DRAFT Languages Action Plan – Actions Feedback	ACT Bilingual Education Alliance Comments/feedback
Workforce Planning Outcome: Recruitment and retention to ensure a sustainable workforce in the whole of the ACT	
<u>Resource Development:</u> *To establish and maintain a central pool of digital teaching resources that are language specific, and tools that are universal for language teaching.*	• Ensure full use made of language specific resources shared by language education providers outside mainstream school sectors. For e.g. Canberra Academy of Languages (CAL) https://languages.org.au/index.htm and Sydney Institute of Community Languages Education (SICLE) http://openlanguage.org.au/
<u>Scholarships program:</u> *To provide opportunities for teachers wishing to upskill to become language teachers, and for existing language teachers to maintain and improve their own language skills. This is part of the Directorate's existing Scholarships program as Languages is an area that is highlighted as having a teacher shortage.*	• As noted in the Discussion Paper (3.3), language teachers in the community language sector and international teachers are often challenged by the English language proficiency requirements of teacher registration. Consideration should therefore be given to scholarships for IELTS preparation or assistance with the fees for taking the test. • A large scale study by SICLE (*The Skills Question* file:///C:/Users/langu/Downloads/skills_in_question.pdf) found that nearly 80% of community language school (CLS) teachers expressed the wish to become accredited teachers in Australia – most as language teachers at primary or secondary level but a significant number in science and maths – other areas of teacher shortage. 44.3% of the CLS teachers had majors in education, and the most common barriers to gaining accreditation were financial, family responsibilities and levels of English language proficiency.
<u>Professional Development:</u> *To maximise professional development networks for language teachers by ensuring they are targeted to specific languages and specific to language teaching pedagogy.*	• The need for language specific PD has been made many times. The small number of teachers for individual languages in the ACT may be a challenge, underlining the need for cross-sectoral and other partnerships e.g. with initial teacher ed course providers, the community language sector and CAL. • Some PD could also be run in the target language or a mixture of the language and English. This would help teachers maintain, share and improve their language skills. • Collaboration with SICLE could be very fruitful. They have developed an extensive program of PD for a wide range of languages. • The ACT CLS Association has been in touch with the Director of SICLE, Ken Cruickshank, about PD possibilities. This follows the ACT government's agreement to engage with SICLE and investigate other potential opportunities with CIT to strengthen support for teacher PD in response to Recommendation 5 of the 'Independent Review of Investment in ACT Community Language Schools' – see https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dhK_ImimQSXTh-HU6GlvVRcYExWNpNkv/view
<u>Centralised advice to schools regarding language provision and recruitment:</u> *To provide a service from within the Education Directorate to advise and support schools in their choice of language programs. This includes enabling communication between language teacher networks, principals and the Directorates People and Performance team.*	• Communication within teacher networks seems to work effectively at present without another layer of organisation added to it. • The Education Directorate's best interests might be best served by supporting teacher development and resources development.

Survey of language teachers and potential language teaching workforce: *To conduct a survey of our teaching workforce to identify language teaching staff and their skillsets.*	• This could be coupled with a survey of teachers in the CLS and other local language education providers to identify potential teachers for mainstream schools and assess PD and scholarship requirements.
Mentorship program: *To establish a mentorship program and support network specifically for new language teachers to encourage retention and demonstrate career pathways.*	• Excellent idea. • It is important to ensure that all early year teachers receive a reduced teaching load to enable them to develop with support and working with mentors in early years.
Workforce Plan: *To develop a workforce plan for language teachers that builds on the Education Directorate's existing workforce strategy.*	• Teacher language competency, and a system for measuring it is important. • Language testing of teachers (standard in Queensland) would help create an objective external measure of teacher standard. When teachers enter schools in a preservice capacity, it is possible to support their development in pedagogy, but not in language.
Internship program: *To establish an internship program for incoming and pre-service language teachers.*	• This is an excellent idea. The added workload on teachers should also be recognised.
Other feedback on Workforce Planning	• As you may know, the ACT government has announced extra funding over the next four years in response to recommendations made in the 2021 Independent Review of Investment in ACT Community Language Schools. Some of this funding will go towards planning for a Teacher Professional Development Program for CLS teachers. • It might be useful for the Education Directorate to liaise with the Office of Multicultural Affairs about this if they have nor already done so. • Explore alternative paths to accreditation and simplify the registration process. We are aware of a number of teachers with overseas degrees who are not only native speakers but may also have degrees IN language teaching AND education. Many do not want to follow a process they consider excessive and irrelevant (e.g. English tests, which they have to take and pay for even if they are working professionally in English or even publish in English!). • Formal recognition of qualifications and experience would also help retain teachers in community language schools, encourage their further professional development, and attract and encourage kids to continue learning languages as they would be more willing to participate in accredited courses.
Pedagogy/Delivery Models Outcome: The ACT has language education programs with engaging pedagogies and innovative delivery model options	
Delivery model alternatives: *To explore alternative delivery models for language education programs that will provide flexible and innovative solutions for students wishing to undertake a pathway for proficiency option.*	• The Canberra Academy of Languages would be an excellent model to explore here. It has proved it can work and, while concentrating on senior secondary, is a good example of what can be done.

For example: a Hub model to offer languages not available in Priority Enrolment Area Schools Or *A line coverage model, where language teachers who have additional teaching capacity in their teaching loads may be able to deliver a remote face-to-face model across multiple schools. This means primarily teaching online in a conference style.*	
Gifted and Talented program: *Exploration of possibility of establishing a gifted and talented languages program, where students of any age are able to participate in an advanced languages program, studying languages at an advanced or native speaker proficiency level.*	• This would presumably have to be run mainly outside of normal school hours and could open up the possibility of offering more or all of the 16 languages currently offered in the Australian curriculum. • This would have implications for Workforce planning. The possibilities of alternative methods of recognising teacher qualifications - as is the case in the Victorian School of Languages - may need to be canvassed with the ACT TQI.
Other feedback on **Pedagogy/Delivery Models**	
Languages Education Curriculum, Policy and Strategy Outcome: Complete delivery of languages as one of the eight learning areas	

Languages in ACT Public Schools Discussion Paper: *To release a publication to aid consultation outlining the current status in Languages Education Programs in ACT Public Schools.*	• The discussion paper needs updating to reflect the current languages education scene in the ACT.
	• In addition to Embassies and higher education, the increasingly multilingual nature of the population should be acknowledged as a valuable resource – for language teaching, learning and education more broadly.
	• One the four foundations of the *Future of Education Strategy*' is to 'place students at the centre of their learning'. ABS 2021 census results indicate that at least 1 in 4 children in ACT schools actively speak or passively understand a language other than English at home.
	• Just as home languages are seen as a valuable resource by teachers of EALD, they can be acknowledged and drawn on when learning other additional languages. This can have multiple benefits, for e.g. it can:
	  ➢ increase interest in learning languages (see 2021 Cambridge study https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/cultivating-multilingual-identities-in-schools-could-help-reverse-national-crisis-in-language?utm_source=miragenews&utm_medium=miragenews&utm_campaign=news)
	  ➢ assist the development of intercultural understanding, a capability that is said to be core to the Australian Curriculum: Languages
	  ➢ validate the skills and identity of all students, thus assisting other foundations of the *Future of Education Strategy* that include meeting the needs of all students and focusing on equity

Centralised authority languages: *To ensure centralised approval for language choice by schools, in consultation with school communities to*	• Even centralised decisions would have limitations. To maximise possibilities for students to pursue study of their chosen language or languages this would need to be combined with a

ensure consistency in language programs and maximise language pathway opportunities	more flexible approach with pathway opportunities outside the mainstream system or through a Hub model.
Pathways for Proficiency Options: *To provide a pathway for a proficiency option in high school and college settings to facilitate consistency in language provision across school years.*	• As above, to maximise possibilities for students to gain proficiency in their chosen language or languages, government schools and colleges would need to recognise and partner with external pathway opportunities.
Exploration of introduction of 16 Languages: *To expand the language offerings to all of the sixteen languages currently offered under the Australian Curriculum: Arabic, Auslan, Chinese, Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages, Framework for Classical Languages, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese.*	• It may be better for schools to concentrate on a certain number of languages which the system knows it can staff adequately and develop a Hub model and/or build on and further support language learning options already in the community to assist them to provide quality language programs for ACT students.
Language programs in every school: *To ensure all ACT Public schools to have a language program.*	• All ACT Public schools should have a language program, preferably starting at kindergarten level. Innovative ways could be explored to ensure fluent speakers of the language are employed to teach or assist with teaching these languages
Review of Language Minutes: *To review and potentially remove the minutes mandated in the Curriculum Requirements Policy and Procedures to ensure that languages is delivered as one of the eight learning areas under the Australian Curriculum.*	• If this resulted in reduced time on task this would reinforce the idea that languages are not a serious part of a school's academic program
Languages Strategy *To produce a long-term viewed Languages Strategy to ensure the consistent, innovative and sustainable delivery of languages in ACT Public Schools.*	• An effective Languages Strategy should acknowledge the limitations of ACT public schools working in isolation to provide an extensive, consistent, innovative and sustainable languages program. A hub model and/or earmarked dedicated funding to allow schools to build partnerships with community groups and other organisations that provide language education programs outside the mainstream system would do much to ensure that Canberra becomes one of the best cities in which to learn an additional language – the vision espoused in the opening sentence of the Executive Summary of the Discussion Paper
Uptake of Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) *To roll out ELLA Language learning apps in ACT Public Primary Schools, pending the completion of the ELLA trial, schools utlilise the ELLA program for languages F-2.*	• This is an excellent program that arouses interest in languages – among children and teachers, who do not need to know the language/s in the apps. However, the benefits are limited if there are no pathways for students to continue their language learning journey after year 2.
Review of Action Plan *To review and revise actions needed to be undertaken for the ACT Language Education Action Plan.*	• The plan probably needs to be over a longer time period before it is reviewed. We are already at the end of 2022.
Other feedback on Language Education, Curriculum and Policy	• One observation in the Discussion Paper (3.1) not picked up in the draft action plan is the lack of formal recognition of the learning of languages outside the ACT public school sector, for example in CL schools. These languages can be current priority languages or a range of other languages.

	- Developing a formal recognition process for this language learning would do much to show the value of languages education and promote language learning. It could also help forge partnerships of great benefit for all sides. - The Education Directorate could also work more closely with the Multicultural portfolio to broaden the scope of the response to Recommendation 1 of the *2021 Independent Review of Investment in ACT Community Language Schools* – "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. The ACT government has agreed to consider this in the development of the Multicultural Recognition Act (see https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dhK_ImimQSXTh-HU6GlvVRcYExWNpNkv/view) - A more holistic view of languages education - going beyond one learning area in the curriculum – could also help the ACT government meet the overall goal of its Future of Education strategy "to support and deliver excellence and equity in educational outcomes for each and every child and young person".
Partnerships Outcome: Successful partnerships within the community to enhance Languages Education programs	
Embassies: *To continue, maintain and develop further relationships, memorandum of understanding and language teaching supports with our Embassy community in the ACT.*	-
Community Language Schools *To forge stronger connections with the Community Language Schools in Canberra, exploring potential ways to include and incorporate more community languages into schools.*	- Many primary schools in NSW actually teach community languages in the schools. Is this feasible for the ACT? - You do not actually have to teach the language though. By routinely acknowledging and drawing on all the languages that children bring with them to school, teachers can incorporate them into the general curriculum as well as a school's language programs, including of course, English. - As noted above, developing a formal recognition process for language learning outside the school can also do much to show the value of skills in additional languages other than English.
Universities *To build on existing relationships with universities to promote the training of teachers in the area of languages*	-
International teachers *To work with the Teacher Quality Institute to explore options for international teachers looking to teach in the ACT.*	- We suggest the development of a pathway approach to full recognition of qualifications, with a focus on pedagogy for Australian school settings.
Other feedback on **Partnerships**	- Other organisations with which partnerships should be made include the Canberra Academy of Languages and community groups such the ACT Bilingual Alliance and language specific groups such as the Spielwelt German Parents Association and ACT Hispanic P&C