About the Department

Vision
Every young Victorian thrives, learns and grows to enjoy a productive, rewarding and fulfilling life, while contributing to their local and global communities.

Mission
Ensure a high-quality and coherent birth-to-adulthood learning and development system to build the capability of every young Victorian.

Key responsibilities
The Department supports the Minister for Education and the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development. Our focus is on the learning, development, health and wellbeing of all young Victorians, from birth to adulthood.

The Department provides a range of services for young people, from birth to the beginning of adulthood. These services support delivery of its four main responsibilities:

• to provide policy advice to the Ministers about education, early childhood development and children’s services in general
• to implement Victorian Government policy on early childhood services
• to implement Victorian Government policy on school education for all school-age children
• to manage and drive continuous improvement in the delivery of primary and secondary education in Victorian government schools.

The Department provides services to children and young people directly through government schools and indirectly through regulation and funding of early childhood services and non-government schools.

As of the February school census there were:

• 1555 government schools
• 707 non-government schools.

During 2009–10, the early childhood sector included 921 maternal and child health nurses operating from 724 service locations; over 4000 children’s services and outside school hours care programs, 2932 fully licensed services and 1192 provisionally licensed services; and 982 organisations that were funded to provide kindergarten programs for children in the year before school at 1670 service locations.
To support the delivery of services, the Department is organised into four central offices and nine regional offices (see organisational chart on page 15). The four central offices are:

- Office for Children and Portfolio Coordination (OCPC)
- Office for Government School Education (OGSE)
- Office for Policy, Research and Innovation (OPRI)
- Office for Resources and Infrastructure (ORI).

Outcomes
The outcomes outlined below provide a basis for supporting all children, young people and their families to access high-quality and integrated services. The Department is striving to ensure that every child and young person is moving towards these outcomes and achieving optimal health, development and learning. The Department recognises that some children, young people and their families will need more support than others at different developmental stages and particularly at the time of key transitions. The focus of these services is on providing access when there is a need and early intervention when problems arise.

Early childhood
- Children have the best start in life to achieve optimal health, development and wellbeing.
- All children have access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education in the years before schooling.
- Quality early childhood education and care supports the workforce participation choices of parents with children in the years before formal schooling.
- Children acquire the basic skills for life and learning.

Schools
- All children are engaged in and benefiting from schooling.
- Children are meeting expected literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy are improving.
- Victorian students excel by national and international standards.

Youth transitions
- Young people make a successful transition from school to further education and/or work that provides further training opportunities.
Ministers

The Department supports the Minister for Education, the Hon Bronwyn Pike MP and the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development the Hon Maxine Morand MP.

The Acts of Parliament administered by each Minister are outlined in Appendix 11.

Minister for Education

Hon Bronwyn Pike MP

Bronwyn Pike has been Minister for Education since August 2007, and is the longest serving female Minister in Victoria's history.

The Minister for Education is responsible for the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, which provides for ‘a high standard of education and training for all Victorians’. The Minister for Education’s responsibilities include school policy, governance, funding, planning and performance, student learning and curriculum, teaching and workforce supply, occupational health and safety, and information technology.

In addition to her responsibilities as Minister for Education, Ms Pike became Minister for Skills and Workforce Participation in January 2010, supported by the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development and the Department of Planning and Community Development.

Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development

Hon Maxine Morand MP

Maxine Morand is the first Victorian Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development.

The Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development's responsibilities include early childhood services (encompassing the maternal and child health service, licensing and regulation of children's services and primary school nursing), kindergartens, the Children's Capital Grants program, kindergarten cluster management, children's policy and research, Indigenous early childhood policy and services, early childhood intervention services, primary and secondary school nurses programs, and programs for students with a disability.

In addition to her responsibilities as Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development, Ms Morand is also Minister for Women's Affairs, supported by the Department of Planning and Community Development.
Secretary
Professor Peter Dawkins

Professor Peter Dawkins joined the Department as Secretary in 2006 and is responsible for managing the Department, thus ensuring that the Minister for Education and the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development are supported in their portfolios.

Since 2007, Professor Dawkins has led a five-year reform agenda on behalf of both Ministers as outlined in the Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development. He has also worked on numerous policy committees, including:

- the Productivity Agenda Working Group that developed the National Productivity Agenda for COAG
- chairing the committee that produced the Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians
- the committee supporting school improvement and transparency and accountability in Victorian government schools.

Prior to joining the public service, Professor Dawkins held a number of university positions and remains an honorary Professorial Fellow of the Melbourne Institute. Professor Dawkins is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and a Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (Victoria). In 2010, Professor Dawkins took study leave of seven weeks at the University of Melbourne to undertake research and policy writing on improving educational outcomes for Victorians, and addressing socioeconomic disadvantage in education policy.
Corporate governance

The Department’s corporate governance structure supports the Department’s direction setting and decision-making, assessment and treatment of risk, compliance and accountability requirements, and the monitoring and optimising of performance.

The Secretary is supported by three key committees:

- the Departmental Leadership Team (DLT), which meets weekly and is responsible for setting policy directions, ensuring the alignment of planning and resources, and considering advice from executive committees
- the Departmental Management Committee (DMC), which meets monthly and oversees management of the Department’s human, financial and information resources, and monitors the implementation of key departmental priorities
- the Portfolio Strategy Board (PSB), which meets quarterly and monitors the Department’s progress against the corporate plan, and assesses the success of portfolio strategies. The PSB also oversees the Department’s research agenda, and identifies areas for long-term policy and strategy work.

Additionally, two other committees, the Portfolio Audit Committee (PAC) and the Accredited Purchasing Unit (APU), provide governance support to the Secretary.

Corporate governance structure
About the Department

The Office for Children and Portfolio Coordination (OCPC) leads reform in the early childhood sector and action across government and in the community to sustain and improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. OCPC coordinates and integrates the Department’s activities across offices, government departments and other agencies, and contributes to portfolio improvement through planning, performance monitoring, evaluation, reporting, risk and compliance management. OCPC also provides advice and an evidence base to shape strategic directions and influence reform.

Key achievements 2009–10

- Developed and implemented the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF), which encompasses the national Early Years Learning Framework.
- Implemented the amended Children’s Services Act 1996 and the new Children’s Services Regulations 2009, including the licensing and regulation of the family day care and outside school hours care sectors.
- Began implementation of early start kindergarten for 3-year-old children known to child protection, and Aboriginal children.
- Rolled out the Australian Early Development Index across Victoria as part of the national rollout. The index provides a national picture of children’s health and development and shows strengths and areas for improvement.
- Implemented the Transition: A Positive Start to School initiative, which includes a Transition Learning and Development Statement developed by early childhood educators and families for each child moving from a funded kindergarten program to Prep in 2010.
- Increased levels of transparency and accountability through the publication of Government School Performance Summaries, available via the VRQA State Register.
- Implemented amendments to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 that deliver a national commitment to legislate for a new national school leaving age of 17 years.
- Managed national consultations on the National Framework for Universal Child and Family Health Services on behalf of the Child Health and Wellbeing Subcommittee of the Australian Population Health and Development Principal Committee of the Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council (AHMAC).
- Coordinated the Department’s response to the interim recommendations of the Bushfire Royal Commission, including a major training, awareness and preparedness program rolled out to all schools and early childhood centres in Victoria.

Deputy Secretary

Tony Cook

Mr Tony Cook was appointed Deputy Secretary, OCPC, in June 2009 after serving as Deputy Secretary, Office for Planning, Strategy and Coordination. Mr Cook, a registered primary school teacher, has been extensively involved in the development of the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care, and the broader COAG early childhood reform agenda. He is the Deputy Chair of the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCECEYDA) Early Childhood Development Working Group.

On 27 April, Mr Cook was seconded to the Commonwealth Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in the position of Deputy Secretary and Director of the Office for Early Childhood Education and Child Care.

 Acting Deputy Secretary

Paul Linossier

During Mr Cook’s secondment, Mr Paul Linossier took up the position of Acting Deputy Secretary, OCPC. Prior to his appointment as Executive Director, Early Childhood Development, in October 2009, Mr Linossier was CEO of MacKillop Family Services. Mr Linossier was awarded a Centenary Medal for services to the welfare sector and the Robin Clark Memorial Award for Inspirational Leadership in 2007.
• Coordinated the Department’s response to the swine flu outbreak of 2009. This involved communicating with schools, children’s services and parents, working closely with the Department of Human Services to manage community concern and school closures, and providing information updates and contacts for medical advice.

• Supported the Effective Early Educational Experiences for Kids (E4Kids) research program led by the University of Melbourne: a longitudinal study into the effects of participation in long day care, family day care and kindergarten, together with related studies of early childhood interventions for disadvantaged children.

• Released key documents and policy statements including:
  – Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development: One Year On
  – Growing, Learning, Thriving – Building on Victoria’s Achievements in Early Childhood Development, which outlines how Victoria will achieve its vision for early childhood
  – Improving Victoria’s Early Childhood Workforce: Working to give Victoria’s Children the Best Start in Life, a strategy that focuses on improved professionalism and sustainable capacity across early childhood services
  – Towards a Health and Wellbeing Service Framework – a discussion paper for consultation. Feedback on the discussion paper and consultations will shape a final Health and Wellbeing Service Framework, due for publication in late 2010 (see case study on page 19)
  – A Partnership Agreement with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), which commits to building positive, collaborative relationships between the Department, MAV and all Victorian local councils, to increase the learning and development opportunities for children, young people and families
  – A Partnership Agreement with the Victorian Community Sector (signed by the Victorian Council of Social Service on behalf of the sector), which commits to working together to improve the learning, development, health and wellbeing outcomes of all Victorian children and young people, particularly those who are vulnerable or experiencing disadvantage
  – Better Opportunities, Better Outcomes, which represents a new step in Victorian planning for services and support for children and young people with a disability or developmental delay. This whole-of-government strategy focuses on the supports funded through the Department and disability services funded through the Department of Human Services. The Strategic Directions paper paves the way for a more holistic approach to the diverse and changing needs of children and young people with a disability or developmental delay, and the needs of their families.
Future plans and challenges

- Trial programs to determine Victoria's capacity to meet the COAG commitment to provide universal access to 15 hours per week of kindergarten.
- Develop new national legislation to support the implementation of the National Quality Framework for Early Education and Care.
- Establish further integrated children's centres.
- Develop a regional rollout strategy for the Department's new electronic document and records management system.
- Implement amendments to the Children's Services Regulations to ensure alignment with national commitments.
- Provide information to the public about statutory sanctions applied to licensed children's services.
- Develop a framework for collaboration with the community sector on education and early childhood development.
- Release and disseminate key findings from *The State of Victoria's Children 2009: Aboriginal Children and Young People in Victoria* report in the coming year to better inform key stakeholders.
- Work with the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services to set joint Victorian Child Public Health Priorities and establish a framework for action across Victorian Government to improve Victorian children's health, wellbeing and development, as well as funded activities that promote children's health and wellbeing through the National Partnership on Preventative Health – Healthy Children initiative.
- Lead whole-of-Victorian-government work on the development of a Breastfeeding Action Plan, including trialling community-based strategies to increase breastfeeding rates. This plan will facilitate implementation of the National Breastfeeding strategy.
- Implement the emergency management review to revise and update all of the Department's emergency management governance arrangements, processes and protocols.
- Initiate improvements to school council financial audit processes.
- Coordinate the Reducing Red Tape project across the Department and significantly improve internal audit processes.
The Department brings together a wide range of services that focus on optimising learning, development, health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people aged 0–18 years, comprising:

- Maternal and Child Health Services
- Early Childhood Intervention Services
- Primary School Nursing program
- Primary Welfare Office initiative
- Secondary School Nursing program
- Student Welfare Coordinators
- Student Support Services
- school chaplains
- school-appointed wellbeing engagement staff.

The Health and Wellbeing Service Framework project looks at the opportunities and challenges resulting from the provision and coordination of this broad range of services, and aims to promote an integrated approach to meeting children and young people’s health and development needs across the range of services supported by the Department.

A discussion paper, Towards a Health and Wellbeing Service Framework, was released on 2 February 2010. Consultations were held with a wide range of key stakeholders, including regional offices, workforce forums, and coordinators and managers of program areas. Written feedback was received from advisory bodies, peak bodies, professional associations, central and regional Department staff, teachers, educators and care professionals. The feedback received will shape a final Health and Wellbeing Service Framework, due for publication in late 2010.

---

**Case study**

**Partnerships to improve school communications**

More than 100 students from RMIT and Swinburne universities worked with six Victorian government schools in a special pilot project to support schools’ marketing and communications activities during 2009. The Schools Marketing and Partnership Project matches the skills and talents of the Marketing, Communications and Public Relations undergraduate students with the schools’ marketing and communication needs.

University students teamed up with schools to work on brochures, newsletters, web design and content, media releases and advertising. Identified challenges included:

- how to engage with parents and the community
- how to integrate communication products, including web and newsletters
- how to develop school branding and identity.

The project successfully provided valuable, hands-on experience for university students and delivered practical outcomes for schools. School principals found the exercise very worthwhile and recommended replicating this project in other schools. Universities felt the task engaged their students and provided a positive experience. In 2010, the project is continuing through a partnership between the Department, Swinburne University and seven schools in Eastern Metropolitan Region that were identified with the assistance of regional network leaders.
Office for Government School Education

The Office for Government School Education’s (OGSE) main function is to manage, coordinate and implement high-quality government school education across Victoria. OGSE aims to improve the educational outcomes of all students in government schools by addressing variations in school performance across the State; developing skilled school leaders and teachers; fostering parent and community engagement; and planning, managing and supporting the delivery of strategies to improve outcomes for children and young people from 0 to 18 years. The nine regional offices are critical to implementing the school improvement agenda and coordinating early childhood and youth services.

Key achievements 2009–10

- Built workforce capacity by:
  - employing 45 equivalent full-time (EFT) literacy coaches, 15 EFT Koorie literacy coaches, and 200 EFT teaching and learning coaches to support teachers in selected schools and to improve student learning outcomes in literacy, mathematics and science
  - offering 19 leadership programs designed to develop the knowledge and skills of principals, assistant principals and teachers
  - enabling teachers to improve their teaching practice by accessing teacher professional leave
  - ensuring trained mentors are available to support new teachers
  - supporting returning teachers and internationally trained teachers to refresh or improve their teaching skills and understanding of government schools
  - supporting 33 teachers to complete the Vocational Graduate Diploma of Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder at the Autism Teaching Institute
  - giving education support staff access to structured professional learning programs and grants to support their individual or team learning needs.

- Supported literacy and numeracy by:
  - establishing the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat in January 2010 to coordinate literacy and numeracy policy and programs across the Department, and to assist regional offices, networks and schools to improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy
  - releasing the Victorian Literacy and Numeracy Statement, which provides a clear and coherent set of expectations that focus on improvement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all Victorian students.
• Held a forum in June 2010 to support principals of National Partnerships schools, regional network leaders, senior regional staff and other stakeholders to achieve the objectives of the national partnerships.

• Entered into a unique partnership with the Colman Foundation. This philanthropic organisation will donate additional funds towards the construction and operation of a new Prep–Year 9 School and Early Childhood Service on the site of Doveton Heights Primary School.

• Conducted extended diagnostic reviews in 71 Victorian government schools that required immediate assessment and intervention. Independent education experts explored each school’s performance by examining data and working extensively with staff, students and the school community. Feedback received from schools and regions was positive, with the reviews contributing to the implementation of effective improvement strategies.

• Introduced the Network Accountability and Improvement Framework to provide regions with increased capacity to support schools by giving greater responsibility to school networks. Regional network leaders oversaw the development of strategic plans in all 70 networks across the state, with schools encouraged to focus on joint approaches and solutions.

• Rolled out Release 1 of the Ultranet – an electronic learning environment supporting high-quality learning and teaching; connecting teachers, students and parents; and enabling efficient knowledge transfer – to government schools beginning in May 2010. Using endorsed digital content and powerful web 2.0 technologies, Release 1 supports teacher collaboration and stimulates student engagement.

• Opened Nossal High School with 200 Year 9 students at the beginning of the 2010 school year. This school is Victoria's first purpose-built, coeducational, selective-entry government school. Nossal High School joins Melbourne High School and MacRobertson Girls High School in offering a comprehensive, academic curriculum for students in Years 9–12.

• Supported the recovery of bushfire-affected schools and students through coordination of the YMCA In-school Support and School Holiday programs and the Scholarships program, both of which were funded by the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund.

Note: Key achievements relating to student learning programs and student services appear in the Outputs and Performance Measures section under ‘Compulsory years’ (pages 40–43) and ‘Services to students’ (pages 46–47).
Future plans and challenges

- Roll out the Ultranet to all government schools by the end of September 2010. The Ultranet will enable the delivery of customised learning programs for students, support ongoing dialogue between parents and teachers, and help parents to become full partners in their child’s education.

- Implement the Department’s five-year regional autism plans to support the Autism State Plan. These regional plans will identify strategies to better coordinate services for students with autism to improve their educational outcomes.

- Deliver the Effective School Governance training package, part of the suite of leadership professional learning programs offered by the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership. The package will develop the knowledge and skills school council members need to fulfil their school governance roles and improve their capacity to influence the quality of education provided to students in their schools. It will be delivered either face to face or online.

- Finalise development of Victoria’s Rural Education Framework, which will assist in the implementation of the school improvement agenda in rural schools. The framework will provide strategies to improve educational outcomes for regional and rural students and ensure that they have access to a high-quality education.
### Case study

**Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership**

In July 2009, the Minister for Education launched the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership. The Bastow Institute provides outstanding professional learning opportunities for emerging leaders, leadership teams, and new and experienced principals. Training modules developed for teachers who have demonstrated achievement in a leadership role and are aspiring to a principal class position form an important part of the Bastow Institute’s range of professional learning opportunities. These opportunities are also provided for regional network leaders; literacy, numeracy and instructional coaches; business managers; and professionals in the early childhood workforce. School council members will be able to participate in a tailor-made professional learning program from 2011.

Bastow Institute director, Bruce Armstrong, said, ‘The Institute is a landmark in the provision of professional learning in leadership in Victoria. It will expand the range of innovative learning opportunities and extend the Department’s strategy to build a strong culture of effective leadership and professional learning’.

The Bastow Institute in Queensberry Street, North Melbourne, will be located in a heritage building dating from 1882 designed by architect Henry Bastow. The building is undergoing significant refurbishment and will feature state-of-the-art technology and learning spaces, including a lecture theatre, an observational classroom, syndicate rooms and an area for larger groups. The building will open in 2011.

---

### Case study

**Wyndham Extended School Hub**

Participation in the Smarter Schools National Partnership for Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities has enabled the Department to conduct four Extended School Hub field trials. The hubs offer a place-based approach to reducing barriers to learning and development experienced by children, young people and their families. The Victorian hubs are located in Eaglehawk, Corio–Norlane, Wyndham and Frankston North. A two-year evaluation will be undertaken to determine the value of the Extended School Hub models for potential replication.

The Wyndham field trial is located in Werribee, a rapidly growing, culturally diverse area of Melbourne’s west that faces many challenges associated with high unemployment and low educational attainment. The three schools involved in the field trials are Glen Devon Primary School, Glen Orden Primary School and Galvin Park Secondary College. These schools are working collaboratively with their regional network leader, The Smith Family, community-based organisations, business and local government to develop an extended school model that will maximise learning outcomes for children and young people and deliver complementary learning programs before, during and after school hours. A number of strategic working groups will concentrate on connecting schools with outside-school activities and providing additional opportunities for students, families and the community to have a voice in the planning and delivery of specific strategies.

The Wyndham field trial model will focus on contributing to lifting performance in literacy, numeracy and student retention, and improving relationships between schools and their communities. Examination of education and early childhood data and consultation across the community led to the development of three focus areas—improving school readiness, increasing student engagement, and lifting the aspirations of families, children and young people.
About the Department

The Office for Policy, Research and Innovation (OPRI) leads the Department in strategic policy development, research and management of key relationships including cross-sectoral, Commonwealth–State, youth transitions and international education. OPRI establishes partnerships that enable more effective and innovative provision of education and early childhood development across all schools and early childhood settings. Through this work, OPRI supports the Department’s vision to ensure that every young Victorian thrives, learns and grows to enjoy a prosperous and fulfilling life, and contributes to their local and global communities.

Key achievements 2009–10

- Released papers outlining the Government’s approach to enhanced transparency and accountability:
  - Supporting School Improvement: Transparency and Accountability in Victorian Government Schools promotes a shared understanding between parents, schools and the government school system about how every school is working and how student outcomes are being improved
  - Transparency and Accountability across all School Sectors in Victoria sets out the approach for all schools regardless of sector
  - Measuring Performance Fairly explains the new intake-adjusted measure of school performance.

Victoria’s approach to transparency and accountability aligns with the Commonwealth Government’s accountability and transparency initiatives, including the My School website.

- Negotiated a new Victorian Non-Government Schools Funding Agreement for 2010–2013 with the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria, which took effect from 1 January 2010. The agreement will enhance transparency and accountability, promote school improvement, encourage cross-sectoral partnerships, and provide new funding targeted to the most needy non-government schools and students, particularly students with disabilities and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Developed Find, Use and Share Education (FUSE) resources, an online portal providing access to digital content from Victoria’s cultural and other educational organisations. The tool provides all government schools with quick and easy access to large repositories of education resources. Teachers can access resources, compile resource packages, build lessons, and find policies and guidelines related to their work. Minister Pike and Senator Conroy launched the portal on 16 February 2010.

Deputy Secretary

Chris Wardlaw

Mr Chris Wardlaw was appointed Deputy Secretary, OPRI, in July 2009. He was Deputy Secretary for Education (Curriculum and Quality Assurance) for the Hong Kong Government from 2002 until 2008. Prior to his appointment in Hong Kong, Mr Wardlaw held executive roles in the Victorian Education Department, including consultancy and policy roles at regional and central offices. Mr Wardlaw has taught at university and secondary schools. In a parallel sporting career, he was the head coach of the Australian Track and Field team at the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000 and an Olympic distance runner.
- Demonstrated innovation in Victorian education and early childhood settings by:
  - holding a showcase in May 2010 to celebrate and share innovative practices
  - holding the inaugural Innovative Learning Environments Design Conference in October 2009, promoting Victoria’s achievements in learning environment design and function.
- Negotiated the Smarter Schools National Partnerships Bilateral Agreement and the Victorian Implementation Plan. The National Partnerships aim to improve teacher quality, boost literacy and numeracy outcomes, and address educational disadvantage resulting from low socioeconomic status school communities. The then Deputy Prime Minister and the Victorian Minister for Education and Skills and Workforce Participation endorsed the agreement with Victoria’s implementation plan announced on 28 April 2010.
- Negotiated the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions Bilateral Agreement and Victorian Implementation Plan. This National Partnership seeks to increase participation of 15–24-year-olds in education, training and employment; raise attainment levels; and improve transitions from school to further education, training and employment. As part of this Partnership there have been major reforms to youth, careers and transitions programs, with a collaborative approach from the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments to reduce duplication and overlap. The then Deputy Prime Minister and the Victorian Ministers for Education and Skills and Workforce Participation endorsed the agreement with Victoria’s implementation plan announced on 28 April 2010.
- Organised a Research and Innovation Partnerships Forum, which engaged over 300 researchers from universities, research organisations, and other government agencies and departments in a discussion about priority areas of interest for research. The forum explored possible partnership arrangements that share knowledge, build capacity and help set future policy directions.
- Established a broader approach to international student programs; student, teacher and principal exchanges; and school-to-school relationships.
- Coordinated the OECD/Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) research project. Victoria is the only Australian state or territory participating in this project, the first stage of which involves identifying and recording cases of innovative learning environments. The project aims to provide examples of inspiring practice to enrich mainstream education in systems around the world. Sixteen Victorian schools have been nominated as part of the project during 2009–10.
Future plans and challenges

- Adopt a coherent approach to monitoring, reporting on and evaluating the seven COAG National Partnerships involving early childhood, schooling and youth transitions. This will facilitate linkages between National Partnerships, ensure effective management of relationships, and support progress towards agreed targets and outcomes.
- Work in partnership with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority to support implementation of the new Australian curriculum.
- Coordinate the Department's contribution to Victoria's Plan to Promote Respect, which is building on a number of existing policies, including those focused on drug and alcohol awareness, school curricula, volunteering, cyber safety and cultural diversity.
- Develop a Languages Strategy that defines quality languages education for all Victorian students. The strategy will build on the Victorian Languages Strategy Discussion Paper and consultation process.
- Develop innovative models of workforce reform, sharing leading practice and addressing disadvantage through the use of technologies.
- Showcase the strengths and achievements of Victoria's school education in a classroom exhibit at the Shanghai World Expo in China in August 2010. More than 40,000 people are expected to visit the Australian Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo each day.

Case study

Find, Use and Share Education

Victoria is setting a new benchmark in the digital education revolution with the online portal FUSE.

FUSE, a publicly accessible site developed by the Department, was launched on 16 February 2010 by Minister Pike and Senator Stephen Conroy, Federal Minister for Broadband, Communication and the Digital Economy.

FUSE has been developed as part of the KnowledgeBank: Next Generation Project. This project conducted research in hundreds of classrooms across Victoria to investigate how web 2.0 technologies can enhance teaching and learning, and established appropriate usage polices for these technologies.

Specifically designed to supply high-quality digital content to schools, families and individual students, FUSE presents quality-assured websites from a range of sources, including those specifically designed for FUSE by cultural organisations such as the National Gallery of Victoria, the State Library, Museum Victoria and Zoos Victoria. This content will enable students to participate in research that goes beyond the classroom. Much of it will explore the idea of Australian identity.

The FUSE portal provides teachers with tools and pathways to learning, leadership, professional learning, whole-of-school improvement and community partnerships. Teachers can publish their own material on FUSE to share with their colleagues.

FUSE will also function as the online resources library for the Ultranet, which will be fully operational in September 2010. The Ultranet is a student-centred electronic learning environment that supports high-quality learning and teaching; connects students, teachers and parents; and enables efficient knowledge transfer.
Case study

Wannik Education Strategy for Koorie Students

Wannik aims to deliver the best possible educational outcomes to Victoria’s Koorie students and encourages collaboration between all Victorian schools, Koorie parents and the Koorie community. The strategy has been developed in close partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) and repositions the education of Koorie students through a culture of strong leadership, high expectations and individualised learning.

Recent Wannik achievements

Koorie Education Workforce Review

The Department has reshaped the former Koorie support workforce to ensure that it can best deliver on the Victorian Government’s reform agenda for Koorie education and early childhood development with the introduction of two new types of roles:

- Koorie Education Coordinator
- Koorie Engagement Support Officer.

Transitional arrangements and support systems are now in place to enable these additional 118 regionally based staff to meet the necessary experience, competence and skill requirements of their roles.

Wannik Tutorial programs

In 2010, the Victorian Government is investing an additional $13.2 million in the Wannik Tutorial programs, making a total investment of $22.6 million over four years, providing funding certainty to schools with eligible students.

The Victorian Government is committed to COAG’s targets for ‘closing the gap’ between Indigenous student and non-Indigenous student outcomes. By providing tutoring to more students in more year levels, Wannik tutorial programs will supplement mainstream teaching resources to achieve these targets by focusing on the literacy and numeracy achievement of Indigenous school students.

Clontarf Football Academies for Koorie boys

The Clontarf Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to help improve the health, employment, education and life skills of Australia’s teenage male Indigenous population through the medium of football. In 2010, Clontarf Academies were established in Victoria for the first time in government schools in Mildura, Robinvale (as a satellite Clontarf Academy to Mildura), Swan Hill, Bairnsdale and Warrnambool.

Wannik Dance Academies for Koorie girls

Wannik Dance Academies provide an educational program that engages Koorie girls from Years 7 to 9 with their schooling, closing the gap through the development of literacy and numeracy skills, and providing opportunities for mentoring and the development of youth transition pathways. Opening in 2010, Wannik Dance Academies are located at Ballarat, Eaglehawk and Mooroopna secondary colleges and offer a culture-specific dance program aligned to the regular school curriculum.
About the Department

The Office for Resources and Infrastructure (ORI) is responsible for the development and implementation of policies and procedures for the Department in the areas of finance, information technology, project management, environmental support, human resources, procurement, information management and infrastructure. ORI provides direct services to the Department’s central office, regional offices and to government schools.

Key achievements 2009–10

- Continued to make significant progress upgrading government school facilities. The VSP has invested $1.9 billion in 553 schools since the 2007–08 financial year to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for students. Victoria will also receive approximately $2.5 billion in BER funding for the government sector. The Department is implementing the following BER programs:
  - Primary Schools for the 21st Century program in 1253 government primary schools, with a total estimated investment of over $2.2 billion
  - National Schools Pride program in 1581 government school sites, with a total investment of $204 million
  - Science and Language Centres for 70 government schools, with a total estimated investment of $141 million.

The Department is integrating delivery of the VSP and BER and both programs are on track.

- Reviewed its first Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2005–2008, which was developed under the requirements of the Disability Act 2006. A new program of initiatives to improve access and inclusion to the Department’s education and early childhood services, buildings and facilities, and employment opportunities by people with a disability was developed and a new DAP published online.

- Launched an OD Framework focused on building organisational capability. A key initiative arising from the framework was the development of shared values for the Department. After a wide staff consultation process, the Department endorsed a set of organisational values with related key behaviours. The shared values will be embedded in relevant organisational processes and procedures.

- Completed phase one of the Teacher Career Transition program, with 183 eligible teachers applying for financial support to move to a new career.

Deputy Secretary

Jeff Rosewarne

Mr Jeff Rosewarne returned to the Department to continue as Deputy Secretary, ORI, in July 2009 after acting as Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority in the aftermath of the 2009 bushfires. Mr Rosewarne has previously held executive positions in the Department of Treasury and Finance. During 2009–10, Mr Rosewarne was extensively involved in developing and implementing the Victorian Non-Government Schools Funding Agreement 2010–2013 and, in particular, developing a model for funding of students with disabilities in non-government schools.
• Implemented eduPay, the Department's new web-enabled human resources and payroll system, for all corporate staff in December 2009. eduPay delivers significant functional improvements for staff and for human resources administrators.

• Implemented the Victorian Student Number in all Victorian government and non-government schools.

• Established a national standard for exchanging education data between schools and school systems. The Systems Interoperability Framework is supported by State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers for Education. A bureau has also been established to support eLearning and statistical reporting projects nationally.

• Completed the rebuilding of Marysville Primary School, one of the three primary schools destroyed in the 2009 bushfires. Rebuilding of Middle Kinglake and Strathewen primary schools and the Flowerdale early childhood facility are well underway. The schools in Marysville and Middle Kinglake will be co-located with early childhood facilities; the Flowerdale early years facility will be co-located with the local primary school.

• Opened the first five schools at the beginning of 2010 that have been built as part of the Partnerships Victoria in Schools project. The schools are in Melbourne's growth areas and were built under a Public–Private Partnership between the Department and Axiom Education Victoria. The new schools provide the best possible learning environments for students, with exemplary standards met in the design and building quality.

• Conducted a review of the Department’s procurement policies, practice, activities and capabilities. The objective was to inform and assist the Department to bring its procurement approach in line with public sector best practice, and to provide the Department with sufficient adaptability and mobility to respond to likely changes in the legislation governing procurement.
Future plans and challenges

- Manage the delivery of the BER in conjunction with the VSP on time and on budget.
- Undertake a detailed plant compliance audit of secondary school technology (wood, metal and automotive) classrooms.
- Coordinate the Department and school contributions to the Greener Government Buildings project, which aims to significantly reduce energy and water consumption in Victorian government buildings.
- Develop human resources and payroll services for staff in the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Treasury and Finance to roll out in 2010–11.
- Implement the recommendations of the Department’s Procurement Review and embed the new procurement framework in the organisation.
- The first five schools of the Partnerships Victoria in Schools project are now into the operating phase of the 26 year facilities management arrangement with Axiom Education Victoria. A further seven schools (six primary and one secondary) are under construction and on schedule to open at the beginning of 2011. This includes a new primary school and secondary college in Cranbourne East that were originally planned as a single P–12 school. These schools will have exemplary design and construction standards, open and flexible learning environments, state of the art ICT, strong ecologically sustainable development elements and full landscaping. In addition, a number of community facilities will also open at the beginning of 2011, including two integrated early learning centres, three YMCA community hubs/long day centres and a YMCA aquatic centre.

Case study

VicSmart

VicSmart is an $89.3 million Victorian Government initiative providing a fibre optic broadband network to all Victorian government schools, supported by network partner Telstra.

Bandwidth provision to Victorian government schools has assisted in bridging the technological divide by providing equity of access regardless of geographical location.

The VicSmart Broadband Network has dramatically increased internet connection speeds, providing easier access to online resources and enabling teachers and students to experience new ways of teaching and learning.

Since the inception of the VicSmart initiative and the first rollout of 2 megabits per second (Mbps) in 2006, Victorian government schools have received progressive bandwidth upgrades. The base provision is now 10 Mbps.

In 2009–10, VicSmart delivered 20 and 50 Mbps bandwidth upgrades to larger Victorian government schools, which facilitates more effective use of computers by students and teachers.

High-speed broadband in schools is a key enabler in the delivery of other major initiatives:

- Ultranet – an electronic learning system that will better connect students, teachers and parents
- FUSE – a repository integrated with Ultranet that shares teaching and learning content and showcases new and emerging technologies
- eduSTAR.ISP – the centralised Internet service for Victorian government schools.

VicSmart also complements the Commonwealth Government’s Digital Education Revolution. This initiative includes the National Secondary School Computer Fund, which aims to ensure that every Australian student in Years 9–12 has access to information technologies, and to achieve a 1:1 computer-to-student ratio for this student cohort by the end of 2011.

These initiatives will have a significant impact on school communities by providing new capabilities for information sharing.
About the Department

Case study

Schools Water Efficiency program

The Schools Water Efficiency Program (SWEP) is a Victorian Government program run by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development as part of the Our Water, Our Future campaign. SWEP is an initiative that allows all Victorian government and non-government schools to be audited, and to identify and implement low-cost solutions to achieve indoor water savings. SWEP offers economic and environmental benefits to participating schools by reducing their indoor potable water consumption by between 5 and 30 per cent.

A total of 1739 water audits have been completed in Victorian schools – 1610 in government schools (which includes multi-campus sites) and 129 in private schools. More than 82 per cent (1329 schools) have completed plumbing works – 987 primary schools, 246 secondary schools, 35 P–12 schools and 61 special schools. $2,788,405 has been spent auditing schools and implementing plumbing works as at March 2010.

The following schools have recorded outstanding water savings during the reporting period following their participation in SWEP:

- East Doncaster Secondary College: 17,759 kL
- Glenallen School: 16,401 kL
- Bentleigh Secondary College: 14,091 kL
- Thomastown West Primary School: 10,907 kL
- Canterbury Girls Secondary College: 10,800 kL.

One year into the program, actual water savings totalled 474,323 kL, representing savings of 22 per cent. To date, average estimated savings per student equate to approximately 500 litres. This amounts to 474 Olympic-sized swimming pools of water saved, or 125 toilet ‘half-flushes’ per child. Estimated annual savings from water and energy costs total more than $550,000 so far. The combined payback period for priority one and two works averages 38 months.

In 2010, the Department was nominated as a finalist for the program in the Premier’s Sustainability Awards in the inaugural State Government category.