment);
- teachers and schools with **support for all children and young people** to succeed in literacy and numeracy;
- teachers with **support to work as researchers of their own practice, and in a collaborative way**;
- schools and teachers with support and encouragement to **learn from each other**; and
- **differentiated support** for all schools to lift their performance.





Each of the initiatives is based on evidence and has been designed to support you to deliver better teaching, stronger leadership, and increased support for every child and young person in Victoria.



Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)



# Why now?

There are two key reasons why we are now deepening our focus on literacy and numeracy achievement, drawing on the strengths in our schools, and building on the foundational Education State reforms.

First, while many of our children and young people are achieving well in literacy and numeracy, a significant group are not reaching their full potential.

PISA data indicates that, compared to the best performing countries, Victoria has fewer students performing at the highest levels of proficiency and more students who are not meeting the minimum standards. On average, around a third of high performing students in government primary and secondary schools are not maintaining their high level NAPLAN performance (top 2 bands) from one testing period to the next (e.g. Year 3 to Year 5, Year 7 to 9).

PISA data also indicates that the average reading literacy of Victorian students is significantly lower than in the best performing jurisdictions overseas. The reading literacy of Victorian students aged 15 years is, on average, more than half a year behind their counterparts in Singapore, Hong Kong, Canada, and Finland. Compared to the best performing jurisdictions, Victoria has fewer students performing at the highest levels of proficiency (10 per cent) and more students who are performing below standard (16 per cent).

A pressing and persistent challenge is the variation in outcomes between students from disadvantaged families and those from higher socio-economic backgrounds. Grattan Institute analysis of Victorian NAPLAN data has found that the gap in achievement between students whose parents have low education and those with highly educated parents grows from 10 months in Year 3 to around two-and-a-half years by Year 9. Even if they were doing as well as their peers in Year 3, disadvantaged students make one to two years less progress by Year 9 than students whose parents have more education. Importantly, the learning gaps grow much larger after Year 3. Disadvantaged students are falling further behind each year they are at school.

Encouragingly, we know that in every region of Victoria, there are examples of schools in low socioeconomic areas that are already successfully *breaking the link* between disadvantage and achievement. It is important that we learn from this great work.

We also know that low achievement is not restricted to disadvantaged students. More than half of the students not meeting the minimum standards in Victorian government schools are not in commonly identified disadvantaged cohorts (low socioeconomic status, Indigenous background, refugee background, and students with a disability). Rather, there are challenges for every school and every teacher in supporting all students to succeed in literacy and numeracy.



Analysis of PISA data suggests that significant gains in the top two levels of achievement are correlated with gains in the lower bands, so the focus on educational achievement in the classroom will have a positive impact for all students. A sharper focus on education achievement in the classroom will help reduce the achievement gap between students from disadvantaged backgrounds and other students, assisting us to achieve the Education State *Breaking the link* targets.

Second – and critically – we are ready to take this step. We have strong foundations on which to build. We have worked together to develop and put in place the Education State reforms. This includes the FISO, Communities of Practice, significant additional equity funding, more support for schools through the Learning Places model, the Victorian Curriculum, the Insight Assessment Platform and Panorama. We have also worked with the Aboriginal community to develop the *Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan* to support Victoria to be a place where the rich and thriving culture, and broader knowledge and experience of our First Nations Peoples are celebrated by all Victorians, and where our service systems are inclusive and Koorie learners achieve their potential. Having these foundations in place will make a critical difference to the success of our combined efforts to lift literacy and numeracy achievement across our system. With a shared sense of urgency about the importance of this task for our students, and the additional supports set out in this Strategy, we can support all our students to achieve their full potential.

**We are ready to take this step. We have strong foundations on which to build. We have worked together to develop and put in place the Education State reforms.**

# What is the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy?

At its core, the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy aims to lift literacy and numeracy across Victoria, in every government school, in every classroom, and for every student.

For this to happen, every level of the system will need to focus on achieving teaching and learning excellence in literacy and numeracy. This work is part of the Education State overall improvement agenda, as articulated in FISO.

The Strategy aims to empower and support schools to identify and implement strategies to improve literacy and numeracy teaching and learning, based on their own particular circumstances and needs, as part of their Annual Implementation Plans (AIP). It is not a one-size-fits-all approach. A suite of programs, resources and additional support will be provided to assist schools to set their own literacy and numeracy goals, and to achieve them.

The Strategy recognises that schools are in different places and have different circumstances. Many schools are doing excellent work to achieve outstanding outcomes for their students. Other schools are on a strong improvement pathway. There are also some schools that are not currently achieving the growth in student outcomes that they, their school communities, and students would hope for. Regardless of the starting point, every school and every teacher can continue to build on their practice. This Strategy aims to support every school and every teacher to do this.

The Strategy also aims to improve outcomes for all students, irrespective of their current level of achievement. This includes students who are achieving well above their expected level, those who are achieving at expected levels, and those who are not achieving at expected levels. We know students have the potential to achieve regardless of their background. Students with children from low socioeconomic families, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Koorie children and young people have just as much potential to be high achievers as their peers.

The focus of this Strategy is on supporting excellence in teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy across government schools in Victoria. As always, the quality and consistency of implementation will be critical. That is why we will now work with you and our other stakeholders on a full implementation plan to execute this Strategy through the FISO, AIPS, Communities of Practice and regional support through Learning Places.

Initially, we will provide more intensive additional support, including guides, professional learning and other resources, for primary schools to lift their literacy performance. This will happen alongside continued support for teaching and learning in numeracy and in secondary schools. We will work with you and experts in the field to develop equivalent guides and professional learning to those being delivered for primary school literacy. Likewise, while the Strategy is focused primarily on supporting government schools, the guides and resources will, as always, be available to all schools.

## Principles and expectations

The Strategy is underpinned by the following key principles which are expanded on below:

- Every level of the system supports high quality literacy and numeracy classroom practice;
- High expectations for all;
- Access to high quality, detailed guidance on literacy and numeracy improvement;
- Supporting teachers, middle leadership and principals;
- Lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes is central to what we do – every day; and
- Focused support for schools to maximise outcomes for all students.

### Every level of the system supports high quality literacy and numeracy classroom practice

The Strategy has a focus on excellent teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy, enabled by high quality and professional leadership.

### High expectations for all

While we have different roles and responsibilities at each level of the education system, our shared focus is on supporting teachers in their daily practice to lift literacy and numeracy achievement for all children and young people in Victoria.

### Students

- Every student can expect that they will have the teaching they need to achieve success in literacy and numeracy – regardless of their background or prior achievement.
- Every student can expect to be engaged in their learning, including working with their teachers to





set their own immediate and longer term literacy and numeracy goals, and have their voice heard in designing their own learning.

### **Teachers**

- Routinely reflect on formative, summative and diagnostic assessment to identify what students know and can do, and on the impact of their teaching on individual student learning progress; set goals with students, and tailor teaching using evidence-based strategies.
- Actively engage in collaborative, evidence-based professional learning, within the school and beyond it, about literacy and numeracy curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.
- Build relationships with families that encourage positive dialogue and establish a sense of partnership around the learner.

### **School middle leadership**

- Take an instructional leadership role based on deep content knowledge about the curriculum, formative, summative and diagnostic assessment, moderation and pedagogy of literacy and numeracy.
- Maintain a focus on instructional coaching.

### **Principals and School Improvement Teams**

- Deeply understand their school's performance, including in literacy and numeracy, through assessment and evidence of students' learning.
- Focus on instructional leadership, including driving strong literacy and numeracy practice in every classroom and strong literacy and numeracy outcomes for every student.
- Build the capacity of their school community to collectively strive for teaching and learning excellence.
- Establish a sharp, targeted and explicit improvement agenda and align professional learning, guides and advice to deliver high quality teaching and learning.
- Encourage and support parents and carers to engage with their children's literacy and numeracy – including reading and counting at home in the early years, and sending the message that, with persistence, their child can achieve in literacy and numeracy.

- Build partnerships with Koorie families and explore opportunities for formalised school/community partnerships.

### **Network leaders**

- Drive system improvement through Communities of Practice, including a focus on literacy and numeracy achievement.

### **Regional leaders**

- Understand the literacy and numeracy performance of schools under their remit, what it takes to lift performance, and consistently embed literacy and numeracy goal-setting and improvement into discussions with school leadership and network leaders.
- Differentiate engagement with schools in a tailored way to support a trajectory of improvement, including connecting schools with different modes of support to capitalise on strengths and achieve higher levels of literacy and numeracy for all students.
- Provide opportunities for schools to share and learn from each other within and beyond networks facilitated by Senior Education Improvement Leaders (SEILs).
- Develop local approaches to support Koorie learners by working in partnership with Koorie communities through Regional Partnership Forums and VAEAI Koorie Education Round Tables, with support from Koorie Education Coordinators and Koorie Engagement Support Officers.

**Our shared focus is on supporting teachers in their daily practice to lift literacy and numeracy achievement for all children and young people in Victoria.**

# Timelines

Literacy and numeracy supports	Existing	June 2017	July 2017
Early Years Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program	•		
Extended Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program	•		
Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists	•		
Science and Mathematics Specialist Centres	•		
Secondary STEM catalysts	•		
Wolfram Software Suite – STEM learning tool (until 2019)	•		
Bastow Leading Literacy Program	•		
Bastow Leading Mathematics Program	•		
Bastow Strategic Management for School Leaders: Data literacy module	•		
Victorian Literacy Portal	•		
A School Leaders' Guide to Improving Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes		•	
High Impact Teaching Strategies		•	
Victorian Numeracy Portal		•	
VCAA Curriculum Specialists (early literacy) – guidance for teachers		•	
VCAA Curriculum Specialists (early literacy) – targeted advice for a cohort of teachers		•	
VCAA Curriculum Specialists (STEM) – guidance for teachers		•	
VCAA Mathematics Curriculum – sample program F-10			•
Literacy Teaching Resource – F-6 Core Reading Strategies and expert videos			
English Developmental Continuum F-10			
Mathematics Developmental Continuum F-10			
Reading and Vocabulary Assessment for English as an Additional Language Learners 3-10			
A pedagogical model for schools			
Workshops for primary school literacy leaders			
Literacy Teaching Resource – F-6 teacher demonstration videos (rolling release)			
Bastow Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and Data Program and Guide			
Executive Contract Principals			
Turnaround Teams			
School Improvement Partnerships			
Specialist Teaching Teams			
Digital Panorama Dashboard for each school			
Enhanced English Online Interview process and supporting materials for teachers			
Literacy Teaching Resource (birth to end primary) – full online version including all videos			
Preferred professional development provider list			
Professional Learning Communities initiative – scaling up			
Academic vocabulary resource for secondary school teachers			
Koorie English resources			
A student agency and leadership framework			
Leading Effective Professional Learning Communities: Guidance			

Sept 2017

Oct 2017

Nov 2017

Dec 2017

Jan 2018

Feb 2018

Mar 2018

## June 2018

## Later 2018





## Central office leaders

- Ensure coherence in policy and implementation planning.
- Provide a clearly articulated approach to school leadership of literacy and numeracy improvement, including data and support to diagnose current school performance.
- Provide clearly articulated and precise guidance to teachers about how language and numbers work, how to identify what children and young people know and can do in literacy and numeracy, how to teach literacy and numeracy effectively, and how to evaluate what is working.
- Provide support for every government school, with additional support for some schools, based on their circumstances and needs.
- Provide systemic support for Koorie learners developed through the Marrung Literacy and Numeracy Reference Group.

## Access to high quality, detailed guidance on literacy and numeracy improvement

Comparable school systems that have lifted literacy and numeracy performance offer a detailed and evidence-based approach to the fundamentals of literacy and numeracy teaching and learning, across curriculum, assessment (including formative assessment) and pedagogy. For example, Ontario, Canada published detailed, evidence-based approaches to teaching literacy, available for all teachers and schools. This year we will do the same: the *Excellence in Teaching and Learning: A School Leaders' Guide to Improving Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes* is now available. Later this year we will commence the rollout of detailed guidance on literacy teaching (equivalent resources for numeracy will be released later) as well as a general pedagogical approach.

## Supporting teachers, middle leadership and principals

We will work with school leadership teams to provide more support to teachers and middle leaders – including detailed, evidence-based guides to all aspects of literacy and numeracy improvement, as well as opportunities for literacy or numeracy leaders and coordinators at each school to attend regional conferences to build their knowledge and share experiences.

## Lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes is central to what we do – every day

Improving literacy and numeracy is central to the FISO focus on *Excellence in teaching and learning*.

Providing literacy and numeracy guides is a key enabler, but will not be enough on its own. To succeed, literacy and numeracy outcomes must be central to what we do, across all levels of the system, every day.



**To succeed, literacy and numeracy outcomes must be central to what we do, across all levels of the system, every day.**

Literacy and numeracy need to be given consistent time in the classroom. They need to be talked about in the staff room, in professional learning communities within the school, in Communities of Practice and FISO Groups, by the School Improvement Team, in SEIL and principal conversations, in setting SMART goals in AIPs and planning for improvement, in determining the best ways to use school resources and use professional development opportunities, and in exploring opportunities for schools to partner with others to share and learn.

Achievement in literacy and numeracy supports students to achieve in all of the targets outlined in the Education State. These include the *Learning for life* and *Breaking the link* targets alongside and supporting the *Happy, healthy and resilient kids* and *Pride and confidence in our schools* targets. In the Education State, we care deeply about all students' learning and development.

#### **Focused support for schools to maximise outcomes for all students**

This Strategy is for all schools, and contains support for all (for example, provision of high quality literacy and numeracy guides), as well as additional elements that some schools will receive in any given year (for example, expanded support for Professional Learning Communities, and professional learning through the Bastow Institute on assessment for teachers, and on literacy and numeracy teaching).

Different schools will be provided with different levels of support, recognising and drawing on the excellent work going on in many schools across the state, which is leading to measurable lifts in outcomes.

# Strategic focus and summary of actions

The following actions build on the foundational Education State reforms, such as the creation of the FISO, communities of practice, additional equity funding, more support for schools through the Learning Places model, the Victorian Curriculum and the Insight Assessment Platform.

Strategic focus	Summary of actions
Leaders will have access to high quality data sets and professional development to assess school and student achievement – so you can understand and diagnose your school’s performance, as the basis for formulating approaches to strengthening practice.	Principals receive Panorama reports, which show how your school is performing in relation to other schools, and there have been workshops in Area Forums and professional learning for SEILs.  Some principals will also receive professional learning through the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership on data literacy, to support you to analyse and interpret the Panorama reports and other data.
School leaders have clear, detailed guidance on actions that improve literacy and numeracy achievement (where needed) within the FISO improvement cycle.	<i>Excellence in Teaching and Learning: A School Leaders’ Guide to Improving Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes</i> provides school leaders with a clear standard on school-level planning required annually to ensure strong literacy and numeracy outcomes. This may include setting appropriate targets. This guide directly supports school leaders to develop their 2018 AIP.
Teachers have access to high quality, evidence-based guides and professional learning to inform practice across: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Curriculum</li><li>• Pedagogy</li><li>• Assessment (including formative assessment)</li></ul>	A suite of detailed and comprehensive guides will be provided based on the latest evidence of teaching and learning and aligned to the Victorian Curriculum. Initially, there will be general guidance for primary and secondary schools (for example, a general pedagogical model) as well as literacy-specific guidance with a focus on primary schools. We will work to develop equivalent guidance for secondary schools and on numeracy in the future.  We will support schools with professional learning and advice, including a new Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership course on teacher assessment literacy, access to VCAA Curriculum Specialists, workshops for literacy and numeracy school leaders, and the existing Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists program.  We will also develop a preferred supplier list for schools selecting external literacy and numeracy trainers and coaches.



Strategic focus	Summary of actions
<p>Teachers and schools are provided with support for all children and young people to succeed in literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p>In addition to Education State equity funding, we will provide you with support and guidance on lifting outcomes for targeted cohorts of children and young people, such as Koorie students, students with disabilities and learning difficulties and students with English as an additional language. We will continue to promote cohort strategies, including <i>Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026</i> and the <i>Special Needs Plan</i>, and the <i>Levels A-D: Working Towards Foundation</i>. We will also support the effective use of the existing EAL Continuum by providing an online Reading and Vocabulary assessment for EAL students in Years 3 to 10.</p>
<p>Teachers are supported to work as researchers of their own practice, and in a collaborative way.</p>	<p>We will provide more schools with access to the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Effective PLCs provide the culture and structure for teachers to collaborate, reflect on and evaluate the impact of their teaching on student learning, and determine what they can do to improve their professional practice. We will also provide a guide to all schools on running an effective PLC.</p>
<p>Schools and teachers will be provided with support and encouragement to learn from each other.</p>	<p>In addition to working with other schools through Communities of Practice and FISO Groups, we will continue to explore ways to support high performing schools – those that are demonstrating sustained and significant improvement in outcomes - to share best practice with one another (as is already happening in some parts of the state). Teachers will be encouraged to work together across schools through forming PLCs.</p>
<p>There is differentiated support for all schools to lift their performance.</p>	<p>A range of supports will be provided to teachers and school leaders. Some of these will be available to everyone while others will be available to selected schools based on circumstances and needs. See pages 20-25 for a full description, including new measures funded in the 2017-18 State Budget (such as the Executive Principals, Turnaround Teams, School Improvement Partnerships and Specialist Teaching Teams)</p>

# Support for our teachers

## Support for all

All teachers will have access to a suite of professional learning, guides and advice presenting the latest evidence on what high quality, effective literacy and numeracy teaching looks like in the classroom, as part of the broader agenda to drive improvement in schools articulated by FISO. These supports will be released in phases outlined below.

### Available now

- High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS)

A package of ten universal teaching strategies that have been consistently found to have the greatest impact on student learning. The strategies will help teachers develop their general pedagogical knowledge and skills, which will enable learning and teaching excellence, including in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

- Victorian Literacy Portal

The Literacy Portal brings together a range of quality assured literacy guides, activities and programs, helping early childhood educators, teachers, principals, students, parents and carers to access the information and services they need quickly and easily. It is available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/literacyportal>.

- Science and Mathematics Specialist Centres

The network of six Victorian Science and Mathematics Specialist Centres engage students and teachers across the state in contemporary, experiential science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum. The Centres' programs are available to all Victorian students and their teachers, through on-site visits to a Centre, participating in a virtual program, or Centre staff visiting schools through outreach programs. The Centres are for all Victorian students from Foundation to Year 12, with priority given to rural/regional and disadvantaged schools.

- Wolfram Software Suite

The Wolfram suite of products is internationally recognised as a powerful learning tool across STEM. The products have applications in the areas of computation, problem modelling, coding and more. In June 2016, we entered into a three-year agreement for the provision of a proprietary suite of Wolfram products across all Victorian secondary schools. These are available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/learningdev/vicstem/Pages/wolframsoftware.aspx>.

- Victorian Numeracy Portal

This is a one-stop shop for teachers and school leaders to access advice, guides and learning opportunities. The Portal includes mathematics resource packages aligned to the Victorian Curriculum. It is available at [www.education.vic.gov.au/vicstem](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/vicstem)

- VCAA Curriculum Specialists (early literacy) – guidance for teachers

The work of Early Years Literacy Specialist Teachers continues until June 2018. They are providing professional learning for teachers in the implementation of the Victorian Curriculum within the literacy context. This is available to all schools and promoted through regions and on the VCAA website. Specialist Teachers are also contributing to a range of resources including sample units of work, assessment guides and curriculum planning documents which will be progressively made available on the VCAA website from June.

- VCAA Curriculum Specialists (early literacy) – targeted advice for a cohort of teachers

The Early Years Literacy Specialist Teachers are available until June 2018 to support networks of teachers who need specific support in early years literacy, in addition to their commitment to professional learning. Contact your region for additional information.

- VCAA Curriculum Specialists (STEM) – guidance for teachers including videos

STEM Specialists have expertise in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Their work continues until June 2018. They are providing professional learning for teachers in the implementation of the Victorian Curriculum within the STEM context. They are available to all schools and promoted through regions and on the VCAA website. Specialist Teachers are also contributing to a range of resources including sample units of work, assessment guides and curriculum planning documents which will be progressively made available on the VCAA website from June.





#### Available in July 2017

- VCAA Mathematics curriculum – sample program – F-10

Mathematics sample programs are being developed for every year level (F-10) as examples of how the Mathematics curriculum could be organised into a teaching and learning program. The sample program provides comprehensive coverage of content descriptions from the three strands of the Mathematics curriculum and is sequenced to develop student knowledge and skills. It is available at [http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/curriculum/resources/maths\\_sample.aspx](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/curriculum/resources/maths_sample.aspx).

#### Available in September 2017

- Literacy Teaching Resource – F-6 Core Reading Strategies and expert videos

The web-based Building Practice Excellence: Literacy Teaching Resource will provide detailed guidance to teachers in literacy instruction, across reading, writing, speaking and listening for Foundation to Level 6. In September we will release the core reading strategies, which will provide written advice for teachers including the principles of effective reading instruction, core teaching practices and instructional approaches, samples of instructional practice and lessons. References to the English Victorian Curriculum Strands and Sub-strands will be included in the Literacy Teaching Resource to support planning and targeted teaching and learning. The expert videos will provide interviews of key academics discussing the importance of literacy and effective literacy pedagogy.

The Literacy Teaching Resource will be available on the Literacy Portal, available at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/literacyportal>.

- English Developmental Continuum F-10

The English Developmental Continuum provides a set of indicators of progress for reading, writing, speaking and listening. It describes how a student develops or evolves across these three domains from Foundation to Level 10, with indicators of progress at six-month intervals. Actions and teaching strategies are provided for each indicator across the three domains. These teaching strategies are designed to support purposeful teaching of individuals and small groups of students with similar learning needs. It is intended that teachers use the strategies in the context of their own classrooms and the text or topic being taught.

- Mathematics Developmental Continuum F-10

The Mathematics Developmental Continuum F-10 provides evidence-based indicators of progress, linked to teaching strategies, and aligned to the achievement standards of the Victorian Curriculum - Mathematics. Indicators of progress are points on the learning continuum that highlight critical understandings required by students in order to progress through the achievement standards.

- Reading and Vocabulary Assessment for English as Additional Language Learners 3-10

An online Reading and Vocabulary assessment for EAL students in Years 3 to 10 (RVEAL) will be released in September. This instrument will complement the existing Teaching English as an Additional Language resources and provide additional formative assessment data for teachers to use in planning and delivering programs.

#### Available in October 2017

- A pedagogical model for schools

The pedagogical model for schools will provide school leaders and teachers with a common language to describe and discuss quality teaching and learning in order to improve student learning outcomes. It will support teachers to improve their daily practice as a primary, secondary or specialist teacher across all curriculum areas, drawing on their deep curriculum knowledge and skills in assessment. With a focus on the Excellence in teaching and learning priority of the FISO and with the FISO improvement cycle at its centre, the pedagogical model for schools will guide collaborative efforts to enhance preparation and planning, improve classroom instruction, and promote reflective practices which inform planning for professional learning.



### Available in November 2017

- Teacher demonstration videos (rolling release)

*The Building Practice Excellence: Literacy Teaching Resource will provide detailed guidance to teachers in literacy instruction, across reading, writing, speaking and listening for Birth to Level 6. With links to the English Victorian Curriculum Strands and Sub-strands, it will include written guidance, expert videos and a comprehensive package of videos showing the techniques in practice. It will be available on the Literacy Portal at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/literacyportal>.*

- Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and Data Guide

*The Guide will be developed as a part of the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and Data Professional Learning Program. The guide will be a part of the program and also available as a stand-alone resource.*

### Available in February 2018

- Enhanced English Online Interview process and supporting resources for teachers

*Additional resources for teachers to support their use of the English Online Interview, Diagnostic Assessment Tools in English (DATE) and other Department resources to assist in identifying students who may be experiencing literacy learning difficulties. This will support teachers to use differentiated teaching and learning strategies for all students.*

### Available in March 2018

- Literacy Teaching Resource Birth to Year 6 – full online integrated version

*The Building Practice Excellence: Literacy Teaching Resource will provide detailed guidance to teachers in literacy instruction, across reading, writing, speaking and listening for Birth to Level 6. It will include written guidance, a comprehensive package of videos of experts and of teachers showing the techniques in practice. References to the English Victorian Curriculum Strands and Sub-strands will be included in the Literacy Teaching Resource to support planning and targeted teaching and learning.*

*The full, integrated online version will be released in March 2018. We will work with the sector and experts to develop similar resources for secondary literacy, and primary and secondary numeracy.*

### Available in 2018

- Academic vocabulary resource for secondary school teachers

*We will be introducing a specific resource for teachers to help build the academic literacy skills of secondary school students.*

- Leading Effective Professional Learning Communities: Guidance

*PLCs and teams make it possible for teachers to learn from each other and share practice excellence. Schools are invited to participate in the PLCs initiative to build the capacity and skills of school leaders and teachers to use the FISO improvement cycle to develop and maintain the culture and structure that teachers need to effectively collaborate, reflect on and evaluate the impact of their teaching on student learning. Through this work, schools focus on what they can do to improve their professional practice. Participating schools are supported by intensive professional learning and a range of resources. A compendium of these resources, including advice on classroom observation, student perception data and teacher assessments of student learning, will be available to all schools. For more information about participating in the PLC initiative and for resources and advice, visit: <https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/project/PLC/Pages/Home.aspx>.*





## Additional support for selected schools

Available now

- Professional Learning Communities Initiative – scaling up over the next four years, building on the pilot, so that by 2021 approximately 850 schools will be involved in this initiative. Schools focus their PLC on literacy, numeracy or STEM.

PLCs provide the culture and structure that teachers need to effectively collaborate, reflect on and evaluate the impact of their teaching on student learning, and determine what they can do to improve their professional practice. PLCs make it possible for teachers to learn from each other and share practice excellence. Schools who do this well provide time for teachers to observe and model best practice in the areas of student learning, pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. Teachers hone and evaluate their skills through regular and routinised peer observation, collection and analysis of student perception data and feedback from peers and expert practitioners to support continuous improvement. The PLCs initiative provides selected schools with professional learning and support for school and instructional leaders, ongoing coaching, and a toolkit on high impact practices. The PLCs initiative was recently expanded as part of the 2017-18 State Budget. More information on the PLCs initiative is available at: <https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/project/PLC/Pages/CaseStudies.aspx>.

- Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists

Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists are working to improve the teaching of mathematics and science in 100 disadvantaged government schools across the state. Two Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists in each of the 100 schools will work both in class and directly with fellow teachers to provide professional learning support to build confidence and capacity in teaching these subjects. In this way, all students in these schools will have access to better teaching in the crucial STEM subjects. The first three cohorts of schools are already experiencing the benefits of this initiative, and eligible schools will be contacted later this year to participate in 2018.

Available in January 2018

- Specialist Teaching Teams

For teachers in schools who are experiencing complex challenges, Specialist Teaching Teams will work side by side with classroom teachers to improve instructional practice. Intensive support around curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and evidence-based school improvement approaches will strengthen classroom practice and the learning outcomes of the most disadvantaged children. Specialist Teaching Teams will be equipped to deal with complex problems of practice including those around literacy and numeracy. Specialist Teaching Teams is an initiative funded in the 2017-18 State Budget.

Available in 2018

- Koorie English resources

The provision of professional development to teachers to support teaching speakers of Koorie English.

- A student agency and leadership framework

The student agency and leadership framework and accompanying resources will help to boost student engagement, improve student-teacher relationships and support young people to be active citizens by fostering authentic student agency. The framework will establish a clear vision for students as key partners in decision-making about their own learning, and provide tools and resources that support the development of student agency in the classroom, at the whole of school level, and at a system level.

# Support for our school leaders

School leaders are defined as anyone in the school with leadership responsibilities. This might be the Principal, the Assistant Principal, a curriculum, English, literacy or mathematics coordinator or leader.

## Support for all

### Available now

- Excellence in Teaching and Learning: A School Leaders' Guide to Improving Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes

*A School Leaders' Guide to Improving Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes is a practical guide to using the FISO annual school improvement cycle to implement a whole-school approach to literacy and numeracy improvement.*

### October 2017

- Workshops for primary school literacy leaders

*The literacy leaders from every government primary school in Victoria will be invited to workshops to share their knowledge and experiences, and to work with experts on the best ways to build literacy capacity within their schools. These workshops will be held in each of the Department's 17 Areas. This approach will be expanded in future to include secondary school literacy leaders, and primary and secondary school numeracy leaders.*

### November 2017

- Bastow Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and Data Program and Guide

*A blended learning/online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and Data Professional Learning Program for Primary School Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators and principal class officers to support implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. The program will support participants to lead the development of a whole school approach to assessment and use of data to inform planning and delivery of effective teaching and learning. The program will form a 'template' for subsequent professional learning in numeracy for primary schools and literacy and numeracy for secondary schools.*

### Available in January 2018

- Detailed Panorama Dashboard for each school

*Digital Panorama reports will provide every school with easy-to-access and interactive dashboards that will provide more precise and detailed performance data to support school improvement planning.*

### Available in 2018

- Preferred professional development provider list

*The Department will make available a preferred provider list of external literacy and numeracy trainers and coaches, for use by schools when undertaking professional development. The Department will consult on the development and use of the list in 2018.*

## Additional support for selected schools

### Available now

- Early Years Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program

*Supports eligible F-3 Koorie students not achieving expected levels in literacy and numeracy. Schools support Koorie students in Foundation to Year 3 by implementing or strengthening interventions and/or whole school practices that are informed by and address the specific needs of Koorie students who need additional support with literacy and/or numeracy.*

- Extended Koorie Literacy and Numeracy Program

*Supports eligible Koorie students in Year 4 in 2017 below National Minimum Standards in NAPLAN Reading and/or Numeracy (and Years 4 and 5 in 2018), by assisting schools to identify interventions to support students. Further information will be available in mid-2017.*

- Secondary STEM Catalysts

*The Secondary STEM Catalysts program is already working to build the capacity of 60 teachers across 30 secondary schools from disadvantaged areas to lead, encourage and support changes to teaching Years 7-8 mathematics, science and digital technologies.*

- Bastow Leading Literacy Program

*The schedule of program intakes will include liaison with Regions to meet identified needs in particular networks, areas and schools. The Program provides leaders with the tools, skills and knowledge to embed high quality literacy practice in schools. Participants develop an understanding of the current research on literacy and literacy acquisition, effective pedagogical approaches and leadership models and capabilities to facilitate changes to improve teaching and learning in schools. The course includes workshops, professional reading, electives, and developing and implementing a school-based literacy initiative.*



- **Bastow Leading Mathematics Program**

*Leading Mathematics is designed for both primary and secondary school teams, with a focus on developing the knowledge, capabilities and dispositions to lead and support collegial learning and change. Teams will be asked to collect and analyse a range of different evidence types, experiment with their practices and meet regularly at school to discuss insights and team learning. This will inform the development of a school-wide mathematics improvement strategy. More information is available at: <http://www.bastow.vic.edu.au/courses/leading-mathematics>*

- **Bastow Strategic Management for School Leaders: Data Literacy Module**

*This professional learning program builds the capacity of primary school principals and literacy leaders to develop and implement a whole-school, classroom-focused assessment and data strategy for literacy. The program is delivered using a blended learning approach, with two workshop days bookending a collaborative online learning portal. This program will be delivered to all 17 regional areas, and will incorporate the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy advice and resources currently in development.*

#### **Available in January 2018**

- **Executive Contract Principals**

*With funding from the 2017-18 State Budget, as vacancies arise, Executive Contract Principals will be deployed in schools that face significant challenges. Fundamental to these challenges are literacy and numeracy outcomes. Executive Contract Principals will be high performing system leaders with proven expertise in building leadership capacity to effect strengthened instructional practice resulting in improved student outcomes.*

- **Turnaround Teams**

*The leadership teams of schools with complex challenges will be matched with one of eight Turnaround Teams, consisting of one principal class member and two leading teachers, with expertise in both leadership and instructional practice. Each of the Turnaround Teams will work with three schools over two to three years.*

*With funding from the 2017-18 State Budget, Turnaround Teams will assist schools to focus on the things that matter in student learning, building cultures of high expectations including improving literacy and numeracy outcomes*

*for all students. They will work closely with leadership teams and other formal school leaders to implement a change structure based upon core leadership practices including focusing direction, cultivating collaborative cultures, deepening learning, and securing accountability. The enactment of core leadership processes will vary according to the school context but will be determined with regional consultation.*

- **School Improvement Partnerships**

*School Improvement Partnerships match leadership teams from high-performing schools with those from schools that face significant challenges. Student literacy and numeracy outcomes are commonly among these challenges. Working one-to-one with principals and their leadership teams, and with funding through the 2017-18 State Budget, Partnerships will identify the actions and behaviours necessary to effect change and lead school improvement.*



# Implementation and impact

Close and careful monitoring of the implementation and impact of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy at the individual student, school, region, and state level forms an important part of our work.

The Timelines (pages 14 and 15) set out our aims for implementing the various programs in the Strategy. Together with schools, principals, leaders and teachers, we look forward to closely monitoring performance and implementing plans and resources accordingly.

We appointed Deloitte Access Economics and the Centre for International Research in Education Systems in 2014 to undertake the Education State: Government School Strategic Evaluation. The Strategic Evaluation is a four-year program with various inputs including school performance data collected by the Department, school practice data, surveys and case studies. It will identify the effects of the Education State reforms on practice and performance and on student outcomes over time, and as such will provide one way to help us to understand the impact of this Strategy on teaching and learning.

# Shaping the strategy

We would like to thank the students, teachers, principals, SEILs and EILs, schooling and literacy and numeracy experts, and other stakeholders who have helped shaped this Strategy.

The development of this Strategy is deliberately iterative, and this is Version 1.

We will engage further with our Project Reference Group of principals, teachers and SEILs, and through continuing conversations with students, network chairs, experts and peak bodies, we will develop and implement this strategy with you. The support outlined in this document will be tested in practice – through engagement forums, networks, and regional teams. Your ideas and knowledge will shape both the implementation and further iterations of the Strategy.

Lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes in every school, in every classroom, for every student, is a responsibility we all share.

We welcome your views, and encourage you to get in touch by email: [literacy.and.numeracy@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:literacy.and.numeracy@edumail.vic.gov.au) to share your thoughts, experiences and ideas.

**Lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes in every school, in every classroom, for every student, is a responsibility we all share.**

