**[Katerina Poropat]** Good afternoon and welcome to today's webinar Introducing the Victorian Curriculum F–10: Victorian Aboriginal Languages. My name is Katerina Poropat and I am the Project Manager in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Unit here at the VCAA.

It's my great pleasure to introduce you to the Curriculum Manager for Aboriginal languages, Sarah Glatz, who will be leading our presentation today. We are also joined by Vaso Elefsiniotis, from the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association which many of you will know as VAEAI. I would like to thank Alicia Farrell also from the Victorian Curriculum F–10 Unit who has done a lot of the work behind the scenes to make this webinar possible today.

So before we begin, we will start with an Acknowledgement of Country. I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the many lands across Victoria on which each of you are living, learning, and working from today. For myself and those of us in Metropolitan Melbourne Area, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Kulin Nations. When acknowledging Country, we recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' spiritual and cultural connection to Country and acknowledge their continued care of the lands and waterways over generations, while celebrating the continuation of a living culture that has a unique role in this region. I would like to pay my respects to Elders past, present, and emerging for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation, and hope they will walk with us on our journey.

So before we get into our presentation, I'll briefly go over some housekeeping. Please note that the chat function is only being used to share relevant information and links from the VCAA. You will notice that a Q&A box has been set up. So please use this to put your questions and comments in as this will help us ensure all your queries are attended to, and we do not miss any of your questions. When you use the Q&A box please make sure you select 'All presenters' so that all panelists can see your questions as they come in.

We will answer these in a couple of ways. Firstly, we may type a response directly into the Q&A box which all participants will be able to view, or we will have a dedicated Q&A session at the end of the presentation where Sarah and Vaso will address these queries. A number of questions also came through during the registration process, and these will be addressed during the presentation or at the Q&A session.

The second part of our housekeeping is to let everyone know that this session is being recorded. A copy of both the recording and the PowerPoint plus a transcript, will be loaded onto the VCAA's F–10 resources webpages under the Professional Learning section. A copy of the recording and PowerPoint will also be emailed to participants in the coming days.

So without further ado, Sarah, I'll throw over to you to commence our presentation today.

**[Sarah Glatz]** Great, thanks, Kat. I'd also like to acknowledge the First Nations people with us today, particularly Victorian Aboriginal Elders, teachers, and language speakers. You've worked so hard in reclaiming your language and I'm really grateful to you for sharing your knowledge and culture with us. And I want to thank you for allowing us to walk with you on this journey. I think today we've got a large range of people attending. Some are experts in Victorian Aboriginal Languages. Others are experienced in curriculum delivery and many are just starting out or are curious to learn more. This particular webinar is really focusing on those who are new to teaching Victorian Aboriginal Languages in schools, so, welcome.

Today is about giving you an introduction to the curriculum and there's a lot to cover quite quickly. So I'd encourage you to go back and look at the PowerPoint and explore the different aspects and references when you get a chance.

So learning a Victorian Aboriginal Language which I sometimes refer to as VAL for short, provides many opportunities, as well as some challenges. Due to the effects of colonisation and language suppression, all 44 Victorian languages are revival languages. And so there aren't fluent speakers. Often Communities are only just learning their language themselves and it may take time before they're ready to have their language taught in schools. When a VAL school program is approved and happening in partnership with the local Community, we know that Koorie students and other Indigenous students' self-esteem and confidence grows. The quotes from Geraldine Atkinson and Richard Kennedy here are taken from some great interviews on our VCAA resources site that also reinforced what learning a language does in the words of some Victorian Aboriginal Language speakers and elders.

But we also know that for all students this is a really enriching experience. These are the original languages of Australia and it gives you a window into Aboriginal culture and understanding their unique ways of knowing, doing, and being in a way that only learning a language can. Also protocols are really important in this case, particularly when you start and run a Victorian Aboriginal Languages program, they really give you some important guidance both for engaging with Community and for using language. And Vaso is going to speak a bit more about that at the end, when she does her presentation.

So today we're going to look at the Victorian Curriculum F–10 for Victorian Aboriginal Languages. It's been in place since 2016 and it's closely based on the Australian Curriculum's Revival Pathway. There are three pathways and the revival one is the only one that's appropriate in Victoria. In Victoria, you may know we also have a VCE study, Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation, which is currently being reviewed, including that mouthful of a title! And should be published before the end of the year.

So there are actually two VCAA websites that you need at your fingertips. You know you're on the dedicated curriculum site when you see the logo and wording that's over here on the left. On the right, the logo and wording show the main VCAA resources site. We'll begin by looking at the aims and structure of the VAL curriculum, then we'll take a look at the actual curriculum documents, where to find them and how to use them. And finally, I'll take you through some of the support resources available for planning, teaching, and assessment. And I'll briefly showcase our sample units of work then.

So the aims of Victorian Aboriginal Languages are pretty similar to most of the language aims with communication and developing intercultural capabilities. They both focus on language and culture. Language can, you know, communication can include sign language and gestures as well as words. But it also develops the intercultural skills and understandings, which build the capability to engage with people and worldviews that are different from theirs which is important in languages. But then, the last aim is specific to Victorian Aboriginal Languages. As I mentioned before, all of the 44 Aboriginal languages in Victoria are revival languages. And this means that students will also be involved in learning linguistic techniques to help Community in rebuilding their language.

Then if we move on to look at the structure, as you know, the Victorian Curriculum sets out what students are expected to learn. For Victorian Aboriginal Languages, there's only one F–10 sequence. Some of the languages have more than one. It's designed, as you can see, with the arrows as a continuum of learning in three bands. So there's an F-2 band a 3-6 and a 7-10. And it's assumed, for example, when you start the 3-6 level, that students will bring with them, the learning that comes at the end of Level 2 of the end of the F-2 band.

When you look at it, there are two what they call strands, Communicating and Understanding. And the sub-strands under each of those are here in the boxes. You'll notice again, I've highlighted in yellow the three that are only in Victorian Aboriginal Languages. They're not in the other languages. So that focus then is really on identity, it's on language awareness, and it's also on the role of language building.

So where do you find the curriculum documentation? Well, if you do land on our website, you look for Victorian Curriculum F–10, then go on Languages, then on the Victorian Aboriginal Languages. And that's all. As you can see in the highlight, that's the Victorian Curriculum. That was the logo that was on the left of that earlier slide. And when you get onto that, you'll see that there are two tabs, Introduction and Curriculum. So this is what the page looks like when you land on it. There's a bit to take in. So if you're not too familiar with it, I hope this will help you understand what's included and the way it's set out.

So, on this page, you'll see the F–10 sequence divided into its three bands. At the top left, there's the 'Introduction' tab. And under that, you'll find not only the rationale and aims, and some more information on the structure and on learning in Victorian Aboriginal Languages, there's also a scope and sequence which we'll see in a moment, more resources and a glossary, which can be really helpful. But the actual curriculum documents itself, that's under the red highlighted or circled tab 'Curriculum'.

So let's hit 'Curriculum' and have a look. Up the top left (a lot of people miss this, even teachers who've been using the curriculum for a while), there are these really handy buttons that filter the levels and strands. And also the 'View' ones. I'll take you through what that means, but basically this little tiny, where you see the red three 'View' choices, the button on the left gives you the view you've got now, which is F-2, followed by 3-6, followed by 7-10, and the middle one puts them all next to each other, so you can see across the bands at the same time.

If you move down, you'll see the band description. So there's a little bit of a description at the beginning of each of the bands about what is expected and what will be covered in that. Then you move down, you can see the two strands, Communicating and Understanding, and you can see whichever sub-strands are being looked at.

Then underneath that you can see in blue where the content descriptions are. There's a tiny little link that you can see there, probably barely, in grey, but it's actually a hyperlink, which is really clever because it takes you straight off to that content description with elaborations. I'll talk about that in a moment as well. And then right at the bottom, you'll find the achievement standard.

So I've mentioned now content descriptions and achievement standards. Some of you will really know this well and others won't. So our content descriptions really describe what's to be taught and what students are expected learn. We've seen that they're organised in strands and sub-strands, and they include knowledge and understanding and skills that students will get during this course. They're the ones on the left where you can see 'Communicating - Socialising' and you've got the yellow, green, and blue highlights. If you look across to the achievement standard, that really is what the students are expected to understand and to be able to show you that they can do. And they are highlighted, so that shows you that they match really quite closely in with the content descriptions. It's really important to read those together because they really belong together.

So I said I'd show you the 'Elaboration' view. You can see that little red circle there. It's one that people forget but it's quite handy, especially when you're starting because it gives you ideas for activities that you can do with students. There's lots and lots of ideas that are included there. They're more general, but it will just give you a bit of an idea. And it's really important, a lot of people don't know that these elaborations, even teachers who've been doing it for a while, they're optional. You never assess against them. They're just ideas. It's not something that you have to tick off you've done all of these. They're just a way of giving you ideas about how you might teach the content and cover the curriculum.

So let's move on now to planning. When we're planning the curriculum, we're actually planning to try and help us teach and students learn as effectively as possible. That's pretty basic. But to do that, we often forget that curriculum and assessment go hand in hand. We use the content descriptions to decide what to teach the students, but we need to be sure at the end really of every lesson and certainly at the end of every unit how well students have learned 'the what', so we can build on that next lesson or go back and help them with their knowledge and skills, maybe take a different approach to it and reinforce it so that we've made sure that they have learned it. And that's, I guess what we talk about when we talk about formative assessment. So, the achievement standards can help you focus both for getting those quick sort of daily or weekly or monthly snapshots, but also for larger assessment tasks.

And then as for 'the how', that's really a matter for schools, it's not for the VCAA. And it's also part of teacher training but I'd just like to make one quick comment about Aboriginal pedagogy, Aboriginal approaches to teaching. Indigenous ways of teaching are more holistic generally. And they actually vary between the regions and even language groups. Whatever the case, there's probably a lot of storytelling that's traditionally involved and might be something you think of incorporating into your classroom, or if you're not comfortable with that, get an elder or someone who is a good storyteller out of Community to come and help you with that.

You might've seen this model on the right, the eight Aboriginal ways of learning, which Tyson Yunkaporta helped developed in New South Wales. And it's now available under that link you see there. This is a model, and it may or may not be helpful, but whatever the case is, if you're not from your local Aboriginal community yourself, talk to them to find out their preferred way of teaching, because you'll learn, it will make your teaching possibly a lot richer as a result of doing that. And it is different to the traditional, what used to be called LOTE teaching, language teaching methodology.

The VCAA provides three types of curriculum planning guidance and these are available at various locations. The simplest is via that right-hand link that I showed you earlier on our resources site. They're all in one place there but the whole school curriculum planning advice is also available at the link given here. And you probably know it operates at four levels. So it operates at school level and your curriculum area which here is Victorian Aboriginal Languages, and at the year level, and then at the unit lesson level. It's worth having a look at as well if you're starting out. And for each learning area, the VCAA provides curriculum mapping templates and a scope and sequence for each of the three bands.

This just helps you with your planning and organisation and makes things a little bit easier at the beginning.

So just to show you the curriculum mapping document if you're not familiar with it, this explicitly covers all of those content descriptions. You can see that little bit in blue, that's the hyperlink that takes you through to this specific one. And it's also got this handy assessment chart at the bottom where you can match your assessment to the achievement standards. So you know you're sticking on track which makes reporting really easy at the end.

And this is the scope and sequence document. I'm sorry it's so tiny but it's really great because you can download it as an A3 and we don't print out much anymore because this is often quite handy to have printed out in one of those big A3 folders. So you can just flip through because it gives you everything at a glance. And as you can see it, it compares the levels. So you can see the students building, for example, in socialising at the top, there's their interactive skills. And it will show you how it moves from when they're first starting out to, in the next level between 3 and 6. And then as they move into high school into Year 7 to 10.

So, now we'll move over to the other website which is where our main support resources are. And I'll take you through how to get there but then I think I'll encourage you to bookmark it so that you don't have to do this again. So again, if you go on the VCAA website at the link up here and select F–10 curriculum, you'll then be taken to this page. There are three elements here on the bottom left. Click on 'Help me find curriculum area resources'. Then, you'll get to this with all the curriculum areas, select Languages, and then under Languages, there's this little pop-up that's on the right. And you have to go right down to the bottom because V for Victorian Aboriginal Languages and click on that. When you're there, that's when I'd definitely bookmark it so you can go straight into it.

A little word of, well not warning, but we're in the middle of updating this site for Victorian Aboriginal Languages. We're nearly finished. So hopefully in the next couple of weeks it will be up and active. It's not in its usual state at the moment but it's going to be very exciting when we manage to launch that. And I'd really encourage you in a couple of weeks to have a look at this link because it's not very exciting at the moment but it will be full of all sorts of interesting things. And I think hopefully pretty easy to navigate to get to what you actually want to learn.

So when you see this banner, you know you've arrived at the Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum support pages. The guidance has been developed in collaboration with our key partners, VAEAI, where Vaso works, and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages which you might know as VACL. And we hope it will be helpful to people wishing to introduce a Victorian Aboriginal Language program into a school setting. In all learning areas, you can see the boxes here, we provide the planning resources, teaching resources and assessment resources.

We've already had a look at the planning resources in that black box. What is separate to and different and I think really helpful hopefully for Victorian Aboriginal Languages, is this 'Getting started' button. And once you select that, you'll be given three options, 'Before you start', 'Getting set up', and 'Making it happen' And when you're starting a program you can dip in and out of these as you need to. And there's some really helpful information that makes up I guess, 10 steps to getting started with a language program. Again, Vaso and I, and Aunty Fay from VACL have talked a lot about this as have many people in the past who originally came up with this concept.

There's a couple I'd like to highlight. The Community leaders' interviews, as I said before, are excellent. They deal with eight really commonly asked questions about teaching Victorian Aboriginal Languages. And there are seven leaders, two of whom have passed away. So there's a little warning just in case you need to be careful about that. There will be obviously images and words of people who have passed away. But they're really worth watching. So I'd encourage you to get on and have a look at them.

And then the other one, I haven't highlighted it under getting set up, is the language team. Because all Victorian Aboriginal Languages are revival languages, teaching them requires a broader skillset than general language teaching which is pretty broad in itself. And there are very few resources available for teaching Victorian Aboriginal Languages. And we've found that schools with successful programs generally have a language team, at least in the first year or two.

The preference of all Communities that I know of is to have an Aboriginal person teaching, but there are a few non-Indigenous teachers who have strong relationships with and support from their local Aboriginal community, who've been doing this for a while but really they are very closely linked to Community. Having a language team, I guess, makes sure you have experts from all the skill areas that you need. From local Aboriginal language and culture, linguistics, and from language teaching, and as well as having the support for creating appropriate resources for your local language to be used in a classroom which is different to being used in Community. So that's the planning resources.

And then we move on to the teaching resources. Here we've got, the first button takes you to our sample units of work. I'll talk about them a bit more in just a moment. The middle one has a lot of information, really a wealth of information, about Aboriginal languages particularly in Victoria. For example, Fundamentals of Victorian Aboriginal Languages... Sorry, I've highlighted the wrong thing there. Fundamentals of Victorian Aboriginal Languages includes guidance on pronunciation and spelling, grammar, word formation, dictionaries, and sign language. Before you use any information, we strongly suggest that you consult with your local Aboriginal language speakers to make sure it is suitable to use in the classroom.

And then if you look on the external links tab on the right, it gives you a sample of some of the many links that are available to help in getting you started. So, when you look at the sample units of work, you'll see these. Some of you who've been teaching for a while will be familiar with these sample units of work which are aligned to the content descriptions and the achievement standards in the curriculum. But they're really worthwhile looking at because of the content, because they've been based on culturally appropriate themes. And there are lots of links in them to further information.

And then more recently we've published a series, "Getting Started" units. These have been written with input from Aboriginal teachers and, there are three units. I guess, what you need or not. They're designed to really support you as you get started. Particularly people who are maybe not from the Country, either the non-Indigenous or Aboriginal people from other Country, that will give you a really good introduction to teaching a Victorian Aboriginal Language and the things that you need to be aware of. Community, Country, and Languages is a different way of starting to starting a normal language course. The greetings and routines are very specific in Aboriginal languages. There are lots of things that you need extra language for, and you need to think about. And the sounds and spelling also can be tricky given the colonial background and so many different people from different language backgrounds, noting down how things were spelled. There can be a hundred spellings of someone's language.

So, this gives you a bit of guidance as to how to deal with that. But we're really excited about those units. They not only give you those content descriptions and achievement standards, but I think they have lots of games and songs and ideas for making your classroom, as you start out on this journey, a really lively, exciting place.

Then we move on to assessment. And often we hear that word and think of high stakes tests for marks but assessment is really just to enable teachers and students to know if the students are gaining those skills and knowledge and understanding that we want them to have. Our curriculum and assessment is set up as a continuum as we saw before. And if you check your students' skills and knowledge and understanding really regularly and just keep a little record of that, it will give everyone a good idea of students' growth along that continuum. So we saw earlier that the achievement standard is closely linked to the content descriptions. Remember, I'd highlighted it to show how it linked in. So if you plan your teaching around those content descriptions, then checking what students know and can do should pretty naturally flow out and match the achievement standard.

I've just put a little snapshot of the, I guess, actions, the verbs that are often expected in Victorian Aboriginal Languages, right across from F–10, obviously the more complex higher order thinking skills, things like translate and analyse are often more in the 7-10 area but we find that F-2 students can do that and they certainly can reflect at the end of every lesson, we encourage a little bit of time for that because there are often a lot of things that are quite different. In terms of ideas for assessment, in the new three "Getting Started" units, which we've just mentioned, we've put in a little section that you may find helpful. It starts off obviously with a brief pre-assessment. That's the way all good teachers should start. We often forget to do it but really just checking in before you start and launch into everything. What the students know, you never know who may be connected into Community or may have had an experience that links in. So it's worth checking. And then obviously as you go through the unit, you can do that ongoing assessment and maybe keep a note of it.

And we've provided a table here. On the right-hand side in yellow is actually extracts from the achievement standard that just match into this particular learning activity in the sample unit. So you won't cover everything in every unit but what we've done is had a little look at what would this look like starting out which I guess if you started off in Prep, in Foundation, this is roughly what you'd be expecting a student to do to look like that first achievement standard. And then as they progress along, that's sort of what's in the middle column. So students, it may be Level 1, but as you know there's a big discrepancy in the classroom. So, this helps you differentiate your assessment. And it can also provide a really handy little tool for assessing whether, for example, the students at the end of Level 2, which would normally be the end of Year 2, actually have acquired those skills, do have that knowledge, and they're able to show you that. And if they don't, it gives you the chance to go back and work out how to help them maybe on an individual basis and maybe as a small group, or maybe it shows you that the whole class hasn't understood. So beyond our website, support comes through the F–10 Curriculum Update which you can subscribe to on our professional learning page. The hyperlink is there at the bottom, that's the red button.

I'd also really like to encourage you to look at our Past Professional Learning materials, that's circled in yellow on the top right. Last year in September, Zeta Wilson led a fantastic series on incorporating Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum which Vaso was involved in throughout. And there were webinars from other learning areas and also one dedicated to Victorian Aboriginal Languages which Vaso, Aunty Fay Muir from VACL, and I presented in. And all those webinars are still available via the 'Past Professional Learning' button. They're really great. So, I would strongly encourage you to have a look at them. You can also subscribe to the VCAA Bulletin, you'll see circled there, the F–10 in red, that's the relevant part, when you get the Bulletin to have a look at if you don't know that already. And these are just some contact details, which we'll come back to in the end as well. I'm now going to pass to Vaso and she can introduce herself a bit more and show some of the work she's doing. Thank you.

**[Vaso Elefsiniotis]** Thank you, Sarah. Hello and welcome to our webinar, late afternoon, and end of the week. So I really appreciate you guys coming together for this quick talk and recording around Aboriginal languages in education settings, really. And in particular the curriculum work that's happened. So, I'm only going to talk for a few minutes really to explain the background. I should explain in a moment who I am. My name is Vaso Elefsiniotis. I work at VAEAI, Victorian Aboriginal Education Association. I have been working with VAEAI for 11 years, this month, which is pretty terrific and support Aboriginal language programs in early years settings, schools, and TAFE area. I live and work on Wurundjeri country, so I'd like to acknowledge that. And also in the audience work with closely others, I can see Brett West, hello Brett, and Marjorie who has been involved in this sort of work for longer, much longer than me and in these meetings. So I'm really glad to hear that you guys are involved in this webinar as well.

So, my slide simply says 'Wurrung' language, because we're talking about language today. Not sure who was going to be in the audience so I just wanted to highlight that Wurrung is the word for lips and mouth and therefore language in the Kulin languages. And therefore you might have heard of language group names, Country names, such as Boon wurrung, and Woiwurrung, and Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung... That all has to do with the word for language. Oh, I've got power over the slides. So I will go to the next slide.

Now policy background, what governs our work? And this work began a lot before the Marrung Aboriginal Education Strategy that we have, 2016-26, where we have a... And if you don't know this strategy, it's really worth knowing. Everyone in education should know it as far as we're concerned. But there is one guiding action, and that's what guides the work that I do, the work that in this space that Sarah's doing, the work that Brett is doing and others. So, there is an action in this strategy about increasing the number of Koorie language programs in Victorian kindergartens and schools by supporting Community efforts at language learning through working with the partners. And Sarah mentioned the partners briefly. So the partners in this with the Education Department is VAEAI, Victorian Aboriginal Education Association, VACL, the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, and behind it all is the VCAA, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. So we take this partnership very, very seriously and we have been working together for many years. But this speaks to the three areas where this particular effort and investment is going into.

So, we don't have much time to talk about this today, but just very, very briefly for your interest and information, there are 18 kindergartens across Victoria funded at the moment. Victoria is the only state that funded languages in early years. And there's about 150 kindergartens across Victoria teaching language in a four year program. So, there are about 18 in the early years. We have around between 14 and 20 schools reporting in Victoria about having, teaching Aboriginal languages or having sessions. So we tend to talk about more formal programs that are being guided in particular by curriculum, or it could be about the time allocated versus... And there's no difference, it just depends where you are with this stage. And so there's language education happening on various levels. I think that's that. And in the background, we have a teacher association that's starting because these efforts and this work, same thing, has been growing, we are working towards having a formal Victorian Aboriginal Language Teachers' Association. And there's been talk about this for years. There are over 2000 students in Victoria. I should've had the number quite ready. There are over 2000 students in Victoria reported to be learning an Aboriginal language. So, given that, we have a teacher association information it's not official yet. We have an online Facebook group, 46 members within the broader network, and 35 members in the Facebook group. We've been meeting online. COVID helped with this, not helped with this, but it was the driver, I guess for all this online activity like we're doing now. And we meet monthly on the first Friday of every month. Really good discussions around things like language attitudes in Community, ideas for teaching, plans for student teacher placements.

I don't think I mentioned when I was talking about early years in schools, the other part of that action was about investing in Community training. And this is where we've been running a pilot for the last two years, Certificate III in Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language, and Certificate IV in Teaching an Endangered Aboriginal Language. And those students are about to graduate at the end of semester. They're just doing their final teacher placements at the moment.

So this teacher's association is being a support group in the background to help facilitate placements and ideas and things for sharing. Just to give an example. So, for example, through the Facebook group back in February was International Mother Day Language and the teacher association with, in partnership with First Languages Australia, which is a peak organisation, and VAEAI launched an Indigenous languages meme challenge to flood social media with, in this case, Australian Aboriginal Languages. So, we have those sort of things going in the background.

So, I think we've got questions coming up. And so we didn't know whether we were to talk about protocols or we'll bring these up in the chats, but I did want to just mention very much that around, it's critical and Sarah has shown the website where all this information is and there's a review of the website where that information is being improved. In a nutshell, there are protocols in Victoria about, around Community protocols, around teaching language in education settings, like kindergartens and schools. And we talk about taking a three-pronged approach.

So, if the school wants to start a language program or a kindergarten wants to start a language program, it is very much based on the relationship that you have with Traditional Owners and local Koorie community members because you can't do it alone, and you need the backup and you need the support. And more importantly, you need permissions and endorsement. It's really fundamental to understand that Australian Aboriginal languages belong to language-speaking Communities in the same way as traditional songs, dances, sacred sites, stories ... language belongs in that category. So, there are respect, protocols, courtesies around these that are in place and have been in place for a long time. So the three-pronged approach I was talking about if you were, for example, a primary school in a region you need your school council approval in the first place, you need local Community approval. And we encourage that you do that through your Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, LAECG, and there's information about that on VAEAI's website. In areas where there're aren't LAECG, VAEAI can help facilitate.

And the other, and the most important, is permissions from Traditional Owners. So, they're the protocols in a nutshell, three-pronged approach. And there's much more information on that through the website, but also through our organisations. So if you have any questions around these you can always approach the VCAA but especially you can also approach VAEAI. You can also approach the Department, in particular the Koorie Outcomes Division. And in the school space essentially and really, really importantly, talk to your Koorie Education Workforce, your KESOs and your Koorie Education Coordinators to help guide you through that.

**[Sarah Glatz]** Thanks Vaso. Kat, I'm not sure. I can't see a lot of questions there. So, did you want me to address a couple of things that came up before or have I missed the questions?

**[Katerina Poropat]** No. So no questions have come through the Q&A chat function as yet. So we do invite, if anyone does have any questions please put them in the Q&A chat box now and we can address them. But like we mentioned, at the start of the session, there were a couple that came in through the registration process. So I'll throw over now to Sarah and Vaso to address those now.

**[Sarah Glatz]** Thanks very much. One of the questions that did come up was how to assess against the achievement standard when you only have an hour a week, or even possibly an hour a fortnight. And many people will know that 150 minutes is what's recommended here in Victoria for languages, 120 is sort of what ACARA has been recommending as a national level. And the reality is even for other languages it's not just Victorian Aboriginal Languages, that doesn't happen through all sorts of different reasons. I think the most important thing is to go back to what I showed before on the slide about achievement standard with the table, and just look at it as a continuum, build your students' skills, keep going back and building on them and keep a record of that. And that, if you plan it carefully, you probably can still meet all of those things because the band is over three years, the first one, and then four years, each of the other two. So it gives you plenty of time to build those skills and knowledge and understanding. And then the second question is one that often gets asked. I'd addressed it a little bit before, but Vaso, this time I might ask you your opinion. We were asked if it's appropriate for a non-Indigenous teacher to teach a Victorian Aboriginal Language. So, would you like to give that one a go?

**[Vaso Elefsiniotis]** Sorry, I just needed to unmute myself. Yes, it is a really critical question. We had a moment where we talked about this and it comes up a lot. So the question is, is it appropriate for a non-Indigenous person to be teaching Aboriginal languages? The answer in a nutshell is no, it's not appropriate, generally. It's not appropriate because there are other people to teach language. So, as I said before, language belongs with the language community. So it's the preferences of Koorie Community members across Victoria, that it is an Aboriginal person that be teaching language, in the first instance, the ideal instance, that that teacher be from the Traditional Owner group. So for instance, if you were in Wurundjeri country, then it would be a Wurundjeri person teaching. If you were in Gunaikurnai country, it would be Gunaikurnai person teaching.

Having said that, there are instances where there are non-Indigenous. There's a couple of things. There are instances when an Indigenous person, a Koorie person is teaching, who's not from that language group. But where it is, they have been given distinct and explicit permission to do that. And they have done that because either of, in certain cases, their knowledge of the Community knowledge and their working relationship with Community members. In the cases where, the very few cases where there are non-Indigenous people teaching, they have the backing of the Community elders who endorsed them to teach. And they are involved in Community and include Community in the teaching.

What might happen in a school such as that is... I don't particularly want to talk about specific schools but there are schools where this happens. And it is often, the reason really is because often the language specialists are under so much demand within their own Community and for other cultural activities. So to make themselves available to be the full-time deliverer of a language program in a school is often challenging and difficult. So, you have a non-Indigenous teacher very well known to the Community or to particular elders they've worked with together. There is a trust relationship that is already there. There is a respect relationship that is already there. That person who is non-Indigenous has a greater understanding of the protocols involved around cultural matters, cultural information. So what will often happen is it'll be a particular elder who is a language specialist, who is guiding what that teacher can and is allowed to teach.

And it's a stage by stage process and it's slow but it is hugely rewarding. It's hugely rewarding for the people involved in the teaching, for the people involved in the team, and most importantly, hugely rewarding for the students involved, especially Koorie students, but not exclusively. I have seen so many examples of kids, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. for whom the language and culture program in their school is their favourite topic. It is the most engaging. People who usually work with teaching language, particularly bring in Koorie people into the classroom, into the kindergarten, is so different from the standard model of their normal teacher. So kids are much more engaged. Whether it be a younger person who can sort of jump around with the kids or whether it be a more traditional elder with old ways, the kids are still always engaged. I know from personal experience, bring that information back home and get excited about it and bring language and not just language but all the cultural information that goes behind it because language is not isolated. We know that from anyone who's gone beyond their own language because we're not so much aware of the culture in our own language. But when we learn another language, then we must learn cultural aspects that go with that language.

So the rewards ... Even in something I was writing up the other day, where there is a kindergarten program and then there's a feeder school with that language, kids, particularly Koorie kids, who can often be shy not always, depends on their background and regional and or more city-based or whatever, because diversity is a real thing... But those kids that have had in a kindergarten setting the experience with Aboriginal languages and culture and Community members coming into the classroom, when they go into Prep, they've already got some information, they've got an advantage. And they walk in strong and proud and knowing that. And you know, mini Preps, they're the ones that are the experts according to the other Prep kids. And all of this is super, super valuable.

So, I hope I answered that. I answered it in terms of delivering a language program but we also, aside from that might get and we do at VAEAI, and I know these discussions happen within schools... I know that the KESOs and KECs are asked these questions by principals and teachers, but it might be something like, "We want to do the right thing. We're implementing Aboriginal histories and culture in our curriculum. We want families to feel welcome we're doing this. We've got four houses and we would like to rename them. And we are in Wurundjeri country and we would like to use Woiwurrung. Can we do that?" And so that, even that, is a negotiation process. And it is because of the benefit of the negotiation, it is the relationship that's built up in negotiating and continuing that relationship, that is essential for implementing Aboriginal histories and cultures in the curriculum. It is all bound on developing those relationships. And they're invaluable. They're invaluable life-wise and education. Sarah.

**[Sarah Glatz]** 100% Vaso. Thank you so much. Building on that idea of relationships, before I forget, there are 18 schools give or take, in fact, there are probably a few more. We've had a cluster of schools that have been fantastic at getting culture and histories all through their F-6 in the south-west of the state. Shout out to Tara Hulonce who I think is here and her great team for that. But they've then moved into language. But in terms of relationships, they've gone about it the right way and spoken to all the local people. But also I'd like to encourage people who are new to this area and wanting to get into schools, to get in touch with Vaso or me, because I think we know people who've been doing this successfully and it isn't an easy path always and that can help you take the shortcuts that can help you with all their learnings. So, because it's a very small area at the moment we're able to actually do that. So please do give us a hoy. Get in touch if you would like to be put in touch with one of our more experienced Aboriginal languages teachers as well.

**[Katerina Poropat]** Thank you, Sarah. So that brings us to the end of our presentation today. I would like to thank Sarah for presenting and also to Vaso, especially for coming along and speaking to us and at our presentation today. We really appreciate you taking that time. I would also like to thank all of you for attending today and we hope that you took a lot away from the session. A special shout out also to Alicia for all the behind the scenes work that she does. And I could see her putting all those links into the chat box. So we hope that you find those valuable as well. If you do have any further questions, our details are up on the screen now. So you could email Sarah directly or we've got our F–10 Unit email there as well, as well as the Language Unit Manager, Kylie's details are up there too. So again, thank you both for presenting today and thank you all for attending. We hope you enjoy the rest of your afternoon. Goodbye now.

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