



Newsletter

February 2007

Community Languages Schools Where Language and Culture Come Together

Welcome to 2007

The Ethnic Schools Association of Victoria welcomes you back to the 2007 school year and wishes all those learning, teaching, supporting and cooperating with community languages schools in Victoria every success in 2007. Each year brings new challenges, opportunities and at times, barriers.

What does 2007 have in store for us?

A Statement by Community Languages Australia: Community Languages Schools – Contributing to Quality Languages Education in Australia

Community Languages Australia, as part of the national project to improve national coordination and quality in community languages schools, and funded by the Australian Government through the Schools Languages Programme administered by the Department of Education, Science and Training, has now completed *A Statement by Community Languages Australia: Community Languages Schools – Contributing to Quality Languages Education in Australia*.

This statement articulates the role community languages schools play. It will be a support document for you to use in your discussions with mainstream schools, principals, schools councils, parents and other interested stakeholders.

Operational and Administrative Procedures Manual for Community Languages Schools

Another important resource, the *Operational and Administrative Procedures Manual for Community Languages Schools* will be launched in late March. All schools will be invited to the launch of the manual, which provides advice on school management and operations. Each school will receive a CD-ROM with all the information.

Quality Assurance Framework

We now have an endorsed Quality Assurance Framework. This framework will assist you with planning your work and is structured around eight key dimensions (see diagram at right).

We will be conducting a series of workshops in the first six months of 2007 to assist schools with using the framework effectively. The framework can be found on the Community Languages Australia website: www.communitylanguagesaustralia.org.au.



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Training and professional development

The training and professional development programs are ready to be rolled out. Information on training is attached to this newsletter, and we encourage you to enroll your teachers as soon as possible.

Please read the information *carefully and enroll your staff. If accepted, please ensure those registered attend.*

Emerging communities

We will be establishing an Emerging Communities Working Party. Teresa De Fazio from Victoria University has worked with Community Languages Australia and ESAV to identify some of the issues relevant to emerging communities. We now wish to offer practical, hands-on assistance, based on a mentoring program. We also intend to provide focused professional development to assist with the development of the QA Framework in schools, specific training for instructors in emerging communities, and materials development sessions.

We also plan to address issues that will be raised from time to time by emerging communities representatives.

First aid

The ESAV is now negotiating with a number of providers to obtain quotes for first aid training courses. Schools must have an accredited first aid person on staff as part of their school accreditation process.

Other initiatives

There are many other exciting practical initiatives that will be rolled out throughout 2007. Later in this newsletter, you will read about practical school and classroom activities through:

- the Melbourne Water project
- the Cricket Australia project
- AFL activities
- Harmony Day 2007.

In this newsletter there are some ideas about some of these areas. While we are currently very focused on governance and school planning, and quality assurance issues, we certainly want to be an association that is hands-on, practical and that can serve the teachers and students at a grassroots level.

Water, water, water

Water, or rather the lack of it, is now reality! A real community issue!

In early 2007, schools will be provided with a set of classroom materials that can be used to highlight the water issue. It is intended that the information will not only stimulate classroom discussion and activities, but also encourage students to go home and discuss the issue around the family table with their parents and grandparents.

Another opportunity to engage with the broader community!

We will also be introducing a competition for schools to promote.

My ideas for saving water

Children at all levels can participate. All they have to do is – in some form: art work, writing, PowerPoint, jingle or using other ICT technology – present their ideas on how we can best conserve water.

We will then endeavour to publish some these works and hold an exhibition in a public place in mid-May 2007.

The normal school categories will apply, that is, early years, middle years and then two categories at secondary level.

All entries should be attached to the Water Competition Form provided with this newsletter.

Free tour of Melbourne Water's Western and Eastern treatment plants

You are invited to organize your school group to visit Melbourne Water's treatment plants:

Eastern plant	Bangholme	17 March, 2007
Western plant	Werribee	12 May, 2007

Melbourne Water will provide a free coach and interpreter for your groups.

You must register by:

2 March 2007 for Eastern region visit
15 April 2007 for Western region visit

Information is attached.

Multiculturalism, integration, community relations

Community languages schools provide a best-practice model for showing, in practical terms, community relations and integration of the individual, schools, communities and organisations into the broader community.

They do this because of the positive policy of supporting multiculturalism. The policy is the direction – the integration and strong community relations are the outcome.

Recent discussions have somehow confused many of these issues.

We have more than 35,000 students from over 50 communities that operate within community languages schools in Victoria. Nationally, the number is more than 105,000 students, with over 70 languages groups. Each week, somewhere in Victoria and somewhere in Australia, many community languages school representatives, teachers, administrators, students get together to work on improving quality in education. Discussion might include language maintenance and culture or how to integrate this important work into the bigger Australian community and how to share this asset – this wealth – with others.

Our integration program is one of the finest and is a proven successful model. For years, we have brought all groups together, whether in training, professional development, lobby processes, conferences, ethnic school days or dinners.

Schools, through their programs, encourage students not only to learn the language and understand heritage and culture, but take it out and share it, and engage others to be part of the bigger Australian mix.

Community Languages Australia will be developing a set of classroom ideas for schools to use in promoting the integration of their students, communities and organisations into the broader community.

Community languages schools already play a significant role in doing this. We sometimes do not really appreciate the impact we have in fostering strong community relations.

There are challenges being thrown to communities to show commitment to Australia. Community languages schools throughout their history have been at the forefront of not only speaking about, but also showing in practical terms this commitment.

We are focusing on being practical and taking action this year; not only to theorise about what should happen, but to be practical and take action – because that's what teachers, instructors and students need.

Schools should call public meetings to speak about how they assist students and communities to integrate.

Later in this newsletter, you will read about Australia's Biggest Cricket Game – a perfect example to involve your students and school community in major events.

So do not shy away from what you do so well – teach and maintain language and culture, integrate those you educate into the broader community and share what you have with others for the betterment of Australia!

Funding

The Victorian State Government made an election commitment that there will be a \$20 per capita increase through the Department of Education and Training (DET) and also a one-off \$333,000 professional development program available through the Victorian Multicultural Commission. Our understanding is that these budgetary arrangements are being actioned and that schools will be notified by the Department of Education and Training of the process in due course.

Community Languages Australia Council Meeting

The Australian Federation of Ethnic Schools Associations met in Canberra on 20 January 2007 to discuss national issues such as:

- the launching of the statement
- the *Operational and Administrative Procedures Manual for Community Languages Schools*
- the implementation of the Quality Assurance Program in each state and territory
- partnerships with Cricket Australia (Patrizia Torelli presented at the meeting)
- the National Prescription Service – FECCA Quality Use of Medicines Classroom packs (Doris Kordes from FECCA reported on the program)
- a proposal for securing funding through a per capita arrangement with the state and territory Ethnic Schools Associations/Federations to support the work of Community Languages Australia.



Community Languages Australia Council members.

Council members are fully supportive of national coordination and improving quality in schools. The national body has been a very important structure in ensuring community languages school continue to be part of the quality delivery of languages in Australia.

Mr Noel Simpson, Head of Quality Schools Branch, DEST, and Judy Gordon, Assistant Director, Values and Languages Education Section DEST, also attended a dinner on Friday evening. The council acknowledged the support of DEST and also wished Noel Simpson, a great friend and supporter, well in his intended retirement.

Accreditation funding and news from the Department of Education and Training

Guidelines and application forms for the Community Languages Schools Funding Program for 2007 were sent to all accredited schools by the end of January. The closing date for applications for 2007 is 31 April 2007. No late applications can be accepted this year.

A reminder that community languages schools will need to implement the provisions of the *Working with Children Act* from July 2007.

Some schools that applied for re-accreditation beyond 2007 have been requested to provide additional documentation and have failed to do so. If they do not do so by the end of January, they risk losing their eligibility for funding in 2007.

Some schools have also been requested to attend a meeting to discuss a few issues regarding their application for re-accreditation. They have not responded!

Schools/organisations can confirm their legal status with Consumer Affairs and the status of their registration as an incorporated body.

Any changes to names, addresses, phone numbers, account details etc should be communicated to the Department of Education and Training in writing.

Schools should encourage their staff to attend professional development.

Communication

Email system

A new communication method has been introduced this year for fast communication as well as direct contact with teachers and staff. Please send us your email address and that of your teachers to ensure you receive information quickly and directly.

ESAV website

ESAV website plays an important role in providing schools with information about current activities and major events. You can link your website to the ESAV site, or send information to be posted on the site at: www.esav.org.au.

Send your details to: Abubaker.Fahry.f@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Cricket Australia

Community Languages Australia and the ESAV have formed a partnership with Cricket Australia. Again, this will be of practical benefit for teachers and students.



Cricket Australia has programs for schools that cover issues such as:

- **Commitment** – Uniting for Australia's future and gaining a greater understanding and awareness of our dynamic multicultural society, our democratic system, and our freedoms, languages and laws.
- **Goodwill** – The bonds that hold us together: celebrating community harmony and our commitment to embracing traditional Australian values – justice, equality, fairness and mateship.
- **Understanding** – It starts with you: upholding your culture and traditional heritage while embracing respect for and appreciation of others.
- **Diversity** – Australians have been born here or migrated here; we come from around 200 different backgrounds.
- **Community** – The spirit of cooperation: taking a stand against racism, prejudice and intolerance.
- **Harmony** – Bringing all together to celebrate the many faces of Australia and treating those around us with consideration and dignity.

We are negotiating Professional Development for teachers in community languages schools to strengthen this program and your ability to participate.

Australia's Biggest Cricket Game will be held in schools throughout Australia on 21 March 2007 to celebrate Australia's national Harmony Day.

The game of cricket can be played by your school during that week to be part of the attempt to get into the Guinness Book of Records.

To register to receive updates about the **Cricoids ABC Game**, please email cricedes@cricket.com.au.

Register Get involved Put it into your diary!

More information: www.cricket.com.au/default.aspx?s=crickidsplayinginharmony.

A snapshot of 2006 What a year!

VCE results

We had great VCE results, with close to 80 students from 31 community languages schools receiving over 40 for their VCE ENTER scores.

Teacher training courses

In 2006, a very successful teacher training program was conducted. More than 250 teachers have successfully completed the training and received their certificates in formal graduation ceremonies attended by MPs, representatives from the Department of Education and Training, heads of schools, community representatives and family members – all of them showing their support for the program.

Professional development programs

More than 500 teachers attended the professional development programs and their message was:

Gives us more!

We love it!

Many thanks to the Department of Education and Training in Victoria and the Victorian Multicultural Commission for their support.

State Conference 2006

Languages education and cultural maintenance programs must be strengthened to ensure Australia continues to be an effective international partner. This was the resounding message at the Victorian State Community Languages Schools Conference held at Victoria University, Melbourne, on 1 July 2006.

Partnerships in all shapes and forms strengthen our position and the conference evidently demonstrated these qualities. In other words, partnerships are being formed to make languages educational; not a by-product of our society, but rather an integral part of the domains of education, multicultural affairs, business, foreign affairs and cultural exchanges and other areas.

The strong message that came out of that meeting was the overwhelming commitment of school authorities and teachers to achieve that vision. The large numbers, the enthusiasm to participate in workshops, and the opportunity to network demonstrated the strong engagement of participants. The fact that participants want more

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professional development is an indicator of a highly enthused and committed teaching force.

Community Languages National Conference 2006

Australia cannot afford to be monolingual! That was the overwhelming resolution from presenters and participants at the successful 4th National Community Languages Schools/Ethnic Schooling Conference held on Saturday, 7 October 2006 at the Carlton Crest Hotel in Brisbane.



Participants at the Community Languages National Conference 2006.

Strong presentations from both Commonwealth and Queensland State Government representatives in support of languages were well received. They highlighted the important work undertaken by community languages schools in teaching languages and maintaining culture. It was pointed out that this work positions Australia well internationally.

Officially opening the conference, Senator Russell Trood, representing the Minister for Education The Hon. Julie Bishop, and Andrew Robb MP, the Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, spoke in depth about the importance of languages to Australia, the importance of strong citizenship programs and the contribution of the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) to supporting languages.

Raising children bilingually

A number of seminars were conducted in 2006 by the Research Unit for Multilingualism and Cross-Cultural Communication, School of Languages, University of Melbourne.

These attracted a large number of parents, early childhood/pre-school workers, grandparents,

teachers and others interested in bilingual education.

Raising children bilingually is a very important process. There are many positive strategies that can be employed. This seminars provide participants with some of these important tools.

Dinner dance

More than 270 community languages schools teachers and administrators joined together in a night of entertainment, dancing and team building at the 2006 Victorian Community Languages Schools Dinner on Saturday, 21 October 2006, hosted by Community Languages Australia and the Ethnic Schools Association of Victoria.

Held at the Ukrainian Community Centre in Essendon, in a colourfully decorated hall with a live band and exciting entertainment, many diverse groups came together to showcase the harmonious and cohesive aspect of our Victorian community.

Free tours of Melbourne Water's treatment plants

Ethnic schools have clearly demonstrated their support of Melbourne Water's invitation to visit their Eastern and Western treatment plants.

The aim of the tours was to enable visitors to find out what happens after sewage is treated, where it goes and how it is being used to create green energy and provide recycled water for use in irrigation and public spaces.

Melbourne Water, through their multicultural communication consultants LOTE Marketing, selected 10 communities to participate in the tours – Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Serbian, Somali, Turkish and Vietnamese.

The 12 tours planned for the two treatment plants were booked out.



Participants at the Community Languages National Conference 2006.

NPS and FECCA Families Get to Know Their Medicines curriculum trial – Update

Families Get to Know Their Medicines is a new curriculum trial currently being offered to Chinese, Greek and Vietnamese after-hours ethnic schools in Queensland. The trial is a partnership between the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils Australia (FECCA) and the National Prescribing Service Limited (NPS), working with Community Languages Australia (CLA), the Queensland LOTE Centre and the Ethnic Schools Association Queensland.

The curriculum is for students aged 10–16 years and the trial starts Term 3 2007.

Full translations with ethnic school and community input

The full curriculum package is being translated with input from each language community involved. To date, following community advice, the Chinese translation will be provided in traditional as well as simplified characters. In addition, a Quality Assurance Advisory Group (QAAG) has been set up, which includes experienced community translators and representatives from each language. The members of QAAG have an important role in checking that the translations are accurate, and that the information, names, examples and activities used take into account each community's cultural beliefs and practices.

Teacher's package

The teacher's package comprises seven two-hour lessons, originally developed in English. Sessions teach students the principles of using medicines safely by encouraging them to find out about and tell stories about their family's traditional remedies and medicines, and their encounters with the Australian medicines system. They also develop the

language skills necessary to discuss the information with their families.

At all times equal importance is placed on improving community language skills and acquiring medicines information.

Only general information about the principles of managing medicines safely and wisely is included: no information about the specific medicines that family members may be using is discussed. Fun activities and competitions are used to reinforce the learning.

Session topics include:

- What is a medicine?
- Traditional use of medicines
- Managing and using medicines safely
- Types of questions to ask about a new medicine
- The importance of reliable sources of information

Feedback will determine if curriculum may be available for all schools to use.

During term one and term two, the program team is inviting teachers and principals to participate in evaluation and feedback activities, which include:

- Invitations to LOTE centre professional development, evaluation and publicity activities.
- Opportunities to provide feedback to improve the program.

These activities will help determine whether the curriculum may then be available for all schools to use. For more information about the trial contact:

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Families Get to Know Their Medicines curriculum trial – Partnerships

Families Get to Know Their Medicines curriculum trial is a partnership between the following organisations:

- **National Prescribing Service Limited (NPS)** – an independent, non-profit organisation for the quality use of medicines. NPS is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.
- **Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)** – the peak national body representing multicultural Australians.
- **Community Languages Australia/Australian Federation of Ethnic Schools Associations (CLA)** – an umbrella body that unites ethnic schools and

the Ethnic Schools Associations that serve as their administrators.

- **Queensland LOTE Centre** – contributes towards curriculum renewal by building the workforce capability of LOTE teachers. It plays a key role in the promotion and advocacy of LOTE and ethnic schools are one group of LOTE providers it supports.
- **Ethnic Schools Association Queensland (ESAQ)** – a non-profit, community-based, public organisation whose members provide after-hours language and cultural education for all students, irrespective of their linguistic background.

Training and professional development

Expressions of interest for training courses are now open. Details are attached. Please respond by 1 March 2007.

Please read the conditions for enrolling.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that those who enroll and are accepted fulfill their commitment to attend the sessions.

PD programs

The full program will be available in late February 2007. The program will provide variety in content and be delivered in a range of locations. Please send your teachers to relevant sessions.

Language-specific meetings to discuss funding PD programs

Arabic	Monday, 26 February, 2007	6.30–7.30 p.m.
Chinese	Monday, 26 February, 2007	6.30–7.30 p.m.
Greek	Monday, 26 February, 2007	7.30–8.30 p.m.
Turkish	Monday, 26 February, 2007	7.30–8.30 p.m.
Vietnamese	Monday, 26 February, 2007	7.30–8.30 p.m.

Please send your representative. Confirm by sending in your participation notice.

ESAV membership

Your membership to ESAV is very important. Through our connections and membership we support each other. Please complete the ESAV membership form and send in your membership fee of \$30 by **10 March 2007**.

Dates for your diary

Saturday, 7 July 2007

State Community Languages Conference, Melbourne

Saturday, 6 October 2007

6th National Community Languages Conference, Canberra