



Where language and culture come together



COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AUSTRALIA

Where language and culture come together

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July 22, 2013

For Immediate release

MEDIA RELEASE

VICTORIAN STATE COMMUNITY LANGUAGES SCHOOLS CONFERENCE SHOWS THE DIVERSITY AND STRENGTH OF LANGUAGES EDUCATION IN VICTORIA

*Many cultures, many faiths, many backgrounds -
All in one room focused on one thing - Being better educators*

Languages - a skill to take into life, Using technology in the language classroom, Arts and languages education and Implementing the Victorian State Government's Languages Education Vision and Plan were the thrust of the highly successful Victorian State Community Languages Schools Conference held on Saturday July 6, 2013 at RMIT Storey Hall.

Community Languages Australia Executive Director **Stefan Romaniw** welcomed over 400 participants from over 20 communities who worked throughout the day to continue improving the quality of teaching and learning outcomes in community languages schools.

He also welcomed Council members of the Australian Federation of Ethnic Schools Associations (AFESA) who attended from the various States and Territories.

'Community languages school play a critical role in delivering the languages education agenda and have a responsibility to ensure that programs being delivered were of the highest quality,' Mr Romaniw said.

"The beauty of this room at this time is reflected daily in the community languages school sector around Australia - Many cultures, many faiths, many backgrounds - All in one room focused on one thing - Being better educators" Mr Romaniw said.

The Minister for Education **The Hon Martin Dixon** opened the conference highlighting the Victorian Government commitment to languages education and the important role community languages schools play in delivering the Government's plan. He commended the teachers for their efforts. The Minister also highlighted the funding support the Victorian Government provides to community languages schools. This should be seen as a strong sign of the Government's ongoing commitment.

AFESA Chairman **Tassos Douvartzides** thanked the Minister for his ongoing support and commitment to furthering language education. He highlighted the ongoing work of the sector and the importance of cooperation between government and the community.

Chris Thompson, Director Priority Programs, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) outlined the Victorian Government's Vision and Plans, explaining succinctly



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what the plan involved and how it was to be implemented. He also focused on the role community language schools should be playing in delivering the plan.

He also announced ongoing financial support for training, professional development and administrative support for community languages in Victoria.

Ghina Makari a Senior Communications Advisor with DEECD delivered a passionate presentation from a young person's perspective on learning language for life and as a life skill and where her life journey has taken her.

Further addresses stimulated discussion and provoked thinking.

Speakers and topic were;

Laila Hafez Candidate in the Faculty of Education University of Wollongong, spoke about *The Rise and Fall of Community Language School Education in Australia - A Regional Perspective*

Sarah Rogerson Classroom Teacher, French Hailey bury College inspired participants with her presentation - *Why technology? What technology? What it means for teaching languages? A fresh, practical approach to enhancing classroom activities*

Andrea Makris from Multicultural Arts Victoria put an interesting perspective on making classroom learning fun through the arts with her delivery titled *Language Education and the Arts - A vehicle for making language education interesting*

On arrival participants were entertained by artists from Multicultural Arts Victoria (MAV) **Ping Jiang** a Chinese Guzheng player, and **The Meander Side Project** a four instrumental group bringing ANAM and MAV artists together opened the Conference.

During lunch, roving accordion player **Phillippe** enchanted the audience as he moved around the tables singing popular songs in many languages. The room was alive with music, discussion and networking opportunities.

The afternoon workshops were all well attended.

Presenters **Laila Hafez, Sarah Rogerson, Dr Margaret Gearon, Andrea Makris, Dr Teresa De Fazio** and **Dr Andrea Truckenbrodt** workshopped practical classroom suggestions that captured the imagination of the many attendees.

Conference participants acknowledged the work of now retired DEECD Community languages school senior project officer **Kypros Kyprianou** and welcomed the new officer **Vicky Marinelis**.

Came 4.30pm - the close, but discussion, debate, laughter continued long after as participants mingled and evaluated the day's proceedings.

Another successful celebration of Victoria's United Nations coming together for the betterment of our students, the many communities they represent for Victoria and Australia.



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The next major event is the XII National Community Languages Schools Conference in Canberra on Saturday October 12, 2013. For further information contact -

Email: admin@actclsa.org.au Website: <http://www.actclsa.org.au>

Further information contact Stefan Romaniw 0419531255

Snapshot of photos can be found on <http://www.flickr.com/photos/98064791@N08/sets/72157634645760452/>

Further photos to be added

Some of the presentations can be found on our site <http://www.communitylanguagesaustralia.org.au>