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**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**Report on the Independent Review of the Investment in ACT Community
Language Schools**

**Presented by
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**Review of the investment in
ACT Community Language Schools**

November 2020

This review was undertaken by Strategic Development Group.

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Executive Summary

Almost a quarter of the ACT's population speaks a language other than English at home.¹ Language enables communication, which is essential in building and maintaining connections with friends, family and community, fostering social and economic wellbeing, and maintaining cultural identity.

The ACT Government invests over \$275,000 annually in community languages schools through grants paid to the schools and to support the ACT Community Language Schools Association (ACTCLSA), the sector's peak body that administers the grant program.

Whilst the program has been running for many years, it lacks a **clearly articulated objective or expected outcomes**. As such, no measures of progress could be established. The review was completed by undertaking public and targeted consultations with community language schools and other interested stakeholders coupled with quantitative analysis using data provided by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and ACTCLSA.

Key statistics for community language schools funded in the ACT:

- Number of community language schools – 46
 - Schools with over 100 students – 5 (11%)
 - Schools with between 50 and 100 students – 6 (13%)
 - Schools with fewer than 50 students – 35 (76%)
- Number of students – 2,126
- Languages taught – 34
- Number of teachers – 359
 - Australian teaching qualification – 57 (16%)
 - Overseas teaching qualification – 134 (37%)
 - No teaching qualification – 168 (47%)

Community language schools are eligible for two streams of funding, the levels of which are determined by the number of students that are enrolled. Enrolments are based on a census conducted during term 1 of the school year, with payments made to schools in term 3. The two streams of funding are:

- Per student grant of \$90 per annum (total 2019/20 payment - \$191,340)
- A fixed administration supplement (total 2019/20 payment - \$38,000)
 - \$1,000 for schools with fewer than 50 students
 - \$500 for schools with between 51 and 100 students
 - Zero supplement for schools with greater than 100 students

The allocation of funding across language groups is broadly in line with what would be expected when compared to census data for the ACT related to languages other than English spoken at home.

The top five language groups receiving funding are:

- Chinese² - 27 percent (four schools)
- Arabic – 10 percent (five schools)
- Tamil – 8 percent (two schools)
- Japanese – 5 percent (three schools)
- Sinhalese - 4 percent (two schools)

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 census, https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/8ACTE

² For the purposes of this review, Chinese includes the following languages included separately by the ABS in census data: Cantonese, Chinese (nfd), Mandarin, Man Nam (incl Hokkien), Wu and Hakka

Communities place a very high value on their language schools. **Key strengths of the program that were identified during the review** include:

- *Builds connection within community and between community in the ACT and home*

Community language schools are viewed as a 'bridge' between Australian culture, customs and norms and the language, culture and customs of their ancestry. Community language schools help young people find their identity and build a sense of belonging in both societies.

- *Strengthens social cohesion and mutual respect among communities*

Events such as the ACTCLSA Annual Dinner and the Open Day provide opportunities for different communities to come together and celebrate their diverse cultures. Increased interaction amongst communities, and with the broader ACT community through the Open Day, helps to improve social cohesion and builds mutual respect among communities.

- *Stronger familial ties through a shared language*

Maintaining fluency in a mother-tongue for Australian born children can be difficult. Community language schools are viewed as an important way for children to learn and improve their ability to speak their families' language and enable better communication with relatives who remain overseas.

- *Engenders a sense of community spirit and volunteering*

Community language schools can only survive through the efforts of volunteers, both administrators and teachers. This spirit of volunteering sets a good example for the students – a number of schools reported former students becoming volunteer teachers as a way of giving back to the school.

- *Different languages offered than those in mainstream education*

Community language schools offer different languages than those offered by mainstream schools. This is important for smaller cultural groups, for example the Karen community.

- *Cognitive and educational benefits of knowing more than one language*

A significant amount of evidence demonstrates the positive affect that learning a second language has on the cognitive ability of students. Although no study has been carried out on ACT community language school students, global evidence strongly suggests that students will perform better in their mainstream school, across all subject areas, due to learning a second language.

The ACT community language schools program also has some notable issues. **Key weaknesses identified during the review** include:

- *Cost and security of tenure for venues is a major issue*

Issues around venue are the most common faced by community language schools. Rent takes up a significant amount of budget for the 65 percent of schools who cannot secure free premises through a church, mosque or other community facility. The Education Directorate is the biggest landlord for community language schools. An opportunity exists with the current review of their Community Use Policy to consider the special case of community language schools, both in terms of price being charged to rent school premises, and the length of agreements being offered. Following the New South Wales model and providing free access to school premises would likely be the single biggest positive change the ACT Government could make for community language schools.

- *Quality of education is variable*

The quality of teaching at community language schools is patchy as would be expected when nearly half of the teachers have no formal teaching qualification. Professional development opportunities are limited and obtaining appropriate materials for teachers to use in classrooms can be challenging, especially for small, minority groups.

- *Capacity of ACT Community Language Schools Association*

The ACTCLSA has a very important role to play in the sector, but members expressed a desire for the Association to provide a wider range of services and support, including the need for an updated and more user-friendly website. A number of recommendations are made that will help strengthen the capacity of the ACTCLSA.

- *Unclear whether language is a priority for government*

Whilst it is undoubted that the ACT Government is a champion of multiculturalism, the community languages sector believes there is a lack of specific recognition of the value of language amongst the ACT Government. Respondents expressed the sentiment that government could be doing more to promote the value of bilingualism among the wider community and that active promotion of community language schools should form an important part of that.

- *Unclear point of contact within government*

Current low levels of confidence in the ACTCLSA has left many schools directly seeking government assistance with issues. Along with strengthening the role of the ACTCLSA, the Office of Multicultural Affairs should nominate a position to be the single contact point for schools.

When benchmarked against other states in Australia, **ACT community language schools are under-resourced**, both in terms of direct funding and indirect support such as professional development opportunities, rent relief and ability to access shared pools of funding.

Considering the strengths, weaknesses and comparisons to other jurisdictions, **the following recommendations are made to strengthen the ACT's community language schools' program:**

For the ACT Government (Office of Multicultural Affairs)

- Encourage greater recognition of the value of languages, and the role of community language schools in promoting language, across the ACT Government and the broader community
- Develop a clear program framework including well defined goal, objectives and outcomes
- Strengthen accountability of ACTCLSA by linking ongoing funding with program performance
- Engage with the Education Directorate more actively on its community use policy
- Strengthen support for teacher professional development through engagement with the Sydney Institute for Community Language Education (SICLE)
- Pilot new targeted funding mechanisms – start-up grants and resource development grants

For the ACT Community Language Schools Association

- Identify core services that members require; develop a 12-month workplan to ensure the ACTCLSA is delivering those services
- Hold annual members feedback forum
- Encourage recognition of participation in community language schools by students' regular schools

For community language schools

- Discuss rights and responsibilities under the new license agreements with host school
- Proactively build relationships with host school – promote the school
- Build relationships nationally and with local institutions

Introduction

Almost a quarter of the ACT's population speaks a language other than English at home.³ Language enables communication, which is essential in building and maintaining connections with friends, family and community, fostering social and economic wellbeing, and maintaining cultural identity. Community language schools connect people living in Canberra to the language, heritage and culture of a broad range of communities around the world.

Since 2012, the ACT Government has provided annual financial support to the ACT Community Language Schools Association (ACTCLSA) and annual grants to over 40 community language schools to support the delivery of language education.

The current investment in community languages schools is over \$275,000 annually.

In addition to community language schools, other government institutions such as libraries and schools, along with a wide range of government-supported programs and events assist Canberra's diverse communities and raise awareness of the different cultures in the ACT. Community associations also play a critical role in supporting their communities.

In the ACT Multicultural Framework (2015-2020) Second Action Plan 2019-2020 the ACT Government agreed to undertake an independent review of investment in ACT community language schools.

Scope of review

The purpose of this review is very focused: to review the investment in the ACT community language schools. The review is designed to examine issues around operation of community language schools and the effectiveness of the ACTCLSA in administering the investment.

The role of Indigenous languages in the ACT Community was not explored in the review, and as there is not currently a Ngunnawal community language school, issues specific to Indigenous languages do not form part of the review.

As described in the Approach section below, consultations were held with a range of stakeholders, including service providers in the ACT who regularly use translation services, notably Health, and the Justice and Community Safety Directorates. Whilst the potential role of community language schools as a pathway for qualified translators was discussed, the provision of translation services and the qualifications required to be recognised as a translator are beyond the scope of the review.

Responsibility for administering community language schools varies between jurisdictions. In the majority of cases, community language schools are the responsibility of the equivalent of the ACT's Education Directorate. It was noted during consultations with some states that responsibility has moved in the past between the departments responsible for education and multicultural affairs. Community language schools are administered in the ACT by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, part of the Community Services Directorate. Governance of the program is beyond the scope of the review; no comment has been made on the appropriateness of the government's administration of the program. Where raised by respondents, and appropriate, consideration has been given to the adequacy of resourcing within the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Approach

The review sought to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data to support its recommendations.

A review of program literature did not reveal any clear program objectives or outcomes beyond listing activities for the ACTCLSA to undertake such as grant dissemination and conducting professional development courses. This lack of clarity makes it difficult to measure progress made by the program and it is unclear against what outcomes progress would be measured.

As a result, a formative evaluation was completed. This type of evaluation focuses its attention on what is working well and why, and what is not working well and why. It is not necessary to have agreed

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 census, https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/8ACTE

upon outcomes or indicators against which to measure progress. To explore these questions requires significant engagement with those involved in running and administering the community language schools as well as other stakeholders.

Consequently, consultations, both public and targeted, formed the main basis of the review. A full list of groups consulted is included at Annex 4.

Key consultations undertaken include:

- Key ACT Government stakeholders
 - Inter-Directorate Implementation Group – ACT Multicultural Framework
 - Languages Policy Group
 - Education Directorate
 - Libraries ACT
- Key sector bodies
 - Multicultural Advisory Council (MAC)
 - ACT Community Language Schools Association (ACTCLSA)
 - Modern Language Teachers Association
- Three public consultations co-hosted with ACTCLSA and MAC
 - Attracting a total of 23 participants
- Three other state government departments running community language school programs
 - Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales
- Community Languages Australia – the national peak body
- Academics and other experts from the community language sector

Consultations with community language school students were not conducted as part of the review as it was considered that the additional benefit of undertaking these consultations outweighed the ethical and administrative issues involved in working with children.

Quantitative analysis throughout the report has been developed independently from data provided by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the ACTCLSA and publicly available information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Report layout

The review contains four major sections:

- Overview of ACT community language schools' sector
- The current funding arrangements for community language schools
- Key findings
- Recommendations

Overview of ACT community language schools

Community language schools are not-for-profit organisations that provide out of hours language classes for all school aged children interested in learning languages. Many of the languages are not taught in mainstream schools. To be eligible for funding from the ACT Government, schools must provide at least two hours of classes per week. Classes can include cultural activities such as dance, music or calligraphy, but all activities must also include a strong language focus.

Key facts and figures

The ACT has a vibrant community language school program⁴.

- Number of community language schools – 46

⁴ Figures based on 2019/20 grants distributed (schools and languages) and 2019/20 grant applications (student and teacher numbers)

- Schools with over 100 students – 5 (11%)
- Schools with between 50 and 100 students – 6 (13%)
- Schools with fewer than 50 students – 35 (76%)
- Schools that charge fees – 31 (67%)
- Schools that do not charge fees – 15 (33%)
- Number of students – 2,126
- Languages taught – 34
- Number of teachers – 359
 - Australian teaching qualification – 57 (16%)
 - Overseas teaching qualification – 134 (37%)
 - No teaching qualification – 168 (47%)

There is a huge variance in the amount of fees charged by community language schools from \$40 per year per student up to \$900 per year per student. Fee paying schools range in size from 13 students up to 295 students; nine of the 10 largest community language schools in the ACT are fee-paying schools. The largest non-fee-paying school has 86 students (the 8th largest in the ACT).

The largest five community language schools in the ACT account for 41 percent of the student population. A full list of schools, including student and teacher numbers, and funding allocation is included at Annex 1.

Administration

The ACT Community Language Schools Association (ACTCLSA) administers the grants distributed under the program. The ACTCLSA is staffed by one part-time Administration Officer; their office is open from 1pm-5pm on weekdays. This information is only available by visiting the office, it is not included on their website, or Facebook page, both of which have limited information.

The ACTCLSA has two grant agreements with the ACT Government. The first is a simple agreement to manage the disbursement of grants in accordance with an agreed payments list. The Funded Activity as defined in Schedule 2 of the grant agreement contains very basic information about the grants and states that the ACTCLSA must report on the number of schools who received funding, student numbers and the number of professional development events held.

The second agreement covers an annual grant (2020: \$75,850) that the ACTCLSA receives for providing this service. This agreement states that the services to be provided are 'advocacy and support to community language schools' and 'promote the teaching of community languages'. Reporting back to government includes measures such as school visits, number of professional development events held, and promotion activities undertaken. There are no benchmarks in the agreement, for example targeting a rise in number of students due to promotional activities undertaken or engagement undertaken with new communities in Canberra to encourage establishment of a language school. This is unlike agreements with organisations providing similar services to the government which were reviewed – some included explicit growth targets or objectives around raising issues with government that are affecting their members.

The grant agreements do not explicitly identify the program objective or expected outcomes.

Current funding model

Government funding is critical to the financial viability of community language schools, representing 28 percent of total estimated revenue for the schools in the 2019/20 year. This figure is considerably skewed by the significant fees generated by the 10 largest community language schools (by total income) which account for 66 percent of total estimated revenue. For the remaining 36 community language schools, government grants represent 85 percent of their expected income.

The vast majority of community language schools are heavily dependent on the ACT Government's grant program to continue operating. Payments are made to schools annually in July or August of each year. Issues with payments last year saw them delayed until January 2020, causing considerable hardship for the schools. The Office of Multicultural Affairs has acknowledged the delay and has taken steps to rectify the situation.

The current funding model has two streams which are paid together:

- A per student grant of \$90 per annum
 - Based on term 1 registrations
- A fixed administration supplement
 - \$1,000 for schools with fewer than 50 students
 - \$500 for schools with between 51 and 100 students
 - Zero supplement for schools with greater than 100 students

Total funding provided to community language schools in 2019/20 through the ACT Government grants scheme was \$229,340.

- Per student grants - \$191,340
- Administration supplement grants - \$38,000

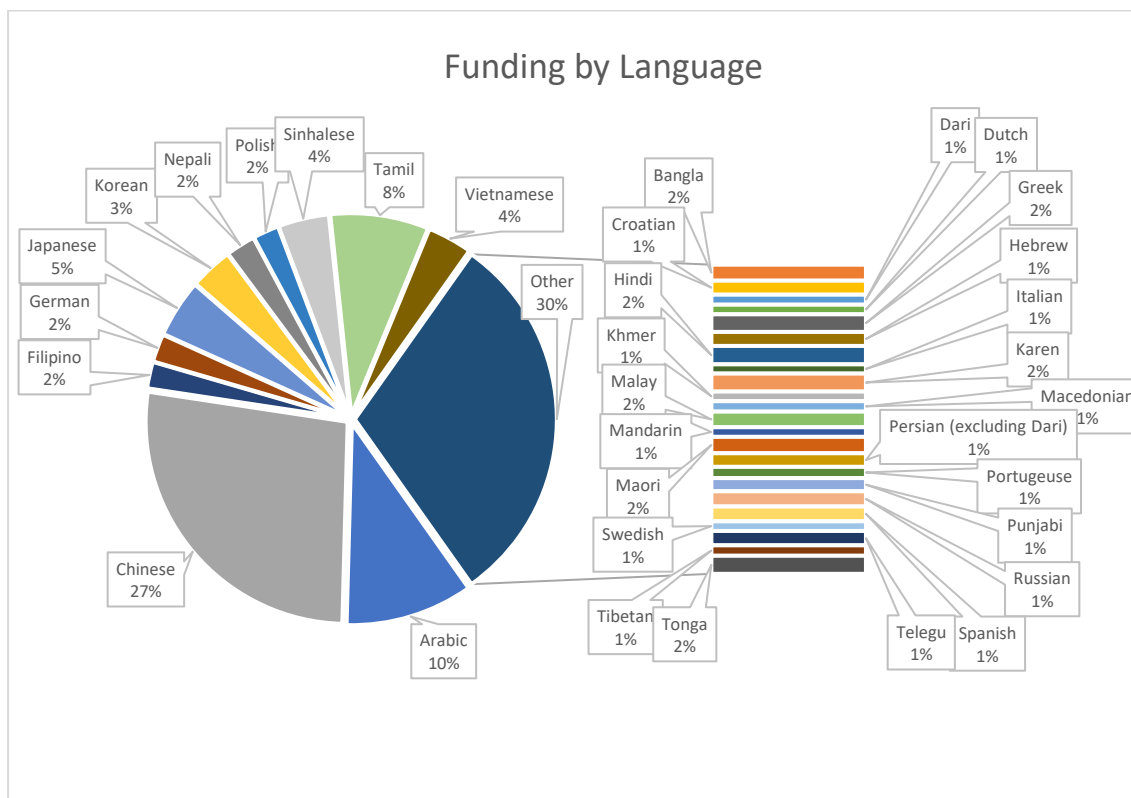
A summary of the allocation of government grant funding is below:

	No of Schools	\$1,000 supplemental grant	\$500 supplemental grant	No supplemental funding	Total
Number of schools	46	35	6	5	\$229,340 (100%)
Grant funding	46 (100%)	\$78,660	\$33,750	\$78,930	\$191,340 (83%)
Supplemental funding	41 (89%)	\$35,000	\$3,000	0	\$38,000 (17%)
Total	46	\$148,660	\$39,750	\$78,930	

Key highlights:

- 83 percent of grants given by the ACT Government are calculated on a per student basis
 - 17 percent are flat rate supplementary grants based on size of school
- 35 of 46 (76%) community language schools have fewer than 50 students and qualify for the highest level of supplementary grant (\$1,000)
- 6 of 46 (13%) schools have between 51 and 100 students and qualify for the lower level of supplementary support (\$500)
- Only 5 of the ACT's community language schools have more than 100 students and do not qualify for any supplementary grant

The following details how ACT Government grant money was split by language group.



The largest amount of funding was provided for Chinese community language schools (27% - split between four schools). Arabic (10% - five schools), Tamil (8% - two schools) and Japanese (5% - three schools) were the only other languages to receive at least 5 percent of funding. The remaining 30 languages all received relatively modest share of the funding available.

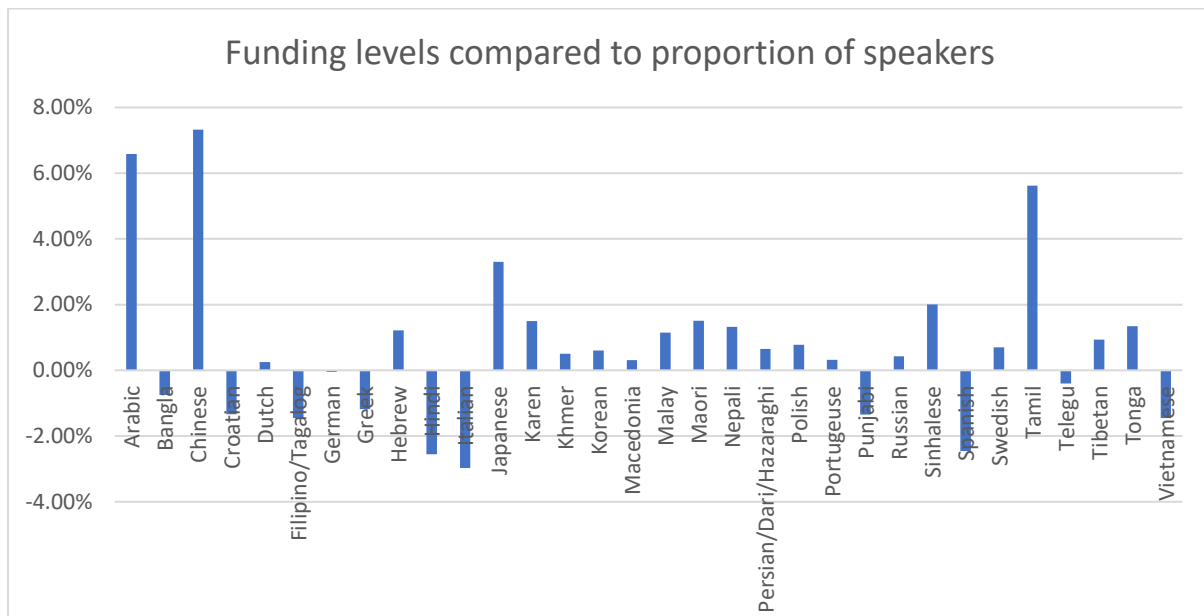
Funding and census data

There are some limitations in using census data to compare to data on community language schools. For example some language groups are treated differently - the census includes Dari and Persian together, whereas separate language schools exist in the ACT. The census also identifies households where a language other than English is spoken at home. It may be the case that families from more established communities do not regularly speak their mother tongue at home any longer and have not indicated another language on the census, but their children still attend a community language school. Despite these minor issues, comparisons to the census provide a useful point of reference.

The 2016 census identifies 88 distinct languages spoken in homes across the ACT; community language schools teach 34 languages. There are around 50 languages spoken in the ACT for which no language schools exist. Of the 30 language groups with more than 1 percent of the foreign language speaking population, 24 receive funding from the ACT Government to support a community language school. In contrast, only 10 of the 58 language groups with less than 1 percent of foreign language speaking population do not have a community language school. Consequently, it is expected that larger language groups will have a higher proportion of community language school funding than what would be expected based on how large their language group is as a proportion of total foreign speakers in the ACT.

Overlaying the current funding allocation with census data (2016)⁵ gives an indication of which language groups are receiving proportionally more funding than the number of speakers in the ACT would indicate. For example, Japanese language schools received 4.6 percent of the funding distributed in 2019/20; according to the 2016 census, only 1.3 percent of people who speak a foreign language at home speak Japanese giving a difference of 3.3 percent.

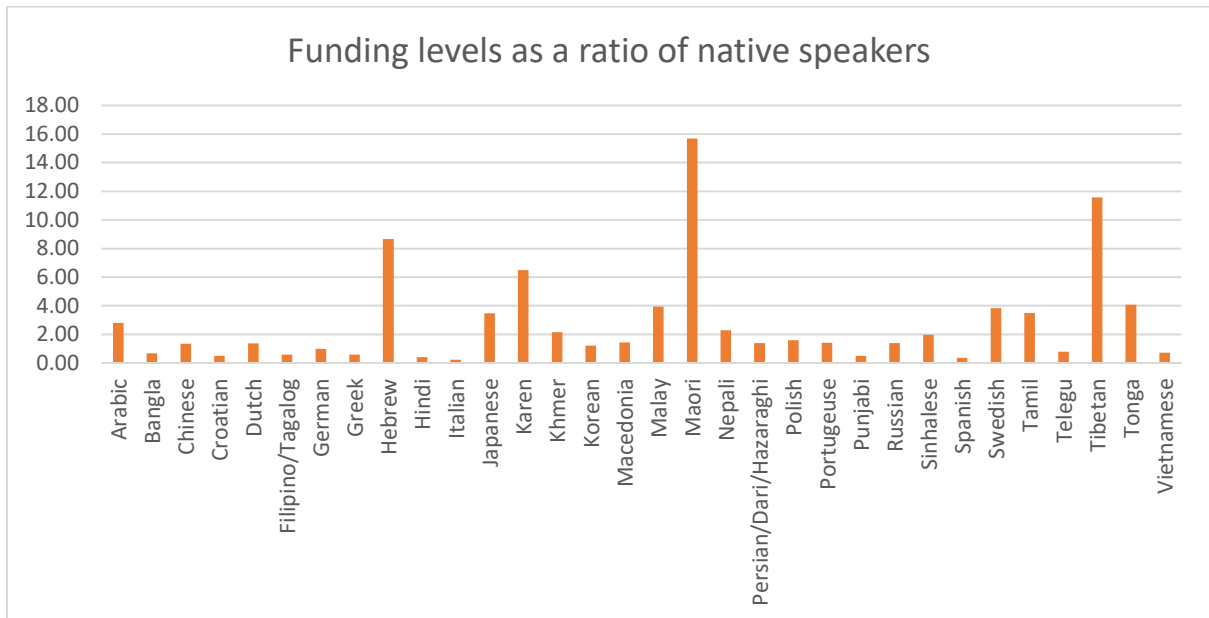
⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 census, https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/8ACTE



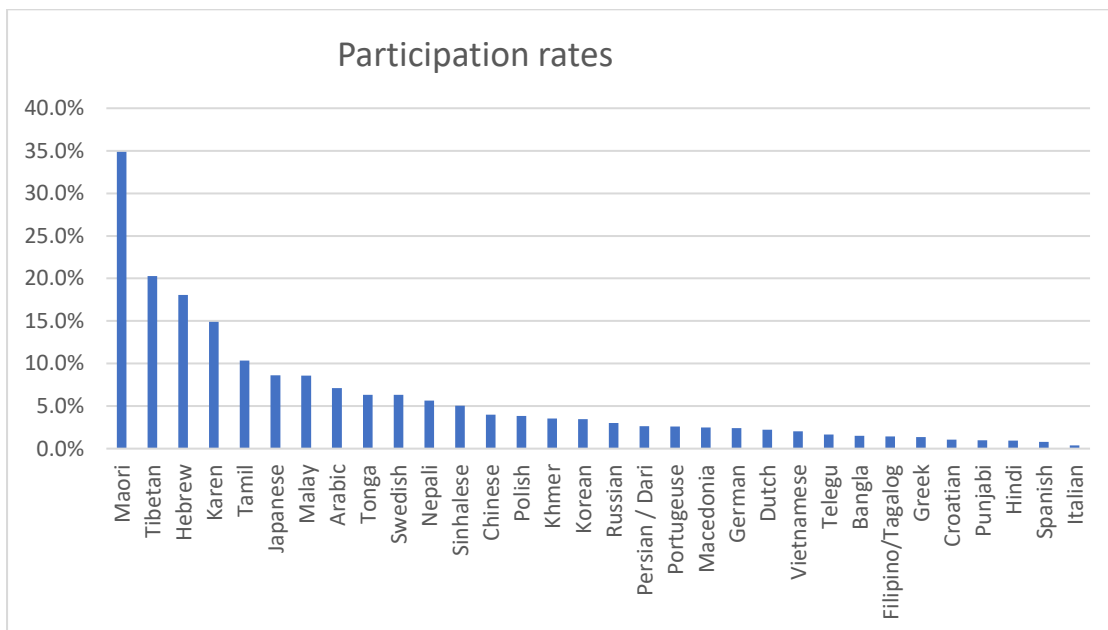
The above highlights the point made that the largest language schools – Chinese, Arabic and Tamil – receive the highest levels of funding above what their populations would predict. The above chart only includes languages that receive funding from the ACT Government – Urdu (2.8%) and French (2.4%) have the highest number of speakers in the ACT without having a government funded community language school.

Perhaps a more useful way of considering relative funding to different language groups is considering their funding levels received compared to the percentage of the population who speak that language as a ratio. A ratio of exactly one would indicate that the level of funding received for community language schools is exactly proportional to the number of speakers of that language in the ACT. Using Japanese as an example again, receiving 4.6 percent of the available funding while Japanese speakers represents 1.3 percent of the total number of foreign language speakers yields a funding ratio of 3.48 placing it seventh highest among the 34 language groups receiving funding.

Using this calculation provides a very different set of results. Perhaps unsurprisingly this list consists of smaller language groups. This is primarily the result of the \$1,000 administrative grant given to smaller schools discussed earlier. Receiving \$1,000 supplementary grants represents close to 0.5 percent of funding distributed and when coupled with the per head grant, even the smallest schools receive around 1 percent of total funding disbursed. So smaller population groups can receive a higher ratio of funding more easily. In comparison, Chinese language schools, which as noted earlier have the highest absolute discrepancy, have a funding ratio of only 1.36. The lowest funding ratios belong to Italian (0.23), Spanish (0.37) and Hindi (0.41) which all have relatively high speaking populations in the ACT and small community language schools.



The high funding ratios for the languages noted above is a result of their very high participation rates. Although imprecise, as the census data includes all speakers of a language not just school age children, a comparison of the number of students enrolled in a community language school compared to the total number of speakers of that language highlights the significant variance in participation rates among language groups.



The current spread of funding correlates reasonably closely to the proportional representation of the languages spoken at home as recorded in the 2016 census. High participation rates among some smaller language groups, most notably Maori, Tibetan and Hebrew speakers, results in those groups receiving a much higher share of funding than would be expected. Some larger speaking groups, with multiple, active community language schools receive more funding than expected based on the proportion of language speakers in the ACT.

Key Findings

Key findings are based on qualitative data gathered during consultations and analysis of quantitative data from a variety of sources. Strengths and weaknesses identified during the consultation process are outlined. Comparisons are drawn with support provided in other jurisdictions across Australia and alternative funding models considered based on this benchmarking exercise.

Formative evaluation of ACT community language schools

The following findings outline the **strengths** of the current community language schools program:

Building connection within community and between community in the ACT and home

Community language schools are viewed by the schools as a 'bridge' between Australian society and their home community. One participant stated that students were learning Australian culture, customs and norms during the week at their regular school and learning the language, culture and customs of their ancestry at the community language school. The idea that community language schools help young people find their identity and build a sense of belonging in both societies was strongly articulated by the majority of participants.

It was also noted that community language schools provide a cultural base for students from which they can explore in the future. Schools noted some drop off in students when they became teenagers and other interests became more important. But they also noted, anecdotally, that many people reconnected with their culture in their early-20s, using their learnings from community language school as a starting point for reconnecting.

Strengthens social cohesion and mutual respect among communities

It was noted that community language schools, particularly through events organised by the ACTCLSA such as the Annual Dinner and the Open Day, provide opportunities for different communities to come together and celebrate their diverse cultures. Increased interaction amongst communities, and with the broader ACT community through the Open Day, helps to improve social cohesion and builds mutual respect among communities.

Stronger familial ties through a shared language

For longer standing communities in the ACT, maintaining fluency in a mother-tongue for Australian born children can be difficult. This can cause problems amongst families, particular where older generations and extended family remains in the home country. Communication can be difficult with limited shared language. Community language schools are viewed as an important way for children to learn and improve their ability to speak their families' language and enable better communication with relatives who remain overseas.

Engenders a sense of community spirit and volunteering

Community language schools can only survive through the efforts of volunteers, both administrators and teachers. The majority of teachers are either not paid or receive a small stipend to cover travel and other out of pocket costs. As noted, 47 percent of teachers in community language schools have no formal qualification in education but are willing to teach the students for the greater good of their community. This spirit of volunteering sets a good example for the students – a number of schools reported former students becoming volunteer teachers as a way of giving back to the school.

Different languages offered than those in mainstream education

Community language schools are able to offer different languages than those offered by mainstream schools as they can draw students from across the Territory. This is important for smaller cultural groups such as the Karen community. As noted above, the Karen school has a healthy 34 students, with a participation rate of 15 percent. It is highly unlikely that Karen would ever be taught in the education system, but the community language school is an important part of the local community.

In the absence of the government supported school of languages, where students from schools across the Territory can learn less popular languages as part of their regular schooling, community language schools can fill the void to a certain point. The relatively low number of qualified teachers is an issue, but with support, targeted community language schools could provide alternative language options for students across the Territory.

Cognitive and educational benefits of knowing more than one language

Discussions with experts in the field of languages repeatedly referred to the benefit to students in their regular studies that comes from learning a second language. Studies have demonstrated that people who speak more than one language have improved memory, problem-solving, and critical-thinking skills⁶. The value of a second language is implicitly recognised by the Education Directorate which requires at least one of eight priority languages to be taught in all ACT public schools⁷. A number of respondents mentioned that in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, proficiency in another language gave students a vital skill to engage with the world in a more meaningful way while better preparing them to compete and succeed in the global economy. There is evidence to back up this view, and to promote bilingualism as positive for the Australian economy – studies in Switzerland found that language skills of workers open up more markets to Swiss businesses and that this estimated to contribute 10 percent of Switzerland's GDP⁸.

The following outlines the **weaknesses** in the current operations of the community language schools program:

Cost and security of tenure for venues is a major issue

The majority of schools consulted noted that venue was one of their biggest issues. Sixty-five percent of community language schools pay rent. The average rent paid by those schools is \$4,520 per annum. The average grant across all community language schools is \$4,986.

Existing school facilities are the most common location for community language schools. Twenty-three community language schools rent rooms from 38 public and private schools. The remaining community language schools either rent other state owned properties such as a community centre or library (13), rent from institutions such as Alliance Francais (2), or have secured free premises such as rooms in churches or mosques (9).

While the Education Directorate offers discounted rates for community language schools, rent is still the most significant cost for the majority of community language schools. The Education Directorate noted that uneven application of the schedule of rates by individual schools had resulted in some confusion among the community language schools.

In some instances, limitations are put on the facilities that can be used by community language schools within the school building. For example, some community language schools were not allowed to use the blackboards / whiteboards or access the internet. Limitations varied by school, although it was noted that primary schools tended to be more restrictive as the teachers had a 'sense of ownership' over the room as they always taught in that room and did not necessarily like other groups using the room.

Conversely, the Education Directorate emphasised the need for respectful use of the rooms. They also noted that community language schools were high intensity users because of the number and age of the users. Prior to the COVID pandemic, schools were not cleaned between Friday evening and Monday evening. This meant that any rubbish or mess not cleaned by community language schools would still be there when teachers and students arrived on Monday morning. Additional cleaning during COVID has changed this, but it comes at a high cost which will be passed on to weekend users, further exacerbating issues of financial sustainability of the language schools.

⁶ Marian V, Shook A. The cognitive benefits of being bilingual. *Cerebrum*. 2012;2012:13.

⁷ <https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/Our-Curriculum/languages-in-schools>; accessed 28 November 2020

⁸ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/04/the-benefits-of-speaking-more-than-one-language/>

Security of tenure was also an issue for community language schools. The Education Directorate recently moved community language schools from hire agreements to license agreements. These should afford more security to community language schools in the future, although due to a review of community use policy by the Directorate, the first license agreements were made for 12 months only. The ACTCLSA should enter negotiations to have all future license agreement run for a five-year period.

Quality of education is variable

Due to the volunteer nature of the majority of teachers and the fact that just under half of the teachers have no formal qualifications, the quality of teaching at community language schools is patchy. Professional development opportunities are limited to four per year, and as teachers have other jobs, their availability to attend is often limited. Obtaining appropriate materials for teachers to use in classrooms can also be an issue. Some language groups from well-resourced countries can access materials from their home countries' education department that are specifically developed for learners of the language in overseas contexts. While some smaller language groups, especially those who are from a minority cultural group in their home country, have to develop their own materials for every lesson for all levels of learners. This takes a significant amount of time and resources and produces materials of variable quality.

Capacity of ACT Community Language Schools Association (ACTCLSA)

The ACTCLSA administers the program on behalf of the ACT Government. They are funded to do so and employ a part-time Administration Officer to do so. The ACTCLSA is governed by a nine-member Committee.

Consultations revealed opportunities to build the capacity of the ACTCLSA so it could better support members, for example, in negotiating the change in contracting terms with the Education Directorate, from hire agreements to licensing agreements. The need for legal advice prior to signing a license agreement resulted in significant stress for some schools as they could not afford a lawyer and spent significant time trying to source a pro-bono lawyer. This is a missed opportunity by the ACTCLSA to provide a useful service to its members, such as publishing a list of pro-bono lawyers on their website.

There is a perception amongst some community language schools that the ACTCLSA is under-resourced and unable to effectively support all members. While resourcing is a challenge there is also potential for better prioritisation and organisation. For example, its flagship event, the Community Languages School Open Day which is designed to raise awareness about community language schools among the wider ACT community, was held on Saturday 14 November. It was not promoted on its Facebook page and was only promoted on the ACTCLSA's website on 11 November giving little chance for members of the public to attend the event.

Supporting the ACTCLSA to become a stronger and effective peak body would deliver benefits to both members and the ACT Government. The ACTCLSA has a key role to play in ensuring that government understands the issues and concerns facing community language schools.

Unclear whether language is a priority for government

A number of respondents felt there was a lack of recognition for the value of language amongst the ACT Government. Respondents expressed the sentiment that government could be doing more to promote the value of bilingualism among the wider community and that active promotion of community language schools was an important part of that promotion.

One respondent noted that in November 2019 the South Australian Minister for Education signed a Statement of Commitment with the Ethnic Schools Association of South Australia (ESASA) which set out why the government values the learning of language and the value it provide to South Australia⁹. This was followed by a message from the Minister in the July 2020 ESASA newsletter which contained the following:

⁹ www.esasa.asn.au/public/47/files/ED19217%20Statement%20of%20Commitment%20and%20Collab_A4%20SCREEN.pdf

‘(Community language schools) play a key role in maintaining and valorising our cultural diversity, ensuring that a multitude of languages, cultures and traditions continue to thrive not only for the benefit of those already engaged with those cultures, but to allow our larger community to embrace and appreciate its own diversity.

Learning to respect and embrace cultural and ethnic diversity and to develop sophisticated cultural awareness seems central to the creation of harmonious, respectful societies which encourage our young people to think about who they want to be, and not merely what they want to be.’¹⁰

The then Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Minister for Education provided statements for the ACTCLSA 2019 Yearly Magazine as did the Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs. They were good statements, but with a limited readership within the community language school community.

Making more regular public comments about the importance of language, and signing a Statement of Commitment, similar to that in South Australia, gives great visibility and credibility to the work that community language schools are doing. Tracking community sentiments towards the value of languages among the wider ACT population could be monitored through an annual Your Say survey.

Unclear point of contact within government

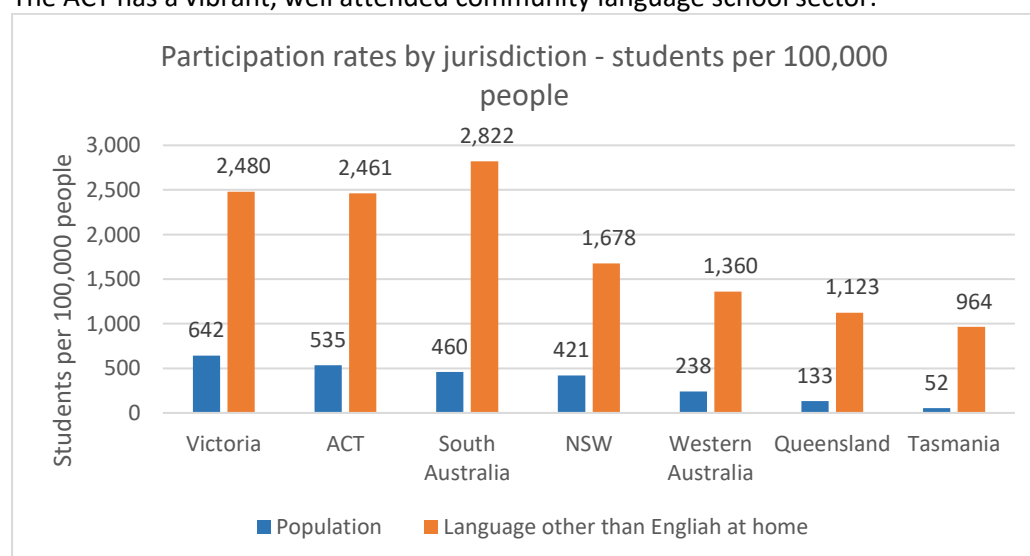
It was noted that there is not a single focal point for community language schools within government if they need to raise any pressing issues. This links to the lack of capacity and subsequent underutilisation by members of the ACTCLSA who could provide a useful one stop shop service for raising issues and negotiating with government on behalf of its members. Alternatively, the Office of Multicultural Affairs could nominate a position to be the contact point for schools if they need to raise issues with the government.

Possible alternative supporting packages for ACT community language schools

The ACT has a relatively high number of enrolled students given the size of its population. A simple comparison of the number of community language students per 100,000 residents shows the ACT only behind Victoria in terms of participation rates amongst the total population.

When participation is calculated based only on those who speak a language other than English at home, the relatively lower levels of non-English speaking households in South Australia results in that state having the highest participation rate in community language schools followed by Victoria and the ACT.

The ACT has a vibrant, well attended community language school sector.



Source: Population / language other than English speakers: census 2016; CLS participants: <https://www.communitylanguagesaustralia.org.au/> (WA information incorrect on CLA website, correct information confirmed during consultation with WA Government, information provided by government)

¹⁰ The Ethnic Schools Association of South Australia Inc, ESASA News, July 2020

Benchmarking funding arrangements

A benchmarking activity was undertaken to compare the way community language schools are funded and administered in other states across the country. Consultations were held with departments responsible for administering the equivalent programs in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. Due to the timing of the second major Covid-19 outbreak, no consultation was held with Victoria, despite it running a significant community language schools program.

Discussions were also held with Community Language Schools Australia, the national peak body for the sector.

Despite these discussions and the helpful summary provided by Community Languages Australia (Annex 3), comparisons across jurisdictions are difficult because of the different scope of services provided by community language schools, the different funding models adopted and the variety of non-financial support provided by governments.

All jurisdictions funding models include a basic per head funding component. On this crude metric, the ACT rates poorly compared to other jurisdictions:

Jurisdiction	Per head funding component
Victoria	\$245
South Australia	\$178 (\$143 base plus \$35 for materials)
New South Wales	\$131.57
Western Australia	\$120
ACT	\$90
Queensland	\$70 - \$100 depending on hours per week

Queensland and the ACT also provide an additional fixed grant to schools each year. In Queensland, all schools receive a flat fee of \$1,500 each. As noted earlier, In the ACT the equivalent grant is based on the number of students attending the school and ranges from zero for larger schools, \$500 for mid-sized schools (50-100 students) and \$1,000 for schools with less than 50 students. This additional funding results in a small ACT community language school with 15 students effectively receiving \$157 per student. A school with 51 students effectively receives \$100 per student.

Significant differences also exist in professional development opportunities available for teachers at community language schools. Professional development is critical for community language schools – in the ACT 47 percent of teachers have no formal teaching qualification and 37 percent hold a qualification from overseas. Only 16 percent of teachers in community language schools are qualified to teach in the Australian school system.

A brief overview of support for professional development of teachers follows:

Jurisdiction	Support for professional development
Victoria	Grant pool of \$490,000 total - \$340,000 per annum for courses through universities; \$150,000 for RTOs to support participants
South Australia	Grant pool of \$316,000 per annum
New South Wales	\$10.9 million, includes \$6.9 million to create the Sydney Institute of Community Languages at the University of Sydney – run two free courses for teachers and administrators, webinars; workshops by Education Officers, Annual NSW CLFS community language conferences

Western Australia	Australian Institute of Management funded to run 35-40 workshops per year ¹¹
ACT	Four workshops held per annum, run by the Modern Language Teachers' Association ACT
Queensland	Four workshops per year run by the Ethnic Schools Association of Queensland

The Sydney Institute for Community Languages Education (SICLE) offers free professional development courses for teachers in community language schools in NSW. It is a comprehensive program that comprising three packages, each requiring 60 hours of class time – Community Language Teaching Foundation program, Community Language Teaching Advanced program and Community Language School Leadership and Management program. The courses are in person or can be delivered using a mixed methods approach including online sessions.

Significant variances exist in the level of support for professional development opportunities, and the way they can be accessed, by community language school teachers across the country. As with the per student grant, the ACT is on the lower end of the level of support provided.

The other significant area of support provided by some jurisdictions is around subsidised rent for government owned premises – mostly schools.

The Government of South Australia pays community language schools who rent rooms at public schools an additional \$36 per student per annum as a contribution towards rent. In New South Wales, community language schools can use local public schools rent free with the public school provided additional funding in their budget to cover incidental costs of hosting the community language school. Given that the average rent paid by schools in the ACT is \$4,520 per annum¹², this is a significant saving. The ACT offers no rent support or subsidy to community language schools. However, ACT Libraries have a policy of allowing small unincorporated community groups with an education outcome, which would include newly formed language schools, to access their rooms for free. This is a very useful boost for new schools, but only lasts for a short period as groups need to be incorporated to access government funding.

Various other grants are available to community language schools in different jurisdictions. For example, Queensland and Western Australia both offer set up grants for new community language schools - up to \$3,400 in Queensland and \$4,000 in Western Australia. New South Wales has a \$50,000 per annum funding pool that can be accessed by community language schools to develop new classroom materials and Victoria has a variety of grants available through its Office of Multicultural Affairs.

In summary, it is difficult to make a like for like comparison between jurisdictions in terms of overall levels of support for community language schools. What is clear is that the ACT is at the lower end of the per student funding provided to community language schools by all jurisdictions, is at the lower end of professional development opportunities for teachers and offers relatively few other possible avenues for funding or in-kind support when compared to larger jurisdictions. This makes the high participation rates noted earlier even more impressive as ACT community language schools are relatively under-resourced compared to their peers.

Possible changes to the ACT funding model

The per student funding model is the basic building block for funding community language schools across the country. In all jurisdictions it is a flat per student amount. Consideration was given to possible ways of including a weighting of the per student rate that would enable the ACT Government

¹¹ <CONFIDENTIAL> Per discussions with WA Office of Multicultural Interests, agreement with AIM is due to be reviewed in the coming year with different models being considered. Likely to fund the WA equivalent of the ACT's Community Language Schools Association

¹² Average of the 65% of schools who pay rent (35% do not pay rent and operate out of religious buildings or other community-controlled buildings). Average rent figure includes private schools and other properties as well as public school buildings

to increase the level of resources directed to schools servicing newer, smaller communities in the ACT. The following options were modelled and the reasons for discounting them noted:

- A reduction in the per student rate depending on the number of years the school had been operating
 - A decreasing scale from 100 percent for first four years, to a low of 70 percent after 15 years
 - Assumes increasing capacity and efficiency over time that may not be true given the volunteer nature of community language schools and turnover of administrators and staff as students graduate
- An assessment of support received from outside groups such as Embassies, local businesses or home country ministries of education; scale of 1-5, total funding reduced based upon assessment
 - Only two ACT community language receive any support from their Embassy; very little other third-party support received
 - Subjective criteria that would create an excessive administrative burden and be open to appeal, creating more issues

It is difficult to make significant changes to the current model without unintended consequences. For example, placing a cap on the number of students funded provides an incentive for schools to split in two to avoid going over the cap and ensure they receive funding for all the students they teach. This would result in an increased administrative burden due to an artificial increase in the number of schools.

Currently the five largest community language schools in the ACT teach 41 percent of the enrolled students. They are the only schools with over 100 students and consequently do not receive any supplementary funding. The remaining 41 schools accounting for 59 percent of the students, all receive some supplementary funding and consequently receive a higher proportion of total funding (66%) than expected based just on student numbers. There are strong arguments as to why this is a good outcome – for example economies of scale for larger schools, more established curriculum with existing resources and the ability to share more expensive resources across a number of classes.

Several alternative funding models have been developed which consider different combinations of per student grants and administrative supplementary grants in order to consider the impact on the proportion of funding to the larger compared with smaller schools. As this is an exercise to consider the impact of changes to the model, budget constraints have not been considered.

The following summarises the results from a selection of the models based on 2019/20 student numbers.

	Current model \$90 / \$500-1000		\$90 per student / flat \$1,500 for less than 100 students		\$135 per student / current grant rate \$500-1,000		\$50 per student / \$3,500 grant for all schools	
Schools over 100 students (5)	78,930	34%	78,930	31%	118,395	36%	61,350	23%
Schools under 100 students (41)	150,410	66%	173,910	69%	206,615	64%	209,450	77%
Total	229,340	100%	252,840	100%	325,010	100%	270,800	100%
Increase on existing	-		10.2%		41.7%		18.1%	

The aim of any revision to the funding model will determine which, if any, of the above options is most suitable. If the aim is to ensure that funding levels match student enrolments, scrapping the fixed supplementary grant would achieve that aim, increasing the relative funding levels for larger schools.

Presuming the amount of funding is fixed and the number of students remain unchanged, redistributing the supplementary grants to the per student grant would increase the per student grant by \$18, taking the amount to \$108 per student.

A more incremental approach to achieve the aim of funding more closely matching student numbers is to maintain the fixed supplementary grants at current levels whilst increasing the per student funding. The ACTCLSA indicated that it is broadly happy with the funding model, but believes the per student figure has not changed for a number of years and as such will seek increase to \$135 per student in the near future. Adopting this figure as the per student funding results in total grants rising to \$325,010, an increase of 41.7 percent. Smaller schools would still receive a relatively higher share of the overall funding than student numbers alone would suggest, but the balance would shift towards larger schools (36%, an increase of 2%).

Conversely, if the aim is to increase the proportion of funding to smaller schools, the simplest way to achieve this is to increase the supplementary grant whilst maintaining the \$90 per student funding level. Given that only six schools receive the mid-level \$500 supplementary grant, it is simpler and more efficient from an administration perspective to implement a flat fee for all schools under 100 students of (say) \$1,500 in line with Queensland. This results in an increase in total spending of \$23,500 per annum (10.2%) all of which flows to small schools. To ensure a school with between 100-115 students is not disadvantaged, as would be the case with the Canberra Tamil School this financial year, schools with between 99 and 115 students would all receive \$10,410 (99 students @\$90 plus \$1,500). This approach results in smaller schools receiving 69 percent of the total funding on offer, an increase of 3 percent from current levels, without reducing the amount paid to larger schools.

Completely changing the structure to make the largest proportion of payments a flat \$3,500 grant to all schools and reducing the per student figure to \$50 results in a significant shift in funding to smaller schools: 77 percent compared to the current 66 percent. Significantly increasing the fixed element of the funding carries the risk that schools will split in order to access additional funding. For example, a school with 40 students would receive \$5,500 under this model, whereas two schools with 20 students each would receive \$4,500 each or \$9,000 in total for the same number of students. Existing large schools with multiple campuses could easily split into multiple schools to increase their overall funding. The forecast increase in total spend under this method is 18.1 percent, up to \$270,800. This does not include any schools splitting which has potential to significantly increase the total grants disbursed.

Other grant mechanisms

The most effective way to target funding to schools that are struggling or have special needs, such as developing educational materials, is through targeted grant mechanisms.

Resources fund

An annual funding pool of (say) \$50,000 could be established to support the creation of new teaching materials. This would be very beneficial, especially to communities coming from developing countries with under-resourced education sectors or minority communities who may not have education materials in their language, even in their home country. It could also be used to create online materials as mixed teaching approaches become more common in a post-COVID environment.

A very simple application process would be established to ensure smaller schools are not discouraged from applying by the demands of the process. A committee to assess the grant applications would be established to assess the applications; this could comprise of representatives from the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the ACTCLSA, and possibly someone from the Canberra Regional Languages Forum or similar community based organisation. Guidelines around the use of grants would need to be developed along with maximum grant amounts.

A role for the ACTCLSA could be to undertake a stocktake of current materials used by ACT schools and engage with Community Languages Australia to compare ACT's school materials with those used

in other states. This may allow some schools to improve materials by sharing with their NSW counterparts for example.

One condition of developing new materials could be that they be made available to other community language schools across the country upon request. This may prevent different states from funding development of similar materials for the same language.

Start-up grants

Start-up grants are a feature of community language programs in Western Australia and Queensland. Usually a school is required to have been operating for between three to six months before they can qualify for a grant. Schools are then not eligible for regular funding for up to twelve months after receiving the start-up grant.

As noted earlier, there are approximately 50 languages spoken in the ACT for which no community language school exists. The average number of speakers of those languages is 375. There are currently eight funded language schools with fewer people in the ACT speaking their language. There is a sufficient number of speakers for several new language schools to be established should the communities wish to do so.

Introducing a start-up grant for new community language schools may encourage this. Suggested criteria for receiving a grant:

- Have a minimum of 15 students attend at least three, 2-hour classes
- Been operational for one month

This time period is shorter than others around the country. A longer period before qualifying for the grant requires someone to pay the school's operating costs, such as materials, for an extended period of time, with the start-up grant used to reimburse expenses incurred. Using a shorter time frame does not require an individual to bankroll a new school beyond an initial one-month period and will allow smaller groups, especially those who arrive on humanitarian visas, to more quickly establish a community language school as a hub for their communities.

Two inspections during the school's first month of operation should be conducted by the ACTCLSA and / or Office of Multicultural Affairs to verify the legitimacy of the school.

Leveraging other government resources

As noted in the evaluation, cost and security of tenure of premises for the schools is a major issue. A large number of schools utilise ACT Government school premises or ACT Libraries for their community language schools. As different government departments, the conditions of use of their premises differ.

- ACT Education Directorate

As noted earlier, twenty-two community language schools rent rooms from 38 public and private schools, making the Education Directorate the largest landlord for community language schools. The Education Directorate is currently reviewing their community use policy which dictates the terms of renting school properties. They have indicated a willingness to explore options for community language schools using public schools at heavily discounted rates, even beyond the current, significant discounts offered.

Individual schools should not be financially disadvantaged for accommodating community language schools, so even if rents were reduced below cost or waived altogether, schools would have to be reimbursed for the cost of hosting community language schools, either by the Education Directorate or the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

The total rent paid by community language schools (including non-school rents) is approximately \$135,000, a relatively small absolute amount, but a significant amount when compared to the level of funding community language schools receive. Allowing free access to school premises by community

language schools would be the single biggest positive change that could be made to the program, at very little cost, given the Education Directorate's 2019/20 budget of approximately \$885 million¹³.

Significantly reducing or waiving fees may also create additional demand for school premises which may not be able to be met as community language schools currently renting privately would have an incentive to move into a school property.

The license agreements that community language schools now sign with the Education Directorate to rent rooms are for a standard period of five years. Any change requires a variation that must be reviewed by a lawyer. There were good reasons for the Education Directorate not to enter into five-year agreements in 2020, however the ACTCLSA, supported by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, should push for greater security of tenure, and provide the opportunity for community language schools to build strong working relationships with their host schools, by seeking a full five-year term on all future license agreements.

- ACT Libraries

ACT Libraries offer free room hire for small, unincorporated groups with a learning outcome. In order to receive funding, community language schools must be incorporated. ACT Libraries are very supportive of all language related initiatives; before COVID restrictions they were holding bilingual story time for pre-school children in 14 languages across five branches every month.

ACT Libraries see themselves as a community hub and understand the value of an inclusive Canberra and the role that they, and community language schools, can have in facilitating connections between new and existing communities in Canberra. Discussions with ACT Libraries to reach an agreement around free access to their facilities for new language schools, even if they are incorporated, for a period of at least 12 months until they receive their first annual instalment would be of great assistance to new schools.

As well as providing a location for community language schools, ACT Libraries have some spaces that would be suitable for other community events and the Community Language School Open Day. A broader discussion between the Office of Multicultural Affairs, ACTCLSA and ACT Libraries to discuss a possible partnership should be arranged.

Emerging issues

One of the biggest issues that community language schools are dealing with is the move to online teaching. This was forced on many schools due to the venue lockdowns and social distancing requirements that occurred during the COVID pandemic.

Prior to COVID, online classes were expressly prohibited for community language schools in New South Wales. This was primarily due to difficulties in ascertaining enrolment numbers. That prohibition has been dropped in the short term, although it is unclear what system has been developed to count enrolments next year and determine funding.

Unpublished research from the University of Sydney has noted some benefits to community language schools moving online¹⁴.

- Greater participation by parents during lessons as they can be present but still be doing other things around the house and provide assistance when required
 - Some schools have developed projects for families to do together, such as cooking a traditional dish, and making a short video of the process
- Easier access to existing online resources from home country
- Access for dispersed communities (i.e. cuts transport costs/ enhances participation)

¹³ ACT Government, Budget 2019/20: Budget Papers F – Education Directorate, https://apps.treasury.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1369789/F-Education-Directorate.pdf

¹⁴ Discussion with Ken Cruikshank, SICLE

- Students can do learning in their own time
- Higher quality materials (i.e. will typically have been developed by professional bodies) – and also eliminates costs associated with curriculum development being done by volunteers in ACT

The move to more online teaching also has drawbacks:

- Unequal access to the required technology – entrenching existing inequality between schools and individual students
- Shorter classes for younger students due to limitations on how long they will spend in front of a screen
- Although no data is available yet, respondents also raised questions about schools ‘poaching’ students from other schools as distance from schools becomes less of an issue

There is insufficient evidence to support recommendations about online learning for ACT community language schools. The issue is raised here as something that the Office of Multicultural Affairs is going to need to consider in the coming years. As New South Wales is starting to consider these issues, connecting with the relevant people in the Department of Education is a sensible starting point.

Recommendations for improving the operation of community language schools in the ACT

Recommendations for improving the operation of community language schools are broken into three sections corresponding with the three main stakeholders involved in the program: the ACT Government through the Office of Multicultural Affairs; the ACTCLSA; and finally the language schools themselves.

Recommendations for the ACT Government (Office of Multicultural Affairs)	
1. <i>Encourage greater recognition of the value of languages, and the role of community language schools in promoting languages, across the ACT Government and the broader community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT Government undoubtedly values diversity, but it is difficult to find instances where leading government figures have actively promoted <i>language diversity</i> in the ACT • The Office of Multicultural Affairs, perhaps through the Government's Multicultural Advisory Council, could work with the ACTCLSA to prepare a Statement of Commitment similar to that signed by the South Australian Government, emphasising the ACT Government's commitment to languages in the ACT • Conduct annual Your Say survey to gauge the perceived value of language across the ACT- track the trend of percentage of Your Say respondents who recognise the value of multilingualism
2. <i>Develop a clear program goal, objectives and outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulating what the program is aiming to achieve in the next (say) 4 years provides specific targets for Office of Multicultural Affairs and the ACTCLSA to measure progress against • An indicative framework is provided at Annex 2 – this has been developed without wider consultation and should not be treated as a final document, rather it provides an idea of what a framework might look like and the types of measures it could contain
3. <i>Strengthen the capacity of ACTCLSA by linking ongoing funding with program performance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program outcomes developed above should be included in Schedule 2 of the agreement with ACTCLSA to track progress • A strong, independent voice for community language schools is important for the success of the sector, the Office of Multicultural Affairs needs to consider how best to support the ACTCLSA to deliver this service for its members
4. <i>Engage with the Education Directorate more actively on its community use policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Education Directorate is the biggest single landlord for community language schools; rent is the biggest cost incurred by the majority of schools • Total rent paid by community language schools, including non-school rents, is approximately \$135,000 • The single biggest positive change the ACT Government could make for community language schools would be to have free access to government premises • Individual schools should not be financially disadvantaged for accommodating community language school; similar to the NSW system, it may be possible to negotiate a system whereby

	<p>Education Directorate and Office of Multicultural Affairs can top up budgets of schools that host a community language school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion should also involve increased security of tenure for community language schools, seeking five-year terms as standard in future licensing agreements
<p>5. <i>Strengthen support for teacher professional development through engagement with the Sydney Institute for Community Language Education (SICLE)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SICLE is open to discussing making the courses available to teachers in the ACT, possibly for free • SICLE has indicated that there is flexibility in course structure and delivery methods that may make it more accessible for teachers in the ACT • Courses are also available in some languages if English is a barrier. • The Office of Multicultural Affairs should engage with SICLE as a possible additional or alternate provider of professional development courses for community language schools' teachers in the ACT
<p>6. <i>Pilot new targeted funding mechanisms – start-up grants and resource development grants</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT's community language school sector is relatively underfunded compared to other jurisdictions • The current funding model allocates a higher proportion of funds to smaller schools due to the supplementary grants provided to smaller schools, which is considered reasonable • To encourage new language schools, especially among new communities, the creation of a start-up grant mechanism should be explored. The amount can be reasonably modest, with connections to ACT Libraries facilities as part of the start-up package if required. • A modest resource development grant mechanism should also be piloted to support small schools to develop new materials and also support the piloting of online resources as schools consider mixed method approaches in the future. • Careful consideration has to be given to the cost of administering the fund, ensuring it is not expensive for either the schools to apply or for a transparent selection process to be established and maintained.
<p>Recommendations for the ACT Community Language Schools Association (ACTCLSA)</p>	
<p>1. <i>In line with recommended development of program objectives, work with members to develop a 12-month workplan to ensure the ACTCLSA meets program objectives</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACTCLSA is under-resourced, but by how much is unclear. • In conjunction with its members, the ACTCLSA should develop a 12-month workplan that outlines its plans for 2021. Possible activities could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop list of pro-bono lawyers and other service providers as identified by members • Build stronger relationship with Office of Multicultural Affairs, Education Directorate and ACT Libraries with a view to improving the total resource envelope available to community language schools • Engage with SICLE, in conjunction with Office of Multicultural Affairs, to explore options for improving professional development opportunities for teachers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a pack of resources for people interested in starting a language school • Build a new, more user-friendly website
2. <i>Hold annual members feedback forum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of respondents noted how valuable the process of the review had been, just making the time to discuss issues they are facing with people involved in similar organisations • The ACTCLSA should schedule an annual, independently facilitated 2-hour meeting at a time that best suits the most members to discuss the issues faced by the sector. • The session should be timed to coincide with the development of annual workplans as the outcomes of the session should guide the work of the ACTCLSA for the coming year
3. <i>Encourage recognition of participation in community language schools by students' regular schools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with the Education Directorate the development of a handbook for school Principals and community language school administrators detailing productive ways to work more closely together. For example, the handbook may include suggestions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising achievements of community language school students at school assemblies in much the same way that sporting and other achievements are recognised • Include community language schools at school fetes • Recognise national days of significance for students attending a community language school • Create a public space where the work of community language school students can be displayed for other students to see
<i>Recommendations for the community language schools</i>	
1. <i>Discuss rights and responsibilities under the new license agreements with host school</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new license agreements, which give community language schools greater rights and responsibilities than the previous agreements, are held centrally in the Education Directorate - but the day-to-day relationship still rests with the school Principal • Community language schools should ensure they understand their rights and responsibilities and build constructive relationships with the Principal of their host school so any issues can be resolved quickly and not lead to ongoing issues • There is great potential for increased security of tenure under future license agreements; proactively seek legal advice months in advance of the current license agreement expiring
2. <i>Proactively build relationships with host school – promote the school</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The license agreements between the two schools are designed to foster closer relationships than a short-term hire agreement • Use this reset in the relationship to positively promote the community language school and build relationships with the wider school community; suggest new ideas for engagement and cooperation, such as those noted above in recommendation 3 for the ACTCLSA.

<p>3. <i>Build relationships nationally and with local institutions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT community language schools should not operate in a bubble, particularly smaller schools with stretched resources • Build relationships with community language schools in other states to expand the school's resource base and support network • This will become more important as some teaching moves online, resources can be more easily shared, and it may be possible for 'excursions' or joint classes to occur across borders • The ACTCLSA will be able to assist in making connections through their corresponding body in each state. • Build relationships with language schools and student clubs at local universities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Korean community language school has a very supportive partnership with the Korean language department at the Australian National University where they are able to use ANU facilities for the school and hold joint events.
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Annexes

Annex 1 – ACT community language schools -funding for 2019/20 year

Language	School name	Funding			No of students
		Per head	Admin	Total	
Arabic	Arabic Academic and Cultural	1,800	1,000	2,800	20
Arabic	Canberra Islamic School	10,170		10,170	113
Arabic	Canberra Islamic Centre	1,620	1,000	2,620	18
Arabic	Gungahlin Mosque Islamic School	3,420	1,000	4,420	38
Arabic	Canberra Muslim Youth (Taqwa Language School)	2,430	1,000	3,430	27
Bangla	Bangla Language and Cultural School	2,610	1,000	3,610	29
Chinese	Australian School of Contemporary Chinese	10,440		10,440	116
Chinese	Canberra Chinese School	26,100		26,100	290
Chinese	EASS Chinese School	1,890	1,000	2,890	21
Chinese	FCCI Chinese School	22,410		22,410	249
Croatian	Croatian Ethnic School	2,160	1,000	3,160	24
Dari	Dari Language School	1,260	1,000	2,260	14
Dutch	Abeltje Dutch School Canberra	1,170	1,000	2,170	13
Filipino	Filipino Language School of Canberra	3,870	1,000	4,870	43
German	ACT German Language School	4,140	1,000	5,140	46
Greek	St Nikolas Greek School	2,970	1,000	3,970	33

Language	School name	Funding			No of students
		Per head	Admin	Total	
Hebrew	ACT Jewish Community Hebrew School	2,160	1,000	3,160	24
Hindi	Canberra Hindi School	3,150	1,000	4,150	35
Italian	Italian Language School	1,080	1,000	2,080	12
Japanese	Canberra Japanese Supplementary School	4,500	1,000	5,500	50
Japanese	Japanese Community Language School	2,430	500	2,930	27
Japanese	CJC Japanese Language Kindergarten	1,710	500	2,210	19
Karen	Kaw Lah Karen School	3,060	1,000	4,060	34
Khmer	Canberra Cambodian School	1,170	1,000	2,170	13
Korean	Canberra Korean School of Education	7,380	500	7,880	82
Macedonia	Macedonian School St Kliment of Ohrid	1,350	1,000	2,350	15
Malay	Malayalam Vidu Vedi	2,520	1,000	3,520	28
Mandarin	TACA Mandarin Language School	1,170	1,000	2,170	13
Maori	ANZ Maori Cultural Centre	2,700	1,000	3,700	30
Nepali	Hamro Pathshala	4,410	1,000	5,410	49
Persian	Persian Language School	2,070	1,000	3,070	23
Polish	Polish School of Canberra	3,780	1,000	4,780	42

Language	School name	Funding			No of students
		Per head	Admin	Total	
Portuguese	Monaro Portuguese	1,530	1,000	2,530	17
Punjabi	Canberra Khalsa Punjabi School	1,980	1,000	2,980	22
Russian	St John Russian Orthodox	2,430	1,000	3,430	27
Sinhala	Buddhism and Sinhala Language School of Sri Lanka Dhamma Viahra	1,080	1,000	2,080	12
Sinhala	Sinhala Language School of Canberra	6,750	500	7,250	75
Spanish	Spanish Speakers Association	2,340	1,000	3,340	26
Swedish	Swedish School in Canberra	1,170	1,000	2,170	13
Tamil	Canberra Tamil School	9,810		9,810	109
Tamil	Chennai Tamil School	7,740	500	8,240	86
Telegu	Telegubadi School	2,250	1,000	3,250	25
Tibetan	Tibetan Community Language School	1,350	1,000	2,350	15
Tonga	ACT Tongan Language and Cultural Centre	540	1,000	1,540	6
Tonga	Tongan Association Tongan Language School	1,530	1,000	2,530	17
Vietnamese	Canberra Vietnamese School	7,740	500	8,240	86
		191,340	38,000	229,340	2,126

Annex 2 - Indicative Program Framework for ACT Community Language Schools

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
Overall objective/ Goal	To help build social cohesion and a more inclusive ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of YourSay respondents who recognise value of multi-lingualism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YourSay Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT government continues to recognise the value of CL schools
Purpose	To help build connections within ethnic communities, and between community in ACT and home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater recognition of the role that CLS play in forming and developing communities • % of students who recognise CLS as an 'important bridge' between community in ACT and home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YourSay Survey • CL School Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic communities within ACT continue to recognise the importance of CL schools in forming and developing communities • Students continue to enrol in CL schools
Results	1. Capacity of ACTCLSA strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTCLSA website operating • Greater engagement by ACTCLSA with DoE & OMA • % of CL schools who view ACTCLSA as a trusted partner • Increase in PD opportunities identified by ACTCLSA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes, reports from ACTCLSA • Website reports • Annual members forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CL schools continue to recognise the value and importance of the association

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
	2. Strengthened links between CLS and formal education sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthened relationship between CLS and host schoolGreater recognition that CL schools are a complimentary provider of languages education in ACTAcknowledgement of relationship between CLS and formal education sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Minutes, reports from OMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Suitable PD opportunities can be identified to support CL schoolsOther ACT government departments willing to work with OMA to support CL schools
	3. Financial viability of language schools enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">% improvement in security of tenureImprovement in predictability of funding% accessing start up grant/ % accessing resource development grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">OMA financial recordsCL School financial reports	
Activities	1.1. Develop ACTCLSA website 1.2. ACTCLSA promotes further engagement between DoE & OMA. 1.3. ACTCLSA continues to engage with CL schools, including establishing annual dialogue sessions to discuss challenges facing language schools 1.4. ACTCLSA continues to promote professionalisation of teachers, including identifying PD opportunities (such as scholarship opportunities, SICLE professional development programs, ANU and also pathways to accreditation for CL teachers 1.5. ACTCLSA continues to lobby/advocate for greater	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ACT government willing to continue to fund CL schools		

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
	<p>recognition of CLS in order to enhance profile of CLS</p> <p>CLSA explores networking opportunities between ACT and interstate counterparts</p>			
	<p>2.1. Work with ACT Government to enhance status of language school</p> <p>2.2. Establish single focal point within ACT government for language schools</p> <p>2.3. Explore options to create greater interconnectedness between CLS and formal schooling system (e.g. joint language provision, accreditation possibilities, joint language provision</p> <p>2.4. Identify ways to systematically support CLS beyond financial needs (e.g. enhancing administrative skills, leadership, and school governance; in addition to supporting liaison/ mediation between CLS and host schools).</p>			
	<p>3.1. OMA to explore different options pertaining to Department of Education's Community Use policy for facilities</p>			

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
	<p>3.2. OMA explore options to leverage other ACT resources for CL schools such as Libraries ACT</p> <p>3.3. OMA and ACTCLSA explore possibilities of promoting closers links/ties between CL schools and relevant Embassies</p>			

Annex 3 - Overview of state funding and administration arrangements

Source - Community Languages Australia – reproduced with the approval for Community Languages Australia; not for wider circulation

STATE	PER CAPITA GRANTS	PROF DEV/T	MATERIALS etc.	RENTAL - SUPPORT	WHO PROVIDES FUNDING eg Dept of Education or OMI etc? WHO ADMINISTERS FUNDING? WHAT ARE THE ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR FUNDING? (Attach guidelines)	OTHER PLEASE ANY OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING INCLUDE FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION OR SUPPORT BY ANY OTHER DEPT
SA	\$143pa /student (GST ex)	\$316,000 (GST exclusive) plus CPI increase per annum over the three years (2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19) (The amount of \$316,000 per annum comprises \$261,000 Education Grant and \$55,000 Operation Grant). I.e. Total \$316,000 plus CPI adjustments as applicable	\$35pa / student with minimum grant of \$1200pa / school (GST ex)	2019: \$36/ethnic school student hosted by a government school	Department for Education	\$30,500 (GST exclusive) plus CPI increase per annum over the three years (2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19) And \$30,000 (GST exclusive) no CPI increase in 2017/18 and 2018/19. I.e. Total \$60,500 plus CPI adjustments as applicable
NSW	\$131.57	Non-credit bearing workshops offered by Education Officers (the Federation offers at least 60 per year which include	Specific Project Grant: \$50,000 (total funding pool) for materials development	NSW Dept. of Education provides free use of government schools to approved	NSW Department of Education's Community Languages Schools Program provides and administers the grants and funding.	Part of the Communities United Through Language Grant of \$400,000 is allocated to professional development (ongoing) currently \$10.9m (\$6.9m allocated to the university of

		The Annual NSWFLS community Languages Conference – NESA PD hours approved Non-credit bearing Certificate in Language Teaching; Diploma in Language Teaching; Certificate in Leadership and Management offered at the University of Sydney		community organisations.	Accreditation for funding click the Funding Guidelines for details	Sydney to create the Sydney Institute of Community Languages; \$800,000 allocated to NSW educational Standards Authority to create five language syllabuses; \$1.2m to the NSWFLS and the remaining amount to schools that take up the Learning Management System) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$400,000 one-off grant from Multicultural NSW (expired) • \$35,000 from Multicultural NSW for administration support (annual)
WA	Up to \$120 per student (in 2018 CLS received \$127.53 per student due to a small balance of funds available at the end of the grant round).	Service agreement with Australian Institute of Management Western Australia to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professional development workshops (between 35-40 workshops/yr). - Pathways to Improvement Program (school development program that involves self-assessment and evaluation) - maintenance of sector website and facebook group 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant program is administered by the Office of Multicultural Interests • No accreditation required, however in 2019 CLS are required to be enrolled in 'Pathways to Improvement Program'. Other requirements in guidelines attached. 	

	Up to \$4000 for a new school. Schools that receive a new school grant cannot receive per capita (they would apply for per capita the following year).	MOU with State Library of Western Australia for Community Languages Collection. Teaching resources and materials available for loan by CLS teachers.				
QLD	Funding will consist of: annual base amount of \$1,500 plus A per Student per annum basis calculated: - 2-hour session (excluding breaks) \$70 - 2.5-hour session	4 in this year - from ESAQ at the moment nothing I from DoE	no special grants for materials/resource	Nil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoE • Set up fund: https://communitylanguageschools.eq.edu.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/application-for-setup-funding.doc • Annual grant: https://communitylanguageschools.eq.edu.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/fact- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The set-up funding is based on eligible student enrolments* as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6–15 students — \$850 • 15–25 students — \$1,700 • 26–35 students — \$2,550 • over 35 students — \$3,400 <p>Schools can apply to QLD Multicultural Commission</p>

	<p>(excluding breaks) \$85 - 3-hour session (excluding breaks) \$100</p> <p>Additional for each Year 12 student that pass the Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority (QCAA) External Exam \$100</p>				sheet-applying-for-a-grant.doc	for the Community Grants program
VIC	<p>\$245 per capita grant Included as of 2019 Preschool students (Approx. \$9m per annum)</p>	<p>\$340,000 per annum Professional Development Credit Bearing Courses – through universities RTO – Funding to support participants \$150,000 Administrative Support (total \$490,000 per annum)</p>	<p>Victorian Multicultural Commission Grants program https://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/grants/apply-for-a-grant</p>	NIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education and Training https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/languages/Pages/clsschools.aspx Accreditation – conducted by RUMMAC – University of Melbourne 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools can apply for special grants through the VMC https://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/grants/apply-for-a-grant

					https://www.cls.vic.edu.au/	
ACT	<p>\$90 per student,</p> <p>Additional funding for smaller schools</p> <p>\$500 funding for language based playgroups.</p>	<p>Modern Language Teachers' Association ACT is paid by the Education Directorate to conduct PD 4 times per year.</p> <p>Biannual first aid training funded by ACT CLSA</p>	Currently no special grants for materials/resources development	No subsidy for rental agreed at ACT Government schools, managed on a case by case basis at each location with CLS leaders directly liaising with venue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding provided by Community Services Directorate, Office of Multicultural Affairs • ACT Community Language Schools Association administers the funding • Guidelines for funding supplied attached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for Administration support \$76,982.27 covers ACT Community Language Schools Association costs including staff listed below • One P/T Administration Officer • One P/T Bookkeeper

Tasmania is currently lobbying for a more structured funding program

Here are some grants schools can apply for

http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr/grants_and_community_engagement/multicultural_grants_program_2016

Annex 4 - Summary of consultations undertaken

- Key ACT Government groups with an interest in language
 - Inter-Directorate Implementation Group – ACT Multicultural Framework
 - Language Policy group
- State government counterparts
 - NSW
 - Western Australia
 - Queensland
- The Multicultural Advisory Council (MAC)
- ACT Community Language School Association Committee
- ACT Community Language School Association staff
- Community Languages Australia
- Two public consultations co-hosted with MAC
 - 8 participants from community language schools and interested groups
- Public consultation co-hosted with ACT Community Language Schools Association
 - 15 participants from 12 community language schools
- ACT Directorate of Education
- Libraries ACT
- Sydney Institute for Community Language Education (SICLE)
 - Dr Ken Cruickshank
- Other community language school stakeholders
 - Dr Mandy Ayres (ANU)
 - Frank Keighley (Canberra Academy of Languages)
 - Sharee Harrild (President – Modern Language Teachers Association)