



# NEWS RELEASE

## Premier of New South Wales

### **BIGGEST SUPPORT PACKAGE IN AUSTRALIA FOR COMMUNITY LANGUAGES – HELPING PRESERVE THE LANGUAGE OF THEIR PARENTS**

Tuesday, 23 November 2010

Premier Kristina Keneally and Education Minister, Verity Firth today announced the NSW Government will more than double the funding for Community Language Schools – ensuring the children of migrants retain the language of their parents.

It is the most generous support package for Community Language Schools in Australia.

There are more than 33,000 children studying at 435 Community Language Schools around NSW – in 48 different languages and dialects.

“This is about ensuring the children of migrants get to retain and love the language of their parents,” Ms Keneally said.

**The NSW Government will spend \$8.1 million over four years to double Community Language School funding from \$60 to \$120 per student a year.**

**Unlike other States, the NSW Government does not charge Community Language Schools rent so the additional \$8.1 million will go directly towards buying new textbooks and equipment for students.**

Funding will also be adjusted annually to ensure the Government’s support keeps pace with inflation, a first for Community Language Schools in Australia.

The NSW Government’s funding boost includes:

- **A \$500,000 Community Language School grants program** to provide schools with new textbooks and resources for the 2011 school year;
- **An additional \$30,000 for 300 volunteer teachers** to undertake a fully-subsidised professional accreditation course each year through university study; and
- **Community Language School start-up grants will increase from \$1,000 to \$2,500** to support the introduction of new schools and language courses where there is unmet demand.

“The NSW Government is providing the most generous support package for Community Language Schools in the country,” Ms Keneally said.

“We are funding the most Community Language Schools, the most students and the most languages to support the culturally diverse community we are fortunate to share in here in NSW.

“This sends a clear message about the importance of multiculturalism and diversity in our State.”

Chair of the Community Languages Schools Board, Jozefa Sobski and President of the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools, Albert Vella have welcomed the funding boost.

“NSW will now lead Australia in assisting language learning and maintenance, and this is good for our culture and good for our global future,” Ms Sobski said.

“This funding increase by the Keneally Government is a very welcome recognition of our hard work and the importance of teaching languages for the future of NSW,” Mr Vella said.

On top of this, the NSW Government already:

- **Funds \$410,000 each year in subsidies** so Community Language Schools do not pay rent;
- **Invests \$200,000 each year in professional development** for volunteer teachers;
- **Provides two full-time project officers;** and
- **Funds two full-time professional development officers.**

The NSW Education Department also helped to establish a certificate accreditation in community language teaching at Wollongong University to help volunteer teachers attain professional qualifications.

The 300 NSW Government funded volunteer scholarship recipients will undertake their community language school training at short courses put on by the university at various locations in Sydney or the Illawarra.

This recognises the important role of volunteer teachers in Community Language Schools and will support high standards of teaching in language schools across NSW.

Ms Firth said, “Community Language Schools provide an invaluable service ensuring children across our State maintain strong links to their heritage through language.”

“The people who work and volunteer in Community Language Schools deserve our support and the Government is delighted to double the funding the schools receive – from \$60 to \$120 per student, per year.

“Community Language Schools will also be able to apply for funds under the NSW Government’s \$500,000 grants program to purchase updated textbooks and classroom resources for the 2011 school year.”

Minister for Citizenship, John Hatzistergos said: “The \$2,500 Community Language School start up grants will encourage the establishment of Community Language Schools to cater for new languages in new areas.”

“This is particularly important for new and growing communities in NSW who want to share their traditional languages with the rest of our community.”

Information on how to apply for funds in the \$500,000 Community Language School grants program and the \$2,500 establishment grants program will be released shortly.

#### **Background:**

- The Victorian Government’s election promise to fund Community Language Schools with \$200 per student, per year does not include a forty per cent levy on each student (\$80) which is charged back to Community Language Schools for rent.
- The NSW Government provides \$410,000 in subsidies each year so Community Language Schools do not have to pay rent in NSW.
- The increase in funding from \$60 to \$120 per student each year in NSW will have an annual CPI adjustment to secure future funds for Community Language Schools.

**Languages taught in NSW Community Language Schools include:**

- Arabic
- Hungarian
- Punjabi
- Armenian
- Indonesian
- Russian
- Assyrian
- Italian
- Samoan
- Bengali
- Japanese
- Sanskrit
- Bosnian
- Khmer
- Serbian
- Chinese-Cantonese/Mandarin
- Korean
- Sinhala
- Chinese-Mandarin
- Lao
- Spanish
- Cook Island Maori
- Latvian
- Swedish
- Croatian
- Macedonian
- Tamil
- Dari
- Malay
- Telugu
- Filipino
- Maltese
- Thai
- Finnish
- Marathi
- Tongan
- German
- Persian (Farsi)
- Turkish
- Greek
- Polish
- Uighur
- Hebrew
- Portuguese
- Ukrainian
- Hindi
- Pukapuka
- Vietnamese