



AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATIONS

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Suzanne Northcott
National Education Agreement Taskforce
National Education System Group
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Canberra
ACT

23 Feb. 09

Dear Ms Northcott,

Re: Consultation on the MCEETYA Action Plan 2009-2012

The following is the response of the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations (AFMLTA) to the *MCEETYA Action Plan 2009-2012*, a document which supports the Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians released in December 2008.

As stated in our initial response to the *Draft National Declaration*, the AFMLTA believes the overall goals are commendable and the AFMLTA on behalf of the State and Territory Modern Language Teachers Associations confirms a desire to see translation of these goals into action.

Our AFMLTA response to the *Action Plan* is outlined below. It takes key notions presented in the *Action Plan* and provides comment and discussion relating to the relevant issues.

1. The eight inter-related areas of the National Declaration are all-encompassing and will provide a suitable underpinning from which Australian teachers of languages and cultures (alongside their teaching colleagues in all other curriculum areas) can continue to support, adopt and enact the curriculum.
2. *Developing stronger partnerships* (page 5). The AFMLTA is keen to support any funded initiatives that help the intended developing of stronger partnerships. The already excellent work completed for languages education with the design and dissemination of Promotions Materials supporting the teaching and learning of languages can be drawn upon to do this.

3. *Supporting quality teaching and school leadership* (page 6). The AFMLTA acknowledges the importance placed on supporting quality teaching and school leadership. The Government's funding of the AFMLTA's *Professional Standards Project* will need to be further assisted financially beyond its 2010 end date in order to achieve the goal more fully by 2012.
4. *Strengthening early childhood education* (page 7). Some state and territory systems offer languages other than English programs in early childhood stages of schooling. The AFMLTA will support initiatives in the still few school contexts where languages other than English programs are embedded in the early childhood curriculum.
5. *Enhancing middle years development* (page 8). The AFMLTA supports these statements about the importance of recognising the middle years.
6. *Supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions* (page 9). The AFMLTA applauds the kind of general support that will be provided to senior students, and trusts that the Government aligns that action with the recently implemented *National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program* (NALSSP) which aims to increase the number of students completing Year 12 with an Asian language. The AFMLTA would support any moves that would enhance the learning of both Asian and European languages to Year 12.
7. *Promoting world-class curriculum and assessment* (page 10). The AFMLTA trusts that the Government will progress quickly on the development of the languages curriculum (after the first four key learning areas of English, mathematics, the sciences and history) in order to realise the goals of provision of world-class curriculum and assessment.
8. *Improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians, especially those from low socioeconomic backgrounds* (page 11). The AFMLTA applauds the additional plan to close the gap for Indigenous children and young people. The AFMLTA trusts that this will develop alongside a carefully constructed plan to include and acknowledge the teaching and learning of indigenous languages, the essence of these childrens' identities.
9. *Strengthening accountability and transparency* (page 12). The AFMLTA acknowledges the Government's plan to report on languages learning, alongside all other learning, in clear language to students and parents.

Overall, the AFMLTA maintains that through the learning of additional languages, successful learners can make more sense of their world and become confident individuals, interculturally aware, and competent to face their futures.



Lesley Harbon

President