



Adrian Piccoli MP

Minister for Education

MEDIA RELEASE

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LANGUAGE LEARNING STARTS AT HOME

Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli today announced a number of initiatives designed to improve and extend languages education in NSW.

“Last year I commissioned the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) to develop recommendations for a dynamic, inclusive languages education policy for NSW,” Mr Piccoli said.

“I am now able to release a number of proposals designed to ensure more students – and their families – see the value in learning another language.

“In particular, we need to harness and extend the existing language capacities in the community – both among students and potential teachers.

“As one of the most culturally diverse places in the world NSW is well placed to more successfully teach, learn and value languages. But we can encourage more students to study languages and provide incentives for them to continue with a language through to their final years at school.”

An expert Languages Advisory Panel will be appointed to consider proposals including:

- cultivating the existing language potential of more than 350,000 NSW students who speak another language at home;
- using online delivery to extend both the reach and range of languages being taught – especially for the priority Asian languages;
- retraining bilingual primary school teachers as language teachers; and
- fostering collaboration between schools and community language providers.

“We need to increase the supply of language teachers and provide greater recognition of the value of learning a language. One important way of doing this may include encouraging students to capitalise on their home language and continue to develop it at school,” Mr Piccoli said.

“And if those students are taking language classes on weekends then schools should be valuing that learning.

“I have every confidence that these actions will mean more students studying languages, and more students having the linguistic and intercultural skills to thrive in our own multi-cultural society and an increasingly connected, global community.

“In commissioning the review by BOSTES I deliberately sought recommendations that avoided the over-promised, under-funded language education wish lists that have often been announced by governments.

“Language teaching and learning has been in decline for some time and improvements won’t be achieved overnight. I am looking for tangible, practical solutions.

“I am also pleased that the recommendations support the Government’s *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning* education reforms.”

For further information go to: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/languagesreview/

MEDIA: Andrew Stevenson – 0428 438 970