FORGING EARLY CHILDHOOD LINKS WITH CHINA

The Andrews Labor Government is breaking new ground, formally connecting Victoria and China’s early years education.

This week the Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos signed a formal agreement between Victoria and China focused on early childhood education, the first of its kind.

Victoria and China have a long-standing close relationship on education, but no formal ties had existed on early childhood issues until now.

The agreement with Sichuan Province focuses on partnerships in research and policy development, and will provide professional development opportunities for the Victorian and Chinese early years workforce.

Ms Mikakos discussed the establishment of the China-Victoria Early Childhood Educational Engagement Program, a partnership with the Chinese Ministry of Education.

Under the partnership, early childhood experts, educators and policy makers will exchange early years research and knowledge.

Ms Mikakos also conducted learning tours of kindergartens in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Tianjin.

The Victorian and Chinese governments have mutual interests, agreeing that all children should have access to early years education, including those with additional learning needs.

China is reforming its early childhood education and care systems. China and Victoria share common objectives of quality, equity and inclusiveness.

Victoria is on the cutting-edge of research and practice in effective learning programs, including “intentional teaching” and play-based learning.

Victoria’s New China Strategy: Partnerships for Prosperity, identifies a strong, co-operative relationship with China has been identified as key to Victoria’s future prosperity and making the Education State.

Announced by the Labor Government in April 2016, the strategy supports the activities of Victorian education providers in China.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos

“We have forged formal early years ties – the first of their kind - between Victoria and China, and I thank China for their enthusiasm and shared vision.”

“In the Education State, Victoria’s kids will reap the benefits of our new partnerships with China for years to come.”