



VPA Position Paper

Early Years Literacy Approach

State education authorities have made a significant commitment to a comprehensive approach to literacy acquisition in the early years of schooling, including Reading Recovery for students at risk. The strategy was informed by longitudinal research undertaken in Victorian schools. Initial training and ongoing development for trainers at a state level was completed by 2003.

Purpose

The Victorian Principals Association (VPA) is concerned with the range of early years' literacy models utilised in government schools, creating inconsistencies in pedagogy and learning outcomes.

Background to the VPA Position

The VPA position has been determined in the following context:

- Since its introduction, various early years' literacy models have been implemented, creating a literacy-learning landscape that is inconsistent, diluting intended practice.
- Many models reduce early intervention of students 'at risk'. Reading Recovery was deemed the program of choice targeting Year 1 students at risk.
- Minimal number of student support services personnel available to support schools.

VPA Position

By 2012 a uniform early years' literacy model is re-implemented across Victoria, including:

- consistent guidelines for students considered 'at risk', including links to pre-school services. Reading Recovery to be the recommended early intervention strategy for schools
- continued state level Reading Recovery tutor training and ongoing professional learning for Reading Recovery tutors
- improved student support services in schools to build a consistent approach to early intervention within the early years' literacy model
- state-wide criteria for appointment of literacy coaches with ability to work P-10
- consistent state-wide initial training and ongoing development of literacy coaches in early years' literacy learning and evaluation
- raising the rigour of literacy accountability K-10.

The VPA *Early Years Literacy Approach* position paper was initiated by VPA Council Members March 2009. Further work on this document was undertaken by VPA Board, President and Executive Officer.