



Where language and culture come together

## COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AUSTRALIA

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# E-Language

## AFESA – COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AUSTRALIA COUNCIL MEETS IN MELBOURNE

### **Securing support for languages education funding**

The Australian Federation of Ethnic Schools Associations (AFESA) / Community Languages Australia (CLA) Council met in Melbourne on Saturday January 17, 2009. ACT, NSW, Queensland South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia were represented.

The main thrust of the meeting was to confirm planning for future activity and strategise on securing ongoing support and funding for languages education and community languages schools and meetings and networking with jurisdictional representatives.

The Council accepted reports from the Chair, Treasurer and the 2007-2008 Auditor's Report, the Executive Director's report and Reports from all member States and Territories.

The Reports indicated a high level of activity nationally and at a local level. They also reflected the planning that has already been undertaken to meet the challenges of 2009.

Some of the highlights stemming from the reports were –

- The successful National Community Languages Schools Conference held in WA in October 2008. The Council evaluated the Conference and deemed it a very positive activity.

Other highlights

- The introduction of State Conference in NSW in October 2008
- A new DVD titled *We, You, Me – Language is the Key* about community language schools produced by the Ethnic Schools Association of South Australia with funding from Ethnic Schools Board in SA.
- Training and PD funded by the Vic DEECD,
- Negotiation and meetings in ACT ,
- Training provide by the LOTE Centre in Queensland and
- Increased interest by parents and students in Tasmania.

The Council also took reports and acknowledged with thanks the four year funding approved by Minister for Education the Hon Julia Gillard and the work and cooperation of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) Council worked on the DEEWR Project Plan that is being developed for this project. There has been a close partnership with DEEWR to ensure an achievable project plan is developed. The Council also worked on aspects of the Final Report to DEEWR on the 2007-2008 Project.

Community Languages Australia has now received Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority registration as a Service Provider for delivering Secondary School LOTE is VCE. The implications of this were also discussed by Council. The support of VRQA and VCCA was noted and acknowledged as a major step in further recognising the work of community languages schools

Future funding streams were also discussed. The Council has over past meetings examined and recognised the need for ongoing funding and support for CLA activity.

The Council resolved to meet with Ministers and jurisdictional representatives to propose funding models that could be supported by State and Territory departments.

A major issue of discussion was the possible implications of the new COAG Funding arrangements between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories. Given that community languages school play a key role in delivering a wide range of languages and are an integral in the delivery of languages education in Australia, funding should continue to flow and in some cases increase.

The Council resolved to contact all Ministers for Education, Ministers for Multicultural Affairs and the relevant Parliamentary Secretaries and jurisdictional representatives seeking increased support. The Council will also write to Minister Gillard seeking her ongoing support for languages education in mainstream schools and community languages schools and confirm her commitment to the community languages schools sector.

The Greek Consul for Education Harry Ladopoulos also attended the meeting and participated in discussion on the role of homeland governments in supporting languages.

The Consul provided insight from a diplomatic perspective and offered his ongoing support and or advice to AFESA. The discussion also focussed on forming a diplomatic corps networks via Embassies and Consulates to seek support for languages and to ensure that all languages in Australia have the opportunity to be taught and learnt whether through mainstream systems or community languages schools sector.

CLA in cooperation with the Australian Human Rights Commission is working on developing a project and classroom materials for students about raising awareness on how to deal with racism.

The National Calendar of meetings was endorsed. Council will meet three times in March-April, October and December months with a fourth meeting at the time of the National Conference which will be held on June 27, 2009 in Melbourne.

The meeting was very productive with strong dialogue and set of outcomes.

***Photos***

***Sitting*** Raniah Daou (SA) Inta Rumpe( SA), Tassos Douvartzides (Vic), Harry Ladopoulos Greek Consul for Education

***Standing***

Javed Mehr (ACT) Albert Vella NSW, Rita Thetadig (Queensland) Stefan Romaniw (Executive Director), Mahendra Pathik (Tas), Enzo Sirna (WA)

*Other Photos Meeting activities*

*Raniah Daou (SA) presents Greek Consul for Education DVD on We, You, Me – Language is the Key*

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