

Leading Languages Education Project

Feedback from NSW (Sydney) Forum Workshop Session

Group 1 – Challenges & Issues

Identify the Challenges & Issues associated with establishing and maintaining Language programs in schools.

- Improving community perception of the importance of learning languages
- Improving staff perception of the importance of learning languages
- Commitment from system leaders for languages
- Commitment of school leadership to languages
- Languages need to have equal status as other KLA's
- Catering for the diversity of students' abilities in learning languages
- Need for provision of a continuum for learning languages through flexible timetabling
- Provision of languages from primary to senior secondary
- Need for advocacy for languages within schools and the wider community (eg Public figures like Kevin Rudd & Peter Fitzsimon)
- Accessing quality and qualified staff to teach Languages
- Overcoming bureaucratic red tape – PEAT – Recruitment (CLARIFY)
- Mandated subjects
- Funding
- Promoting the role that Languages curriculum and examinations occur nationally
- University entrance in NSW attracting additional points for studying languages as in Victoria

Group 2 – School Leadership

As the School Leadership Team what would you do to establish and maintain a Language Program in your school.

- Prepare a Strategic Plan for languages in your school
- Obtain a commitment from the school community
- Survey the school community
- Devise a promotion strategy for learning languages supported by research, data/English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) results which indicate improved literacy in language 1 through study of language 2
- Promote languages through assemblies, newsletters, awards, signage etc
- Seek community sponsorship
- Allocate resources to support Languages
- Promote and integrate Languages across all KLA's
- Establish links with countries overseas that speak the school's LOTE
- Hold a range of cultural activities
- Hold regular Language Days
- Ongoing & frequent evaluation of language programs
- Establish two way exchange programs
- Appoint Assistant Teachers
- Allocate requisite funding
- Lobby for financial support of student exchange programs

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Group 3 – System Leadership

As representatives of THE System (Departments etc) what would you do to establish Language Programs (which has been identified as a priority in your system) in schools

- Provide discretionary funding
- Support and funding for action research, post graduate study to build expertise and authority in teachers
- Provide means of disseminating current, good research on benefits of learning languages for students
- Provide system exposure to individual school/teacher initiatives doing exemplary things for languages
- Fund student trips
- Universities & University Admission Index – redress current disadvantage of downscaling of Beginners Courses. Reward/Advantage of matriculating with a second language
- System initiatives to attach value to learning a second language – eg. diversity of careers in Languages (provide case studies), advertise positive role models in the community
- Community Languages: identify the needs, know the changes third generation in the demographic (a) Continuers Course very hard for them (b) Inadequate resources – fund for a group of teachers to create
- Provide accreditation for native speaking non-qualified teachers who are often highly skilled (eg Institute teachers)
- Update current policy & increase the mandatory hours. This attaches value to Languages as a core subject.
- Establish a Languages Priority Policy in schools demonstrating commitment and ongoing support
- Provide guidelines for successful implementation of Languages Programs
- Provide Mentor programs for teachers in isolation
- Provide extensive professional development opportunities for teachers
- Establish system level links with education systems in other countries
- Identify and disseminate information about resources available including educational bodies, publications, professional organisations and institutions teaching languages

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Group 4 – Advocacy & Promotion of Languages

As a group set up and funded to advocate for & promote the study of Languages in your state, outline your PLAN (What, Who, Where, When, Why)

(A)

- Who: The business community
- What: Intercultural awareness and languages are essential ingredients to parity in trading relationships
- How: Media/advertisements; Infiltrate business networks to raise awareness and discuss what the educational sector can offer/Garner support from politicians (eg. Rudd, Vanstone etc) and public figures (eg, Nick Farr- Jones, Andrew Denton, NSW Governor etc)/Target university students to study overseas.
- Why: We don't want Australia to be the "developing country" in the world with respect to economic growth because of our lack of "savoir-faire"
- Where: Language advocacy on popular TV show (eg morning TV shows and Radio)/Kevin Rudd etc on "Meet the Press" or "Insight" talking up Languages/Business Councils/Business Week product/Chambers of Commerce (local areas targeted by local schools with teachers promoting languages at monthly meetings of local Chambers of Commerce or Council meetings)/Advertise in Business Magazines/ABC's "Difference of Opinion" to focus on Languages/Access scriptwriters of popular TV serials (eg Home & Away" & "Neighbours" etc to incorporate benefits of learning languages into their shows.

(B)

- Provide funding for overseas trips/exchanges for students, teachers and principals etc
- Fund positions across the state to carry out research, to compile research findings etc and establish network databases for new/continuing teachers
- Provide student teachers with a database of Language teachers of excellence and the means to access them
- Establish more Immersion programs
- Establish networks between schools
- Lobby universities to attract more students to study languages & provide more funded places
- Conduct a state-wide promotion of Languages education
- Identify key community members to promote languages
- Get Languages education on the political agenda
- Lobby politicians
- Lobby Education Administrators, Principals, Parent Associations about the benefits of learning another language – improved literacy, cultural understanding, improved outcomes for boys, employment opportunities, global citizens etc
- Adopt a community approach to transition programs

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