

CampaignMediaRelease

Minister for Education Bill Shorten

**$6 MILLION FOR COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

A re-elected Rudd Labor Government will invest $6 million over four years in community language schools to enhance and increase access to quality language education in Australia.

Not only will this funding benefit around 500 community language schools and approximately 90,000 students, it will enrich our society through better understanding of language, tradition and culture.

If our young people are to engage and compete on the international stage, continuous access to language education must be supported at the community level.

Federal Labor recognises the importance of supporting all language education and ensuring the maintenance of heritage languages and links to culture.

This policy will promote partnerships between community language schools, their local community, mainstream schools, parents and caregivers.

$6 million will be provided to Community Languages Australia (CLA) to expand their current role and focus on key languages.

The funding will be used for teacher professional development and will provide community language teachers the opportunity to obtain a Certificate IV in teaching and assessment. This will improve the quality of teaching and enhance the learning experience at these schools.

The funding will also be used for extra teaching resources, such as textbooks, and will increase access for students to community language courses in key languages.

Some of the languages which will be prioritised include Hindi, Japanese, Indonesian, Thai, Korean, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Greek, Italian, Croation, Macedonian, Somali, Amharic and Arabic. All languages in the community languages schools sector will continue to be supported through a national coordination and quality assurance program.

Federal Labor wants to see Australia seize the Asian Century by ensuring our children are learning the languages of our region and also retaining the language of their heritage.

Community Languages Australia will be required to directly support community language schools which are contributing to the Australia in the Asian Century White Paper objectives and the maintenance of popular heritage languages.

This commitment continues Federal Labor’s significant investment in language education in schools including extra resources through the *Better Schools Plan*, investing in new or upgraded Language Centres in schools through the *Building the Education Revolution* program and the development of the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*.

Funding for this initiative is already included in the budget.

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**MELBOURNE**

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