**Two minute promotional film**

**Albert:** Hi, my name is Albert. Nepalese is my first language. Now I’m learning English in Mitta Mitta.

**Micaela:** Hi my name is Micaela. I was born in South Africa. Now, my family has moved to Murrayville. Miss Voula and Miss Willersdorf is my English teacher.

**Art:** Hi, I am Art and I come from Thailand. I live in Apollo Bay.

**Department Voice/Person:** The Department of Education and Training provides the New Arrivals Program to meet the English language needs of newly arrived students. Until now, that program has been delivered through face-to-face teaching in schools in metropolitan areas and regional centres. But more and more, migrant and refugee families are settling in rural areas of Victoria. Often, there is no specialist EAL teacher in these areas. The Virtual EAL New Arrivals Program uses technology to connect those isolated EAL students with specialist teachers, to give them the same foundation for their education as any new arrival in the city.

**Pam Boyd:** We were contacted to be part of the pilot program and I jumped at that chance and so we started with three children. It was the most amazing experience. It was like they were actually in the room with us.

**Louise Mayer**: In South Africa, we don’t speak a lot of English and that was one of our main concerns, how she will fair in English. What surprises me is that they go to so much effort for only one or two children. It’s amazing.

**Department Voice/Person:** The Department’s EAL and Multicultural Unit funds the Victorian School of Languages to connect with and support students across Victoria. The program is designed to be flexible and responsive to differing student needs. Students stay in the program for between six months and a year, to ensure they are proficient enough in English to continue to be engaged in education.

**Pam Boyd**: Having seen three students already complete this program, I’m really excited that they have the confidence now to participate more fully in the school, in their communities and I’m very excited for their futures.

**Department Voice/Person:** In 2014, a pilot program was evaluated by the Language Testing Research Centre at the University of Melbourne, and their findings have been the basis for developing the ongoing program. (10 seconds)

**Ute Knoch**: We found evidence that the language proficiency of the students improved quite significantly within a short time. But not only that, the students were more confident in their mainstream classes and there was also evidence of other benefits beyond the student. The families were more integrated in the school and there were also professional development opportunities for staff, in that they got a better understanding of the needs of EAL students.

**Mandy Gay**: The virtual conferencing program is vital to assist Albert in developing his English skills and without it, his dad would have to take him somewhere else. Undoubtedly, I would recommend this program to another school because of the benefit to Albert.

**Albert**: If I didn’t have Miss Voula, I didn’t have the opportunity to learn English.

**Voula MacKenzie**: I love seeing the students through their journey. I love seeing them, in the initial stages when they’re shy and reserved and then blossom. So they’re able to communicate in the mainstream.

**Micaela:** I feel more connected to the outside world, not just Murrayville. I feel happy that I have Voula and Albert and I am interested in their culture. I feel more comfortable knowing that I’m not the only one.

**Albert:** Yes, I have improved my English. Not quite, but I’m coming along.