



Asia Education Foundation

Building Demand - What Works For Studies of Asia

Building Demand: engaging school educators

Leading 21st Century Schools Victoria: Engage with Asia project (L21CSV)

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) leads this cross sector project funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. All Victorian Principals Associations are partners in the project which supports principals to develop Asia literate schools, teachers and students. The project is based on a national project developed by the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) in which the DEECD participated in 2008-9.

By September 2012, 11.5% of all Victorian schools were engaged with the L21CSV project. 15% of Government schools, 12% of Catholic schools and 3.5% of Independent schools.

The L21CSV project:

- >> builds awareness of the current and future global significance of Asia and the importance for Australia to engage with Asia
- >> supports schools to implement national policies on Asia, including the Australian Curriculum priority of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia and the general capability of Intercultural understanding
- >> supports the development of whole-school approaches to ensure the development of sustainable Asia literate policy and programs
- >> builds principal networks to support and share achievements
- >> provides funding, resources and a range of professional development programs to build Asia literacy in participating schools.



The program

Principals are inducted into the project with a one and a half day training forum. Keynote speakers from industry and education provide compelling reasons for their schools to become Asia literate. Workshops, led by principals who have experience in developing Asia literate schools, provide a clear, five step model and exemplary resources to build capacity.

The five-step model:

1. **Building awareness** in the school community about why Asia is important - includes school council, teachers, parents and students
2. **Auditing the curriculum** for existing Asia related content and auditing resources and staff Asia knowledge and experience
3. **Including Asia literacy in school policy** to ensure sustainability and resourcing
4. **Developing an action plan** and establishing distributed leadership
5. **Implementation and evaluation.**

School principals are highly effective in promoting Asia literacy

The Leading 21st Century Schools: Engage with Asia professional learning program (L21CS Program) is a national professional learning program for principals and other school leaders, funded through NALSSP. Evaluations indicate that it accelerates demand for Asia literacy in participating schools.

"Like all principals' associations in Victoria and at the national level, the Victorian Principals' Association is a partner in the L21CSV project. With the Australian Curriculum, Asia literacy is now a national priority for education. The VPA actively supports capacity building for principals to lead this curriculum innovation. I congratulate principals who are seizing this leadership opportunity."

Gabrielle Leigh, President
Victorian Principals Association

Step 1. Awareness raising – Curriculum change occurs when the school community sees the need for it to happen

By making a presentation about why Asia literacy is important for their students' futures, principals inspire and motivate staff. The project provides material for this purpose including a powerful 14 minute AEF DVD, which presents the rationale through the voices of leading Australians from all walks of life. Principals consistently report that the response from school councils, parents, teachers and students is powerful and positive. When people understand the benefits for their children, they get behind it.

Step 2. Auditing – You can't move forward unless you know where you are

Principals enlist school leadership teams to audit the curriculum to identify where Asia is currently included in the curriculum. Audits of teaching resources and teacher knowledge are showing principals the assets they have to work with and identifying where resource acquisition and professional development for teachers will be most beneficial.

Step 3. Policy – Articulating a policy for Asia literacy provides clarity and ensures sustainability

A clear policy to include Asia related topics in the curriculum will support sustainability and encourage teachers to build their knowledge and confidence to do so. If it's not in the strategic plan, it won't be resourced and it won't happen.

Step 4. Developing an action plan – providing a road map for action

Having established baseline data through the curriculum audit, the school leadership is in an informed position to make evidence based decisions about where Asia will be included across the learning areas and years.

"Embedding Asia as a whole school approach has enriched the curriculum. Teachers are energised and the kids love it."

David Dodd, Principal
St Andrews Primary School

Step 5. Implementation and evaluation – Quality assurance

Implementation might include:

- >> Purchasing teaching resources
- >> Teacher professional development
- >> Curriculum writing
- >> Trialling units of works
- >> Evaluation of student Asia knowledge pre- and post- implementation.

Curriculum development support

The L21CSV provides a whole day curriculum development program for curriculum leaders in participating school networks.

"The workshop has resulted in a scope and sequence, which embeds Asia across the curriculum for the next four years. It will provide welcome guidance and clarity for teachers"

Steven Fernando, Principal
Beveridge Primary School

Complementary professional learning programs

Participating schools have been given priority to access a powerful range of professional learning programs:

- >> ICT and Asia – Fully funded workshops for all teachers to improve their web 2.0 technology skills through the context of Asia.
- >> Asia in the curriculum – Studies of Asia PD is offered across the year for all levels and most learning areas.
- >> Upgrade of teacher qualifications – Graduate Certificate of Education (Studies of Asia) and a Masters of Education (Studies of Asia) by distance learning through Flinders University is available to all teachers and principals. Funds have been available towards fees and some teacher release.
- >> Study programs subsidies – subsidies are available for teachers and principals to join AEF Study Programs during school holidays to a range of Asian countries.

"Asia is fast becoming a central driver in so many global matters which impact on the lives of Australian children and their families. Our students will be collaborating and problem solving with our Asian neighbours. They'll need to build intercultural knowledge and understanding in order to avoid conflicts born out of cross-cultural ignorance and misconceptions based on out-dated stereotypes."

Steve Fernando, Principal,
Beveridge Primary School



Support for teachers

DEECD supports schools with guidance, resources and professional learning programs including whole day curriculum workshops on integrating Asian themes into existing scope and sequence documents. It shows how Asia can be appropriately woven into the existing curriculum. Teachers are relieved to see just how achievable it is.

An example from L21CSV

At Beveridge Primary School in Victoria, which is in a rural community of Anglo-European background, the Principal felt that:

"There was a clear need for a focus on building a broader understanding of the world, nurturing a questioning of current beliefs and opening students up to considering alternate views."

The Program's strategies and tools enabled him to lead the process of analysing the extent of Asia content in the current curriculum. His strategic plan then called for the curriculum to be re-worked to ensure that units of work specifically focussed on increasing students' knowledge of Asia.

The result is that Asia literacy is included in the school's annual implementation plan and strategic plan. Curriculum planning and review processes require teachers to report on what they are doing to build Asia literacy in their classroom, in this way making sustainable Asia literacy a shared responsibility.

Teachers have also been provided with extensive professional learning opportunities.

The Principal now says:

"From Grade 1 to Grade 6, any child can talk to you about Asia and students are active in project development. For example they devised and organised an Asia market event attended by the community last term. They have also formed student change teams which advocate about intercultural understanding."

Outcomes

An evaluation of L21CSV activities in 2010 found that:

- >> The majority of principals have reported significant project outcomes in their schools.
 - i. 94% report a significant increase in support for studies of Asia in their schools
 - ii. 90% report a dramatic increase in teacher expertise in studies of Asia
- >> The project has resulted in a significant increase in the inclusion of Asia across the curriculum
- >> The majority of principals and stakeholders rate the project as highly effective or effective
- >> Principals and stakeholders recommend the project be continued with additional professional development support provided. (p. 5)

A further evaluation in 2011 found that

This highly visible level of principal discourse on Asia focused curriculum change is helping to move the agenda into the mainstream arena and reinforce that Asia literacy is not a passing trend but rather the way of the future in the Australian Curriculum. (p. 6)

Other selected findings were that:

A significant indicator of sustainability is that 49% of respondents reported that school policy documents now give importance to studies of Asia.

- >> 91% of respondents said that the L21CSV project is supporting their capacity to deliver against the Australian Curriculum cross curriculum priority of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia.
- >> 91% of respondents report support from the school community for studies of Asia in the curriculum.
- >> 82% report a positive attitude amongst the school community to the inclusion of an Asian Language in their schools. (p. 7)

Conclusion

Engaging school principals through initiatives such as the L21CSV Program can be highly effective in building demand for Asia literacy.

About AEF

The Asia Education Foundation provides teachers, education leaders and school communities with innovative programs, curriculum resources and networks to support the achievement of Asia literacy for every young Australian.

AEF is a joint activity of Asialink at the University of Melbourne and Education Services Australia. It receives core funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

AEF leverages funding to support Asia literacy in Australian schools from a broad range of government, philanthropic and corporate partners in Australia and Asia.



Related links

- >> Leading 21st Century Schools on the AEF website
www.asiaeducation.edu.au/l21cs
- >> Victorian DEECD L21CSV 2010 Evaluation
https://studiesofasia.wikispaces.com/file/view/NALSSP_L21CSV_project_report_Dec_2010.pdf
- >> Victorian DEECD L21CSV 2011 Evaluation
https://studiesofasia.wikispaces.com/file/view/L21CSV_Final_report_cohort_2-December2011_January_2012_PDF.pdf
- >> Victorian DEECD L21CSV Program notes
<http://studiesofasia.wikispaces.com/L21CSV+2011-12>

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