



The State election will be held on Saturday 24 November 2018. During the caretaker period (commencing 6pm, 30 October 2018) content will only be added to this website in [Close](#) line with the [caretaker conventions](#).

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Learning Languages For Little Victorians At Kinder

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More than 5,000 little Victorians will start learning a new language while at kinder so they can squeeze the most out of the early learning years, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos and Member for Oakleigh Steve Dimopoulos today visited Oakleigh Grammar Early Learning Centre to announce it will be funded through the Early Childhood Language Program to run a fully bilingual Greek kindergarten program from 2019.

As part of this initiative, 150 kindergartens will offer weekly sessions in one of 15 languages and a further 10 have been selected to run a bilingual program, where up to half of the kinder program would be offered in another language.

Kindergartens across Victoria will run weekly sessions in a range of languages including Mandarin, Arabic, Punjabi, Italian, Japanese, French, Greek, Hebrew and Spanish.

This program is expected to reach more than 5,000 children across 160 kindergartens – a third of which are located in regional Victoria. Among these are 29 kindergartens which will offer Aboriginal languages and 27 that will offer Auslan.

The \$17.9 million Early Childhood Language Program will provide additional staff to teach children a new language in partnership with existing staff – at no cost to parents or early childhood services.

Learning languages at a young age is shown to have benefits such as increased reading and writing skills, cognitive flexibility, strengthened brain development and improved problem-solving skills.



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five hours of subsidised three-year-old kinder by 2022, progressively scaled up to 15 hours per week over the next decade.

As part of Labor's plan, some \$1.68 billion will go towards building 785 new kinders and expanding 170 more to accommodate this reform, which will be the largest social, economic and educational reform ever undertaken in early childhood learning in Victoria's history.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos

"We know that learning another language has great rewards – it's fun, it improves brain function and actually helps kids learn English better."

"This Australian-first initiative is going to put little Victorians at the front of the pack and ready for school."

Quote attributable to Member for Oakleigh Steve Dimopoulos

"From 'yiasas' to 'ni hao' – we're giving our children the chance to be immersed in the wonderful languages of the world and it's terrific to see that Oakleigh kids will be among the first to benefit from this amazing program."

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