



Northern  
Territory  
Government

# Changing the Conversation

A Blueprint for Languages Education  
in Northern Territory Schools

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# Changing the Conversation

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in Northern Territory Schools

**Northern Territory Board of Studies**



# FOREWORD



Languages education, formerly known as Languages Other Than English (LOTE), has a unique space in the Northern Territory school curriculum and embodies the uniqueness inherited from the nature of language itself and the rich linguistic and cultural history of its people. Language is integral to our individual identity, to community interests, to social coherence and harmony, and to the economic and strategic development of the Northern Territory.

Within the ever-changing context of education in the Northern Territory, the need to articulate a clear policy position to guide language education from the system, to the school, to the classroom is required now more than ever before. In an age of increasing school autonomy, this *Blueprint* articulates a place for a meaningful language education within students' schooling experience.

*Changing the Conversation—A Blueprint for Languages Education in Northern Territory Schools* (the *Blueprint*) provides a long-term vision for building the capacity of our sector leaders, school leaders and classroom educators, and emphasises the essential measures for tracking the success of languages education by offering strategic actions to guide the work that needs to take place at all levels of education. This *Blueprint* focuses on language learning that is both student-centred and recognises the inherent value of language learning, including:

- equipping students with communication skills and intercultural capabilities to allow them to become confident and capable global citizens
- enhancing students' linguistic and cultural identities
- enabling students to experience rich engagement with multicultural communities within the Northern Territory and beyond.



The research that has informed this *Blueprint* has come from the work of the Northern Territory Board of Studies Languages Stakeholder Reference Group. This work culminated in *What Works: a Discussion of Languages Policy for Northern Territory Schools 2015*, and provided a comprehensive summary of what has contributed to the success of languages programs in the Northern Territory—from both a historical and a contemporary view point. It provides thoughtful analysis of policy and action at local and national levels, as well as case studies of current and successful classroom practice. The key findings included:

- the provision and quality of languages education across all schooling sectors is variable, with greater opportunities for continuity of language learning available for students based in Darwin and Alice Springs
- a diverse range of languages are offered by schools, language centres and other providers, with urban schools tending to offer Japanese and Indonesian and remote schools offering Indigenous languages and culture programs
- a range of programs are recognised as language programs, including programs that focus primarily on cultural knowledge, raising a challenge for continuity of learning at higher stages of schooling and causing tension when beginners and continuers are differentiated for senior secondary course options
- the sustainability of languages education has been highly vulnerable to periodic policy, funding and projects, resulting in the long-term impact of efforts and initiatives being hard to identify.

These key findings highlight the importance of targeted and coordinated action at all levels—systemically, regionally, school-wide and within classrooms. The *Blueprint* offers opportunity for improved precision and a strong evidence base to extend the quality, continuity, provision and sustainability of languages education in Northern Territory schools.

Ralph Wiese  
Chair of Northern Territory Board of Studies



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In developing *Changing the Conversation—A Blueprint for Languages Education in Northern Territory Schools*, the Northern Territory Board of Studies (NTBOS) is mindful of the long history of languages policies, reviews, projects and initiatives. The Board recognises that sustained improvement in languages education is a significant change agenda for sectors, schools and teachers. This document describes the goal and vision for growing the capability of leaders and teachers and outlines four key principles to underpin change. The *Blueprint* also articulates specific strategies and measures to define the change effort that is essential for ongoing and sustained improvement to languages education.



# GOAL

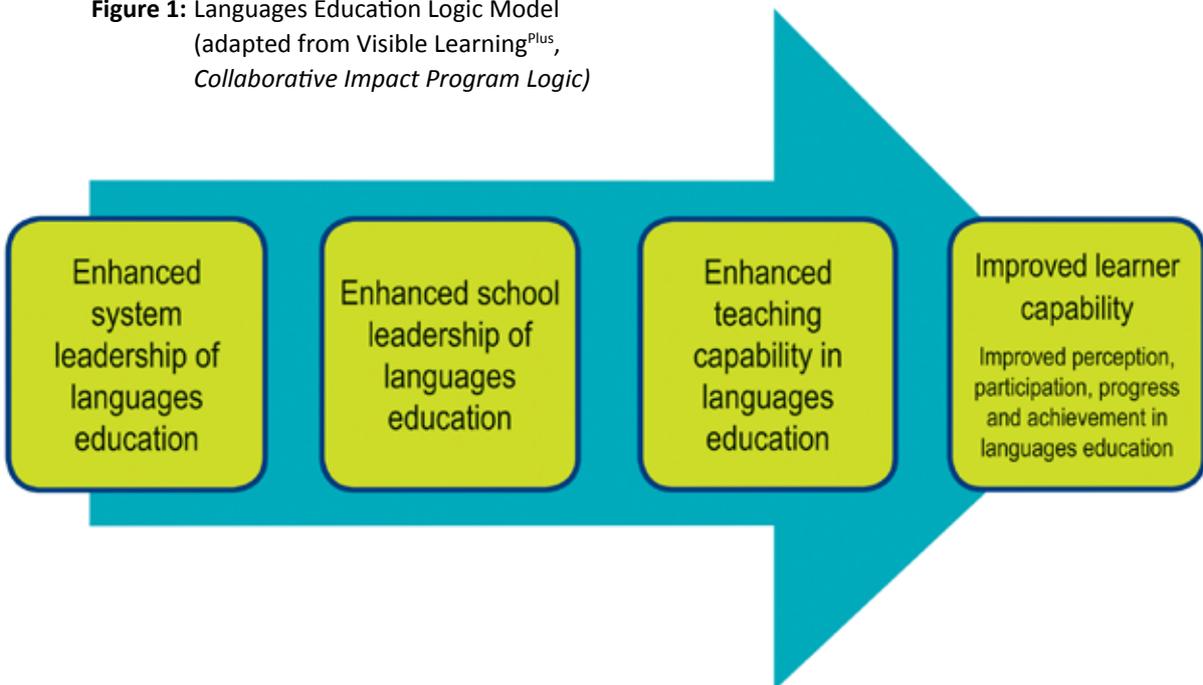
All Northern Territory (NT) students have access to a rich and comprehensive languages education that develops communication skills and intercultural capabilities to allow active engagement and contribution to local and global communities.

# VISION

Leaders at all levels, from the system to the classroom, build a culture that promotes systematic and purposeful languages learning through:

- **system leadership**—values and grows languages education, pays attention to the conditions and levers to sustain improvement at all levels
- **school leadership**—ensures the high value of languages learning by embedding languages education within school policy, routines, programs and practices
- **teaching capability**—challenges beliefs about languages learning, building teacher pedagogical and content knowledge, strengthening teaching practice and enhancing student learning outcomes.

**Figure 1:** Languages Education Logic Model  
(adapted from Visible Learning<sup>Plus</sup>,  
*Collaborative Impact Program Logic*)



# PRINCIPLES

The four key principles of the *Blueprint* are essential in defining the nature of successful languages education. These principles inform strategic actions and directly connect with the measures of success. The principles provide the framework to align the actions of sectors and schools. They inform the intentions of each strategy and connect with the measures and milestones that are used to track progress towards improvement in student perceptions, progress, achievement and participation. The principles are:

- quality languages learning
- continuity of languages learning
- provision of languages programs
- sustainability of languages resources.

# MEASURES

The measures provide critical information to improve languages education. They encourage innovative thinking, ensure effective practices are adopted and evidence of improvement is collected. They give a base from which reflection and review is directly aligned with improvement.

The measures are designed to ensure that all students have access to high quality and continuous languages education and that impacts and changes at all levels are both visible and able to be monitored. The measures are:

- student perceptions
- student progress
- student achievement
- student participation.

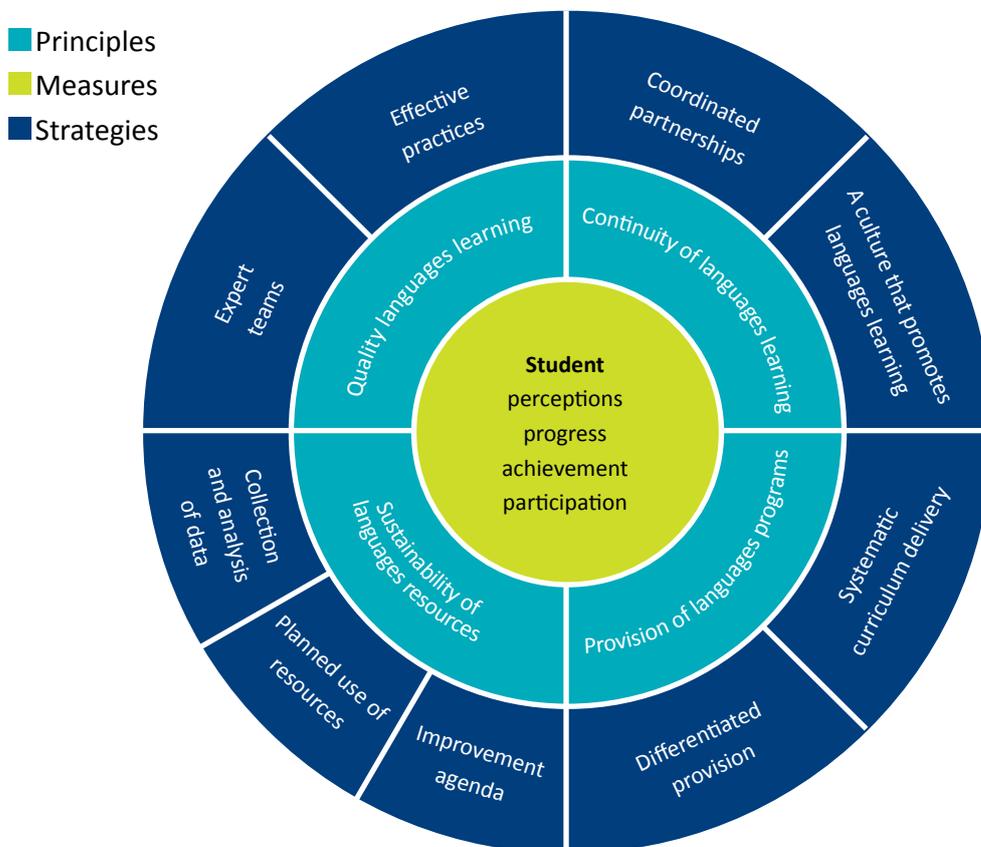


# STRATEGIES

The strategies described in this *Blueprint* bring together findings from international research into the practices of highly effective schools and leaders (*National School Improvement Tool*, ACER, 2012). While the strategies do not describe all that effective sectors and schools can do to improve languages education, they do provide a framework from which observations and evidence gathering can occur. The strategies focus attention on those practices that are most directly related to system and school-wide improvements and complement existing school improvement plans to ensure access to languages education becomes part of the schooling experience for every student. The strategies are:

1. Expert Teams
2. Effective Practices
3. Coordinated Partnerships
4. A Culture that Promotes Languages Learning
5. Systematic Curriculum Delivery
6. Differentiated Provision
7. Improvement Agenda
8. Planned Use of Resources
9. Collection and Analysis of Data

**Figure 2:** Connecting Measures, Principles and Strategies



# CONTEXT AND SCOPE

## The Place of Indigenous Languages



The value, contribution and importance of Indigenous languages and cultures to the past, present and future of the Northern Territory is a fundamental consideration in languages education policy for Northern Territory schools.

As the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) highlighted in *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages* paper, Indigenous languages are important for all students:

*'Learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages meets the needs and rights of young people to learn their own languages and recognises their significance in the language ecology of Australia.'*

*For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, learning their own language is crucial to their overall learning and achievements. It enables them to achieve a secure acceptance of their own identity and helps them to develop a wider recognition and understanding of their language, culture, land, and Country. This contributes to their well-being.*

*For all students, learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages provides a distinctive means of understanding the Country in which they live, including the relationship between land, the environment, and people. The ongoing and necessary reclamation and revitalisation of these languages also contributes to reconciliation.'*

In order to grow the capacity of systems, school teaching teams and Elders to provide programs that develop the languages skills, cultural understandings and intercultural capability offered through learning an Indigenous language, consultative and thoughtful work must be undertaken with NT schools. This relies on a number of factors, including a clear understanding of historical and contemporary perspectives, knowledge of workforce capacity and, importantly, evidence of the impact of Indigenous languages teaching in schools on student learning and progress. It



will require engagement and contribution by many stakeholders, including those with cultural, linguistic and educational expertise and authority.

Since 2001, the *Northern Territory Curriculum Framework* has provided schools with a highly valued curriculum to guide teaching and learning of Indigenous language and culture programs. This curriculum specifically addresses culture and language maintenance and language revitalisation outcomes and provides schools with an opportunity to develop and implement programs contextualised to accommodate individual community needs, heritage and aspirations. The curriculum has allowed schools to draw on the rich linguistic resources that characterise Northern Territory schools.

With the development of the *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* as part of the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, NTBOS will continue to work with critical stakeholders during 2015 and 2016 to research and develop a policy specifically to grow the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages. This *Blueprint* recognises the distinct and significant place of Indigenous languages and cultures and provides a context from which Indigenous languages education can be shaped.

## Research in Education Improvement

Growing languages education within Northern Territory schools is a key improvement agenda and to this end, significant research has been used to underpin the development of this *Blueprint*. Research related to education reform (Coburn, 2003) indicates that to scale-up pockets of success, implementation actions need to address four interrelated aspects:

- depth of change
- spread of change
- sustainability of resources
- shift of ownership.

Coburn’s research along with others is critical in framing some of the design features of this policy; a policy that has evolved as a collaborative construction, including stakeholders from across the sectors, schools and the profession. In order to enhance the potential for success, the impact of the four elements has been explored in relation to languages education as detailed below:

| Coburn on Education Improvement   | Implication for this <i>Blueprint</i>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Depth of change</b><br>Influencing the values and beliefs of key stakeholders at all levels.   | Changing the conversation to include focus on quality and continuity—not only provision. Aiming to influence the values that underpin practices and procedures in the system, in the school and in the classroom.   |
| <b>Spread of change</b><br>Creating a new norm, increasing not only the number of students engaged with language learning but most importantly, the impact of what works to improve language learning outcomes. | Changing the conversation from preoccupation with the numbers of students enrolled or achieving the standard, to talking about which qualitative and quantitative data will inform understandings of the impact of languages education on student perceptions, progress, achievement and participation. |
| <b>Sustainability</b><br>Equipping key stakeholders with the tools and resources required to effect change.   | Changing the conversation from a focus on staffing to a focus on achievable strategies and milestones that reflect a sustainable effort and impact.   |
| <b>Shift of ownership</b><br>Moving from external change to internal change at all levels.  | Changing the conversation to include strategies that are inclusive of both the system and schools, clearly articulating leadership action at all levels.  |

## Australian Curriculum Implementation

The implementation of *Australian Curriculum: Languages* in Northern Territory schools will commence in 2016. *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, with the content descriptions and achievement standards, was written on the assumption that students would have the following time on task (*The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages*, 2011, p. 28):

- Transition to Year 6—350 hours of learning (which is equivalent to 1.25 hours of learning per week or 50 hours per year)
- Years 7 and 8—160 hours of learning (which is equivalent to 2 hours of learning per week or 80 hours per year)
- Years 9 and 10—160 hours of learning (which is equivalent to 2 hours of learning per week or 80 hours per year)

In many schools the actual time on task available for language learning differs from the assumptions ACARA has made in the design of curriculum content and standards. Consequently, teachers are required to adapt the content of the curriculum to ensure that teaching, assessing and reporting is reflective of the actual time allocation.

To do this, mapping out the features of languages education within the primary context is critical. At the primary level, students participate in language learning with established oracy skills in one or more languages and varying degrees of early literacy capability. They develop understandings of their immediate world and themselves through integrated instruction instead of specialised instruction. Language learning at this stage typically focuses on topics that correlate with other learning areas, such as family and school, friendship and the natural and imaginary world. The learning is often play-based and collaborative, building on students' interests and capabilities to help them make connections with other areas of learning; visual arts, movement, music and drama are used to support the growth of skills and understanding.

Given the rich integration of learning experiences in the primary classroom, effective curriculum design offers opportunity for schools to design innovative models, accommodating the specific features of language learning at this stage while continuing to deepen the connection of learning





ideas, concepts, skills and understandings. Such innovative curriculum design also allows partnerships to form with feeder schools, language centres, local community organisations and other language providers. It also enables the meaningful use of technologies to create learning opportunities that enrich the quality, continuity, provision and sustainability of languages programs in the primary school.

Transitioning into secondary school, students have a growing awareness of the world beyond them and bring their experience of language use and learning into this new context. They use language in more elaborate ways as they expand their knowledge of the grammatical system and its use in spoken and written communication. As learning continues, students start to develop a range of language learning strategies to become more autonomous as language users and learners. They develop capacity to interact with a broader range of native language speakers as well as to engage with cognitively challenging and enriching learning experiences.

Given the expanded opportunities that specialised instruction provides, effective curriculum design in the secondary context brings opportunity for schools to create the space for authentic language through innovative use of technologies and learning experiences. Such curriculum design allows schools to accommodate the features of language learning at this stage, developing the students' interculturality through building partnerships with feeder schools, local community organisations and language providers. It also allows for the creation of networks and relationships with native language speakers within and beyond Australia through meaningful use of information communication technologies (ICTs) to create learning opportunities that enrich the quality, continuity, provision and sustainability of languages programs in the secondary school.

With consideration of the change in teaching and learning practice as students move through and across the stages of schooling, implementation of the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* is best achieved through partnerships between primary and secondary teachers; partnerships that create space for teachers to collaboratively design curriculum scope and sequence plans and map the pathways for students as they move from primary into secondary. These plans and maps provide points of continuity as they articulate agreements around:

- who the learner groups are and how schools can accommodate the needs of their learners
- which languages will be taught
- when languages will be taught, including the frequency of instruction
- how the standards for language learning will be described at the exit points of each stage of schooling.



## The Timeline

The table below describes the timeline of process and progress.

| Timeframes | Phase          | Activity  |
|------------|----------------|---|
| 2014       | Engagement     | <p>Languages Stakeholder Reference Group established by NTBOS—to develop, oversee and monitor the research framework for policy work.</p> <p><i>What Works</i>, discussion paper completed—to summarise research into the historical and contemporary context of languages education in the Northern Territory, leading to identifying four key principles to inform future policy work.</p> <p>Languages policy planning day facilitated by NTBOS—to unpack the research and construct the essential ideas that will be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inform a goal and vision for languages education in NT schools</li> <li>• describe the principles for strategic actions</li> <li>• identify the measures that will be used to monitor impact.</li> </ul> |
| 2015       | Development    | <p><i>Blueprint</i> approved by NTBOS—to provide sectors and schools with an explicit and coherent road map for ongoing growth and improvement to languages education.</p> <p><i>Blueprint Communications Plan</i> completed and enacted by NTBOS—to guide communication of the <i>Blueprint</i> to sectors.</p>  |
| 2016       | Implementation | <p>Communication tactics enacted by the sectors—to advise stakeholders of the requirements of the <i>Blueprint</i>.</p> <p>Collection and analysis of sector-wide and school-wide languages education data—to inform ongoing implementation plans.</p> <p>Sectors and school hubs commence documenting plans within school and regional plans—to describe the actions that will be taken to improve languages education.</p> <p>Languages specific support services are available to schools and hubs—to provide opportunity for sharing of ideas, to encourage innovative partnerships and to offer expert knowledge and skills as required.</p>   |
| 2017       | Consolidation  | <p>Regular monitoring and analysis of languages education outcomes by sectors and schools commenced—to provide data and evidence to understand the status of implementation and inform next steps.</p>  |
| 2018       | Review         | <p>Review of the <i>Blueprint</i> commenced by NTBOS—to inform future directions of languages education.</p>  |



## PRINCIPLE ONE QUALITY OF LANGUAGES TEACHING AND LEARNING

High quality languages education places the learner at the centre and aims to develop their communication skills and deep intercultural understanding. Quality is promoted when systems and schools create the conditions for continuous professional growth and development focused on classroom-based teaching and learning. Quality is assured through partnerships that offer teachers mentoring and coaching relationships to help them understand the impact of their instruction on students' progress and achievement. Quality language teaching occurs when teachers take responsibility for students' learning and success, building relationships with students that foster positive attitudes and perceptions to language learning, language and culture and to other participants of the teaching and learning process.

### Strategy One – Expert Teams

#### The Sector

Each sector builds a system-wide team of highly able leaders of languages education with capacity to take an active role within the system, as well as into regions, schools and classrooms. Clear procedures are in place to encourage sector-wide shared responsibility for a culture of continuous improvement to the quality of languages education, continuity of languages learning, provision of languages programs and sustainability of languages resources.

#### Indicated by

- developing long-term strategies to attract and retain qualified language teachers
- lobbying the higher education sector to attract enrolment in pre-service courses for language teachers and growing the potential workforce
- improving languages education expertise through providing sector leaders and teachers access to professional learning that builds shared understandings of how students learn language, connecting curriculum and assessment plans with student skills and knowledge and exemplifying effective pedagogical practice
- fostering networked school relationships to support leadership of languages education and create opportunities for school leaders to work together to learn from each other's practices and programs.

#### The Milestones

- workforce profile of languages expertise and needs in schools
- professional learning initiatives to grow languages teaching and learning capacity in schools
- professional learning networks to ensure collaboration and shared learning.

#### The School

Each school builds a professional team of highly capable teachers, including teachers from hub schools and language centres. This team will be an active advocate for languages education within and beyond the school and will be equipped with language skills and teaching capability. The school develops clear procedures to encourage school-wide shared responsibility for languages learning and success and fosters a culture of continuous professional improvement that includes classroom-based mentoring and coaching arrangements.

#### Indicated by

- placing priority on attracting and retaining the best possible languages teachers and/or partnerships to assist in the growth of a whole-of-school languages programs
- establishing whole-of-school commitment to teaching languages, including explicit design of languages programs and analysis of student work in order to plan, deliver and review the effectiveness of lessons
- assisting teachers to use developmentally appropriate practices, integrating communicative skills and intercultural capabilities, connections between students' linguistic and cultural identities and rich experiences with multicultural communities from within and beyond the NT
- identifying the languages education goals and needs of teaching staff and encouraging them to participate in professional development to deepen understanding of how students learn language and the teaching practices that lead to improvement in student outcomes
- fostering a culture of collaboration where teachers work together to learn from each other's practices, both within the school and across partnerships.

#### The Milestones

- professional learning opportunities, focusing on the development of high levels of pedagogical knowledge and skills
- financial, human and physical resources are allocated to meet the languages education needs of staff
- languages education partnerships are forged to enable collaboration and team work.

## Strategy Two – Effective Practices

### The Sector

Sector leaders and experts recognise that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning. They take a strong leadership role, encouraging the use of research-based teaching practices in all schools to ensure every school is engaged, challenged and achieving improvements in the quality of language learning. All leaders understand and use effective leadership methods, maximising languages education improvement.

### Indicated by

- researching effective languages teaching practices to promote a range of evidence-based practices at hub, school and classroom levels
- making explicit the principles underpinning languages learning at each stage of schooling
- establishing and communicating clear expectations for the implementation of languages programs in schools
- routinely evaluating the effectiveness of school languages programs to provide feedback to schools and to make adjustments to support services and policy as appropriate.

### The Milestones

- expectations for languages programs at each stage of schooling are clearly communicated
- school review processes include feedback concerning languages programs.

### The School

School leaders recognise that highly effective language teaching is the key to improving student learning within and across schools. They take a strong leadership role, encouraging the use of research-based teaching practices in all language classes to ensure that every student is engaged, challenged and learning successfully. All teachers understand and use effective teaching methods to maximise student learning.

### Indicated by

- communicating clear expectations concerning the use of effective teaching practices throughout the school
- spending time working with teachers, providing feedback on language teaching and enabling modelling of effective teaching practice where appropriate
- actively promoting a range of evidence-based strategies that develop shared understanding and practice amongst teaching staff
- setting high expectations for every student's progress
- providing teaching staff with the opportunity to form mentoring relationships with peers and specialists or expert language teachers
- encouraging collaboration in teaching practice and professional learning.

### The Milestones

- school leaders document and monitor processes for improvement in languages teaching throughout the school
- evidence-based languages teaching methods are known and used to help teachers identify how to improve their practice
- timely feedback is provided to teachers enabling them to understand the impact of their teaching on student outcomes.





## PRINCIPLE TWO CONTINUITY OF LANGUAGES LEARNING

Continuity of languages education is achieved through shared professional learning to build common understandings of the expected achievements within and across each stage of schooling. Continuous languages learning draws on the teaching and learning that has already taken place and offers students opportunity to bring to the classroom the span of languages experience they already have—whether their learning is in the same language or an additional language—enabling them to continue to foster an appreciation of language learning and building their overall language capability. Continuity of languages learning is built through partnerships across schools and providers, both locally and globally.

### Strategy Three – Coordinated Partnerships

#### The Sector

Sector leaders work in partnership with schools to actively seek ways to enhance student learning by partnering with languages centres, neighbouring schools, community organisations and other complementary providers locally and globally. Partnerships with language providers are prioritised and specifically established to address languages learning needs, providing access to experiences, support and intellectual and/or physical resources not available within the sector or the school. All partners are committed to the common purposes and goals of languages education and procedures are put in place to ensure effective communications and to monitor and evaluate the impact of the partnerships on student outcomes.

#### Indicated by

- facilitating the formation of school hubs between feeder schools and language program providers, such as local languages centres, to assure language continuity across the region/sector
- exploring the availability and the effectiveness of a range of ICT solutions to enhance the formation of partnerships that facilitate languages education
- supporting hubs to develop clear partnership protocols that clarify the roles and responsibilities of each partner, and the intended impacts of the partnership
- establishing processes for systematically monitoring the use of human, physical and financial resources and the impact of these on student outcomes within and across the hubs
- facilitating coordinated opportunities for students to develop authentic language skills and intercultural understanding through initiatives such as engaging with local cultural groups, in-country visits, student exchanges and sister school arrangements
- facilitating professional learning opportunities where hub partners collaborate to contextualise the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, developing programs that accommodate student needs and aspirations and that are appropriate for each stage of schooling
- communicating language pathway eligibility requirements and the impact of these on continuity of language learning to all schools, students and parents.

#### The Milestones

- support services to grow school partnerships are available
- languages pathways from primary to middle and senior education are continuous
- standards for student achievement, at each stage of schooling are aligned (with the *Australian Curriculum: Languages*).

#### The School

Each school actively seeks ways to enhance student learning of languages by partnering with families, languages centres, neighbouring schools, community organisations, universities and other complementary providers. Partnerships are recognised as integral to the school community and are strategically established to address identified student needs, providing access to experiences, support and intellectual and/or physical resources not available within the school or hub. All partners are committed to the common purposes and goals of partnership activities. Procedures are in place to ensure effective communications and to monitor and evaluate the impact of school or hub partnerships on student outcomes.

#### Indicated by

- building partnerships with other schools and organisations on the basis of their capacity to support a whole-of-school approach to languages education (including families, feeder schools, languages centres, local community organisations, government agencies, tertiary institutions and other complementary providers)
- working with partners to co-construct understandings of the purpose, objectives, roles and responsibilities, ensuring full use of the expertise each partner brings
- building developmentally appropriate opportunities for authentic language use (such as participation in cultural group activities, inter-school exchanges and sister school relationships)
- activating voices to gather feedback on the impact of partnership activities on student language learning
- collating a range of data to evaluate the effectiveness of partnerships in achieving languages learning outcomes for students and teaching staff
- ensuring adequate resources (time allocation, expertise, funds, facilities, materials and staff time) are committed to enable effective and successful partnerships
- communicating eligibility requirements at senior secondary level to parents and students.

#### The Milestones

- plans, procedures and resources to monitor and grow languages partnerships are in place
- student needs and aspirations at each stage of schooling are accommodated within language learning options
- languages pathways within and across the stages of schooling are continuous
- records describing the skills and knowledge students bring as they transition across the stages of schooling are share

## Strategy Four – A Culture that Promotes Languages Learning

### The Sector

Each sector expects that every school is capable of delivering successful languages programs. A high priority is given to supporting innovative curriculum models and growing partnerships that promote sustainable and continuous languages learning pathways, leading to improved student perceptions, progress, achievement and participation in language learning.

### Indicated by

- promoting an expectation that students in NT schools will learn languages
- communicating the high value of languages education for students, schools and the broader NT community
- encouraging, developing and attracting passionate and energetic leaders to promote languages education role models, as well as to promote, value and respect linguistic and cultural diversity
- appreciating and valuing the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of school communities by working to grow languages programs that meet community aspirations
- promoting a culture of inquiry and innovation, where creative exploration and collaborative learning builds models for languages curriculum and provision that is high quality, supportive of continuous learning pathways and sustainably resourced
- working with language teachers to develop skills and understandings that support teaching diverse class make-ups, supporting teachers to accommodate every student's linguistic and cultural background, as well as learning needs.

### The Milestones

- languages learning is valued by schools and communities and integrated as an essential component of school programs
- innovative curriculum models and partnership arrangements enable provision of languages programs within and across schools.

### The School

Each school is driven by a deep understanding that every student is capable of successful language learning and promotes intellectual rigour in every classroom. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff and students. The school works to maintain a languages education environment that is safe, respectful and tolerant, inclusive of student backgrounds, needs and aspirations and actively supports students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

### Indicated by

- appreciating the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of school communities through providing programs that build students' intercultural capability across all aspects of school life
- promoting engagement and participation in languages learning for students and staff by providing sufficient support for the operational and professional requirements (such as timetabling, staffing, curriculum delivery, assessment requirements, support materials, staff development and training)
- facilitating collaborative work between teachers to develop programs that cater for a range of learner needs and aspirations within each class
- providing opportunity for students to actively engage with languages and cultural diversity, using authentic activities to promote languages education.

### The Milestones

- languages teaching staff are active and valued members of the school community
- school planning, as well as feedback and review processes include focus on learning outcomes
- learner backgrounds, needs and aspirations are accommodated within school programs
- celebration of languages and cultural diversity are integrated as part of community events.





## PRINCIPLE THREE PROVISION OF LANGUAGES PROGRAMS

Provision of languages programs includes the languages students learn, the time allocation for instruction and the processes that schools and teachers use to devise innovative models and map coherent and sequenced plans for curriculum delivery. It also includes having teaching and learning expectations clearly referenced to allow monitoring of learning across the years of schooling.

Provision includes the processes school communities use to identify the languages that will be offered, accounting for the sociocultural context of the school community, the options for continued language learning pathways beyond the current stage of schooling, as well as the linguistic and cultural backgrounds and aspirations of students and their families.

Provision accommodates instruction; that is the partnership arrangements schools may form with each other and with languages centres or other providers to ensure continuity and quality. It accommodates the opportunities that evolve from engagement with ICTs and digital platforms to enable teaching and learning experiences to be authentic, meaningful and sustainable.

### Strategy Five – Systematic Curriculum Delivery

#### The Sector

Each sector has clear policies and plans for languages curriculum delivery in schools that promote whole-of-school approaches to teaching and learning of languages. The *Australian Curriculum* (or other approved curriculum), is used to establish a shared vision for language teaching and learning. Evidence from schools is used to allow analysis of the impact of the policies and plans on student outcomes.

#### Indicated by

- assuring languages pathways across the stages of schooling by prioritising languages that are supported by community context and/or the NT's connection with Asian neighbours
- communicating provision guidelines across the stages of schooling to guarantee continuity of languages education for students and eligibility for courses at senior secondary levels
- working with schools to facilitate the sharing of innovative curriculum models and partnership arrangements that successfully sustain the quality, continuity and provision of languages programs within schools and across the stages of schooling
- providing access to professional learning that influences curriculum design and delivery, including a focus on developmentally appropriate practices and alignment of curriculum standards appropriate for each stage of schooling
- aligning assessment and reporting systems with languages provision to ensure data capture includes language-specific enrolment, achievement and progress details at each year level for each school
- developing and endorsing high quality materials and resources to compliment school programs and to support improved student outcomes.

#### The Milestones

- system level expectations and support services are clearly stated in languages education guidelines
- system curation and promotion of high quality materials, resources and professional learning for teachers supports languages provision
- data systems to capture student perceptions, progress, achievement and participation in languages programs are in place.

#### The School

Each school has a coherent, sequenced plan for languages curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations and includes clear references for monitoring learning across the year levels and at key transition points in a student's learning. Plans embed evidence-based teaching practices and align assessment and reporting with the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* or an approved alternative curriculum.

#### Indicated by

- using knowledge of community aspirations and student needs, continuity options, as well as resources sustainability to make careful decisions about the languages curriculum
- working in collaboration with languages partners to develop a scope and sequence for curriculum delivery across each year level and stage of schooling
- using assessment of student work as a basis for ongoing discussions within the school and across the hub, leading to improvements to curriculum plans that consider needs of each school context
- aligning assessment practices with scope and sequence plans to ensure clear learning intentions and success criteria are used to monitor languages provision across the school and hub
- using assessment, enrolment and participation data to report on the impacts of curriculum delivery on student outcomes across the school and hub.

#### The Milestones

- assessment processes within a school and across schools quality assure teacher judgements using moderation practices, leading to shared understandings of growth, progress and achievement in relation to languages education
- languages provision is supported by sustainable resourcing
- innovative curriculum models scope and sequence continuous languages learning within and across the stages of schooling
- languages partners collaborate to review and evaluate languages provision and its impact on student outcomes
- languages curriculum and delivery is included in school improvement plans.

## Strategy Six – Differentiated Provision

### The Sector

Each sector places a high priority on ensuring the language learning background of individual students (second language learners, background language learners and first language learners) is accommodated.

The sector encourages and supports schools to closely monitor the progress of languages programs, identifying roadblocks and enablers for progress and tailoring support services to ensure provision accommodates the varying languages learning needs and aspirations of students as they move through the stages of schooling.

### Indicated by

- identifying curriculum and assessment support materials and resources for use in schools to support differentiated provision of languages learning
- monitoring the progress of individual schools and hubs and continually adjusting support services in response to the progress that is being made to guarantee ongoing improvements to student learning outcomes
- collating information about languages provision to ensure reports at system levels are timely and accurate
- sustaining support services and systems, ensuring schools are able to access the appropriate languages expertise, curriculum and assessment materials and resources and data management systems
- using accurate data sets to inform rigorous discussion and analysis of the provision of languages education in NT schools.

### The Milestones

- resources and materials supporting differentiated provision are identified and made accessible to schools and teachers
- data management systems provide the information required to monitor the progress and impact of languages provision on student progress, achievement and participation in language learning.



### The School

Each school places high priority on ensuring that in their day-to-day teaching, classroom teachers/instructors identify and address the learning needs of individual students, including different learner groups (second language learners, background language learners and first language learners).

Teachers are supported to closely monitor individual student progress, including high-achieving students. Difficulties in accessing language learning are identified and classroom activities are tailored to meet learner levels of readiness, needs and language learning goals.

### Indicated by

- creating baseline data sets to understand where students are at in their language learning and to identify starting points for teaching (such as language backgrounds, current knowledge, skills, learning difficulties and misunderstandings)
- working collaboratively to design classroom language activities to meet students' learning needs, levels of readiness, interests, aspirations and motivations
- monitoring the progress of individual students and continually adjusting teaching practice and programs in response to the progress that individuals are making, ensuring that all students—including high achieving students—are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended
- developing and using formal procedures to communicate with students, parents and hub partners the progress students have made over time and what can be done to support continued learning and provision for individual students
- ensuring tailored, early and sustained interventions are in place for students who may exit or enter languages programs at varying points in their schooling.

### The Milestones

- languages provision accommodates the languages learning needs and backgrounds of students
- languages provision is continuous within the school and across the stages of schooling, allowing learners with specific interest and skill in languages to access ongoing pathways from primary to middle to senior schooling.





## PRINCIPLE FOUR SUSTAINABILITY OF LANGUAGES RESOURCES

Sustainability of languages education requires sectors, schools and teachers to take ownership of an explicit improvement agenda that paves the way for improved student engagement, progress and achievement in languages education. Systematic data on student outcomes that draws on research and professional discussion of evidence-based practice is critical to decision making processes that impact on the quality, continuity and provision of languages education in schools.

Sustainability of languages education requires targeted use of resources (staff time, expertise, funds, facilities and materials, as well as those available through the broader community) and is coupled with the quality of teaching and learning, continuity of language learning and the provision of languages programs. It integrates systemic and school leadership capability with teaching capability to ensure targets for improvement at all levels are specific, measurable, aspirational, realistic and within appropriate timeframes (SMART).

### Strategy Seven – Improvement Agenda

#### The Sector

Each sector has established and is driving a strong improvement agenda for languages education, based on evidence from research about what works in the NT context and expressed in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes. Explicit and sector-wide targets for improvements in languages provision and timelines have been set and communicated to schools.

#### Indicated by

- providing forums where strategies for addressing obstacles to regional and sector-wide resourcing of languages education can be discussed and explored, building shared knowledge of what works and improving the spread of languages programs in schools
- communicating consistent expectations for improvements in student perceptions, progress, achievement and participation in languages programs as part of school review processes
- working with individual schools and hubs to set explicit targets in languages education within school improvement plans.

#### The Milestones

- languages education improvement targets are integrated within strategic plans
- data management systems capture the range of languages data required to monitor and report on improvements at sector levels.

#### The School

Each school leadership team and the council or governing body have established and are driving a strong improvement agenda for languages education at the school and across the hub, grounded in evidence from research and practice and expressed in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes. Explicit and clear school-wide and hub-wide targets for improvement have been set and communicated to teachers, students, parents, partners and the sector, with accompanying timelines.

#### Indicated by

- working with staff and partners across the hub to address obstacles and sustain provision
- articulating and documenting school-wide strategies for improving student participation, perceptions, progress and achievement in languages programs
- using evidence of student achievement to set explicit and realistic improvement targets for languages provision and teaching
- monitoring and reporting progress towards improvement targets by systematically evaluating the impact of languages programs on student learning
- using *Australian Curriculum: Languages* to describe achievement standards for each year and stage of schooling.

#### The Milestones

- communicate improvement strategies and targets to teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders
- adjust school programs and resources in response to student perceptions, progress, achievement and participation.

## Strategy Eight – Planned Use of Resources

### The Sector

Each sector applies resources (staff time, expertise, funds, facilities and materials) in a targeted manner to meet the languages education needs of regions and schools.

Sector-wide plans, initiatives and projects are in place to assist in identifying and addressing school needs related to the continuous provision of quality languages programs.

### Indicated by

- aligning languages support services to improvement priorities for schools
- establishing projects and initiatives for schools requiring additional support when developing whole-of-school approaches to curriculum and assessment planning, professional learning and data analysis and discussion
- identifying and responding to school languages education needs through the allocation of support services
- prioritising services to schools to support implementation of Asian (Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese) and Indigenous languages.

### The Milestones

- support services and resources for schools are aligned with school improvement targets and align with the sector level strategic plans.

### The School

Each school applies resources (staff time, expertise, funds, facilities and materials) in a targeted manner to meet the languages education needs and aspirations of students. It has school-wide policies, practices and programs in place to assist in identifying and addressing student needs. Flexible structures and processes enable the school to respond appropriately to the needs of individual students, as well as to staff development needs.

### Indicated by

- using available discretionary funds to prioritise initiatives aimed at improvement of student learning outcomes
- deploying staff in ways that best address the languages learning needs of students within the school and across the school hub, making best use of available staff time, expertise and interests
- having processes to identify and respond to student needs through the allocation of time, staff and resources
- establishing flexible curriculum delivery arrangements to better address the needs of students
- using the physical environment, technological options and available facilities to maximise languages learning outcomes.

### The Milestones

- languages programs are supported and sustained through the allocation of appropriate and sufficient resourcing.





## Strategy Nine – Collection and Analysis of Data

### The Sector

Each sector places a high priority on sector-wide analysis and discussion of systematic data on student perceptions of languages learning, as well as their progress, achievement and participation in languages education.

Data analysis considers the overall sector performance, as well as the performance of regions, schools and their partnerships through evidence of languages education improvement/regression over time. The evidence of performances is compared with similar school and/or hub partners and includes measurement of student achievement, progress, perception and participation.

### Indicated by

- identifying the required resources and expertise to monitor regional and school achievement and progress in languages education, including input and feedback from schools, language providers, as well as students and the community
- putting into place tools and processes for the systematic collection and analysis of languages education data from multiple sources, including programmatic data, quality classroom assessments, standardised assessments (where appropriate) and A–E achievement
- using data to capture the status of languages education, to identify starting points for improvement, to inform and evaluate systemic support services and initiatives, and to report on progress towards the languages education goal and measures of student outcomes
- developing data management systems to enable all schools and teaching staff to have access to a broad range of student achievement, progress and participation data
- supporting schools to analyse, study and communicate individual and cohort progress and achievement
- providing access to professional development to build school leader and staff skills in analysing and interpreting languages learning data, building a culture of self-evaluation and reflection.

### The Milestones

- data collection and analysis processes are in place
- valid and reliable languages education data is accessible.

### The School

A high priority is given to systematically collecting school-wide and hub-wide data, allowing analysis and discussion of student languages learning outcomes (academic, enrolment and participation). Data analysis considers overall school and hub performance, as well as performances of students from identified priority groups. Evidence of improvement or regression over time includes comparison of performances among similar schools and measures of growth (effect size) across the years of schooling.

### Indicated by

- planning for the collection of a range of languages learning data including achievement (A–E), classroom assessments and standardised assessments, as well as input and feedback from students and parents
- monitoring progress over time through the use of data to identify starting points for improvements to languages learning within the school and across the hub
- putting in place arrangements for the collection and analysis of school-wide data and for summarising, displaying and communicating data to partners, students and parents
- providing professional learning to build staff skills in analysis and interpretation of data concerning student progress, growth and achievement to better understand individual and cohort progress
- using school-specific and other relevant data to work with teaching teams as part of self-evaluation and reflection across the school.

### The Milestones

- school-specific languages education data is available to staff and is used to inform school decisions regarding languages learning interventions, initiatives and partnerships
- school data is used to inform teaching practice and monitor progress in improvement in languages education.



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# GLOSSARY

| Term                     | Definition  |
|--------------------------|---|
| Hub                      | A hub refers to a cluster of schools that work together to provide languages education. It includes contexts where the schools are closely located and share resources. They collaborate to guarantee quality, provision, continuity and sustainable resourcing of languages education. This could include feeder schools where students progress through stages of schooling or where students from a number of schools may access the same services (e.g. local languages education centres).   |
| Learner background       | <p>A student’s linguistic and cultural background heavily impacts language learning at school. The <i>Australian Curriculum: Languages</i> recognises three groups of students based on the relationship between home language and the language learned in school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Second Language Learner—students learning a language as a second or additional language</li> <li>• The Background Language Learner—students who have exposure to the language and culture, and who may engage in some active but predominantly receptive use of the language at home</li> <li>• The First Language Learner—students who have had their primary socialisation as well as initial literacy development and primary schooling in the language, and who use the language at home.</li> </ul> <p>At present, at senior secondary level, eligibility criteria exist for students who take languages as part of the NT Certificate of Education. Students may take courses at Beginner, Continuer and Background Learner levels based on their language background and prior learning experiences.</p> |
| Languages program        | Languages program refers to programs that primarily develop students’ communicative skills in a target language(s). In a language program cultural concepts, beliefs, values and practices are understood as an integrated part of learning and directly relate to the learning achievement. .  |
| Languages centre         | Languages centres refers to Darwin Languages Centre and Alice Springs Language Centre.  |
| Sector                   | Sector is the collective name for the government school sector, Catholic sector and the approved authority representing Independent and Christian schools.  |
| Intercultural capability | Often used interchangeably as ‘intercultural competence’, intercultural capability involves students developing their knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures. To achieve this, students are required to make connections between their world and the worlds of others. They build shared interests and commonalities and negotiate or mediate difference. Intercultural capability develops students’ ability to communicate and empathise with others and to critically analyse intercultural experiences. Learning a language provides students with opportunities to consider their own beliefs and attitudes in a new light and so gain insight into themselves and others.   |



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