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**ETHNIC SCHOOLS ASSOCIATIONS AND FEDERATIONS
HOLD NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS FORUM IN ADELAIDE
MORE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR NATIONAL COORDINATION AND
BETTER RESULTS**

State and Territory Ethnic Schools Associations and Community Languages Schools Federation Executive Officers (EO) met in Adelaide on Wednesday March 15, 2006 in the first National Executive Officers Forum conducted by Community Languages Australia.

The forum held at the Languages and Multicultural Resources Centre in Hectorville, brought together those working on ethnic schools administrative and organizational issues on a daily basis.

PARTICIPANTS

Mimi Zhang from ACT Ethnic Schools Association (ESA), Eva Tzodouris, NSW Federation of Community Languages Schools, Inta Rumpe ESA South Australia, Fahry Abubaker from ESA Victoria, Mahendra Pathik ESA Tasmania attended whilst Kelly Timmons ESA Queensland provided written input.

The meeting was chaired by Community Languages Australia's Executive Director Stefan Romaniw. ESASA President Helena Lelkes welcomed participants to South Australia.

PURPOSE AND AGENDA

The purpose of the meeting was to -

- Provide an opportunity for exchange of work practices, administrative processes and operations between Ethnic Schools Associations – Federations in Australia.
- Establish a set of generic guidelines for effective administration of Ethnic Schools Associations-Federations in Australia

The agenda covered the following:

1. Reports on current activity and operations of Ethnic Schools Associations /Community Languages Federation
2. National Project – DEST - Coordination and Quality Assurance – Project Plan
3. Strategies for ensuring consistency and long term sustainability
4. Why has an Office for an Association?
 - a. What does it stand for?
 - b. Steps to running a good Association and –or Office
 - c. Processes for representation of Office and Association.
 - d. What works for you?

5. Discussion on the Draft Administrative and Organizational Procedures Manual

The meeting allowed for strong and focused discussion and the sharing of ideas, processes. It has provided stimulus for stronger networking between Associations nationally which in turn will enhance national coordination.

Issues of national coordination, quality assurance and general operations of offices were presented by Stefan Romaniw.

The Quality Assurance Framework was discussed at some length. The NSW FCLS has completed its first stage of the Quality Assurance Framework with the assistance of Erebus International and Len Ball from NSW DET. Examples of this work was tabled.

Working parties are now being established in some other jurisdictions.

Inta Rumpe provided a very comprehensive overview on the topic of office operations and management which was judged very useful by all present.

OUTCOMES

Some of the outcomes of the meeting were:

- ✓ Officers will communicate as a network on a regular basis
- ✓ A standard data collection computer program is to be circulated to allow for better coordination of data and statistics. The program will be based on the current Victorian Ethnic Schools Association data program.
- ✓ The April AFESA Council meeting will discuss the data and statistics required how this program might be implemented.
- ✓ Delivery of a national PD program and calendar was also discussed .Associations are to provide required information.
- ✓ A template for Ethnic School Association Annual Reports is to be developed based on the SA Model. Inta Rumpe volunteered to assist. This will allow for a national report to be compiled annually.
- ✓ Job Description Manual for Executive Officers be developed based on Queensland and SA Models
- ✓ That the next AFESA Council meeting discuss funding models to assist national activity
- ✓ Department of Education Resource Centre managers be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss better ways of sharing information and resources
- ✓ That a list of available training programs offered nationally be circulated
- ✓ That a National Tertiary Education Reference Group be convened to discuss national training and PD
- ✓ That Ethnic Schools Boards in SA and NSW be provided with ongoing information on the National project and to seek their direct involvement in Quality Assurance Framework working parties and national PD and Training planning.

- ✓ Community Languages Australia will write to Boards directly requesting an opportunity to present information on the National project and seek ways for enhanced cooperation
A practical example of furthering relationships was the tabling of a copy of the South Australian Ethnic Schools Board Accreditation process as a model .State Ethnic Schools Associations were encouraged to contact the Board about further information and possible visits to explain the process.
- ✓ That the next Executive Officers meeting be held on Tuesday July 23, 2006 in Canberra.

OTHER MEETINGS HELD DURING THE DAY

Languages and Multicultural Resource Centre -SA

The LMRC Manager Alana Zerjal-Mellor met with participants and provided information on the Centre and its activities. Participants undertook a tour of the Centre to examine the many resources.

Maxine Panegyres Superintendent Languages Education Department of Education and Children's Services and Member of MECEETYA Languages Education Working party and Lia Tedesco, Principal, SA School of Languages Executive Officer and MCEETYA Languages Education Working Party

Stefan Romaniw provided a presentation on the National Project for Improving Coordination and Quality Assurance in Ethnic Schools.

Discussion centered on how to engage all stakeholders in this process. A brief overview of the Project's current status was presented.

The role and importance of Ethnic School Boards was also discussed. A letter will be sent to Boards in SA and NSW proposing ways for furthering cooperation .The Project Plan envisages close working cooperation with Boards and Ministerial Committees/Councils. Presentations to the NSW CLS Board (December 2005 and Ministerial Council (MACLEM) (February 2006 in Victoria have been delivered. A letter is being sent to the SA Ethnic Schools Board requesting the opportunity to present to the Board on the Project and to examine ways for the Board's involvement in relevant aspects of the National project.

Boards can play a major role in assisting in the delivery of Key Tasks of the project in the areas of Quality Assurance Framework and Professional Development and Learning.

Discussions also focused on hosting a second Round Table by Community Languages Australia with Stakeholders in South Australia.

Best Wishes

Stefan Romaniw
