acara AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY

MEDIA RELEASE

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Education Ministers endorse changes to strengthen the early years mathematics curriculum

Education Ministers have endorsed changes to the Foundation to Year 2 Australian Curriculum: Mathematics, providing greater clarity about what students should learn and when, while strengthening the foundations for numeracy success.

The changes, developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) following a targeted iterative review, raise expectations for early years mathematics and provide clearer, more practical guidance for teachers.

Key changes include:

- Revising and simplifying curriculum content to clearly identify the essential mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills students should learn at each year level.
- Strengthening and sequencing of mathematical concepts to give teachers greater clarity about what to teach and when.
- Raising expectations by introducing fractions in Year 1 rather than Year 2, requiring recall of addition and subtraction facts up to 10 in Year 1, and strengthening multiplication content in Year 2.
- Introducing new content to build the foundations of consumer and financial literacy, including understanding the value of money and simple transactions.

ACARA CEO, Stephen Gniel, said the changes would help ensure young Australians develop strong foundations in mathematics from their earliest years of schooling.

“A strong grounding in mathematics and numeracy is essential for young people to succeed in their education and later in life.

“We’ve listened to teachers and made the curriculum clearer and more practical, removing ambiguity and strengthening the sequencing of mathematical concepts so teachers know what students need to learn, and when.

“We’ve also raised expectations about what children should learn in their early years. Students will now be introduced to fractions in Year 1, develop recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10, and build stronger multiplication skills in Year 2.

“Importantly, we’ve introduced new content to help children develop an age-appropriate understanding of consumer financial literacy, from exploring sharing and exchanging items in Foundation to understanding money and simple transactions in Years 1 and 2.

“Ultimately, these changes are about giving every child the strongest possible start in mathematics, while supporting teachers with a clearer and more practical curriculum,” Mr Gniel said.

The changes follow extensive consultation with state and territory education authorities, education sectors, teachers, curriculum experts and other stakeholders, including focus groups with practising teachers.

Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers (AAMT) CEO Allan Dougan welcomed the changes.

“The Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers welcomes the changes to the Foundation to Year 2 Mathematics curriculum, which give teachers greater clarity on what matters most in the core concepts of early years mathematics. We were pleased to contribute the profession’s perspective to the review process, and we value ACARA’s willingness to draw on the expertise of the teaching community. Clear, well-sequenced foundations in the early years are essential for every child’s mathematical success,” he said.

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Australian Catholic Primary Principals Association President Phil Schultz also welcomed the review.

“The Australian Catholic Primary Principals Association welcomes the review of the Foundation to Year 2 Mathematics curriculum, which provides clearer guidance, stronger sequencing and greater support for teachers delivering foundational numeracy. By responding directly to teacher feedback and strengthening the focus on essential mathematical concepts, the review has the potential to improve teacher confidence, reduce workload and deliver better learning outcomes for students,” he said.

The revised Foundation to Year 2 Mathematics curriculum will be published on the Australian Curriculum website before the end of November. ACARA will then work with state and territory jurisdictions and sectors to support implementation of the changes in Australian classrooms.

Education ministers have also tasked ACARA with extending the review to Years 3 to 6, including a stronger focus on consumer and financial literacy.

Find out more information about the Australian Curriculum and optional support resources at www.australiaurriculum.edu.au.

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