WHAT IS BILINGUAL EDUCATION: Some Definitions:

- *A bilingual* is an individual who can function in two language environments.
- *Bilingualism* is the state of being able to function in two languages.
- *Bilingual Education* is a type of education in which two languages are used and supported in the teaching of the curriculum (Lotherington, 2000, *What’s bilingual education all about,* p 79).

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

1. Students immersed in an intensive language study experience *improvements in the literacy in their first language.*
2. Students are immersed in a *study of a language, culture, art and music.*
3. The intensity of the bilingual program helps students become *fluent in a language other than English.*
4. Improvements in student *cognitive development*
5. *Educational developments*
6. *Linguistic developments*
7. Increased *problem solving skills*
8. Enhanced confidence in *engaging with unfamiliar or challenging experiences*
9. The bilingual program aims to improve the *students’ employment prospects.*
10. The bilingual program aims to improve students’ *cultural understanding* which is imperative particularly due to our regionality and absence of cultural diversity in our own community. Thus, students have a more open acceptance of difference and a widened sense of the world and its peoples.

WHY AN INDONESIAN BILINGUAL PROGRAM IN BENALLA?

Indonesian was chosen because of the cultural and economic importance of Indonesia, because it is a phonetic language which is relatively easy to learn, it is not a community language (thus does not favour one community over another) and because teachers were available at the inception of the program.

BILINGUAL PROGRAM STRUCTURE AT BENALLA P-12 COLLEGE

At Benalla P-12 College, Avon St Campus and Clarke St Campus, the form of bilingual education offered is partial immersion. In this type of content-based program, Indonesian is used as the classroom medium for a proportion of teaching time, usually about 50% of the day. An essential component of our bilingual program is communicative competence – that is students will learn and prosper in the language if they are given substantial opportunities to function in it. We encourage our students to play an active weekly role in the Campus Assemblies.

We have elected two Indonesian leaders at Avon St Campus who – make speeches in Indonesian as well perform both song, dance, read their completed works and role plays in
Indonesian. Further to this, we try to provide our students will various opportunities to hear the LOTE in class and around the school – and have a variety of opportunities to use Indonesian to do things.

At Prep Level, Indonesian LOTE is taught, with a focus on initial learning and an introduction to Indonesian culture.

At Benalla P-12 College, Avon St Campus, Literacy, Numeracy and Art is taught in the LOTE (Indonesian) and the other half in English. Here the bilingual program starts at Grade 1.

At Benalla P-12 College, Clarke St Campus, bilingual students access Numeracy in Indonesian, plus one hour of LOTE per week and music in Indonesian.

**Best practice examples of bilingual education at our school include:**

The program formally focuses on Literacy and Numeracy, but Art (Prep-4) and Music (Grade 5-6) is also delivered in the Indonesian language. Exploring Art and Music in Indonesian allows our students a further opportunity to access authentic and various art and music forms from Indonesia – in a way that is fun and comfortable for all students.

The bilingual team and Benalla P-12 College leadership is investigating the introduction of the Kitchen Garden Program in Indonesian as well as Science in Indonesian at Avon ST Campus and Clarke St Campus in 2014.

The staff member delivering Physical Education at Avon St Campus is also willing to adopt some of the Indonesian language in their classes.

Cultural awareness: Indonesian visitors attend the school several times each year. These include representatives of the Indonesian consulate, Indonesian dance and cultural groups and teachers from Indonesian schools.

The school celebrates Indonesian Independence Day each year – including a parade featuring Indonesian displays and dance and a Balinese garden has been developed at the school.

There are two dance troupes at Grade 1-2 and Grade 3-4 who perform at School Assemblies – both at campus level and whole school and to external organisations and schools. There is also an Indonesian Choir forming – who will similarly perform at assemblies and to external organisations.

A number of parents act as volunteers in the program – particularly during the designated Bilingual Assemblies – in which four rotational activities operate – Art, Dance, Singing and Cooking. The parents also happily volunteer to accompany the students on school trips and excursions.
Further to this, bilingual assemblies for Grade 1-2 and Grade 3-4 also involve all staff members at that year level – which strengthens the success of this program.

The Kitchen Garden at Avon St Campus is maintained by students and is currently growing a number of seasonal vegetables used in Indonesian cuisine.

Benalla P-12 College in conjunction with Goulburn Valley Grammar annually hosts the regional Sayembara Lisan (Indonesian Speech) Championships. This year 82 students participated from Benalla P-12 College and 34 students from Goulburn Valley Grammar School.

In 2013, 13 of the 21 students who participated in the state wide Sayembara Lisan Finals received top three placements in the competition. This competition attracts more than 800 students participating in it.

In 2011-2012 – Benalla P-12 College received a DEECD nominated Indonesian Language Assistant – these assistants played a vital role in bringing an authentic language learning environment to the school as well further promoting positive language awareness to students, staff and the broader community. We are currently seeking to sponsor an Indonesian language assistant from Bandung.

**EXPLICIT TEACHING IN THE BILINGUAL PROGRAM**

At Benalla P-12 College, we have a whole school focus on explicit teaching.

As a result, in all bilingual lessons we aim to build a culture of learning. The learning needs to be purposeful, relevant and clearly defined. It requires teachers and students to jointly engage in teaching and learning. Successful explicit teaching directly influences literacy and numeracy learning.

Explicit teaching is critically about clarity in:

1. knowing the learner
2. responding to the learner
3. implementing focused lessons
4. reflection and review

Here we try to scaffold our students learning and move them from dependence on the teacher to independence – being confident communicators in the target language and using the language in various situations – making authentic situations within the classroom – dance, cooking, bargaining role playing in an Indonesian marketplace.

Explicit teaching only works if learning is well planned. Similarly, bilingual programs need to be well planned and taught.
For further information about the Benalla P-12 College Indonesian Bilingual Program, please contact the Program Coordinator, Heidi Perry, perry.heidi.h@edumail.vic.gov.au