



AFMLTA

Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations

31 Hayman Rd
Boondall QLD 4034
www.afmlta.asn.au

The Honourable Dan Tehan
Minister for Education and Training
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

4 September 2018

Via email: minister@education.gov.au

Dear Minister

The Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations (AFMLTA) represents teachers of languages in the pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary and community school sectors. We have a membership of over 3500 teachers across the nation, as the umbrella association (federation) for languages teacher associations in all eight Australian states and territories.

We offer our congratulations to you in your new role as Minister of Education, and to the new generation Morrison government, dedicated to advancing the interests of the people of Australia.

We have enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the Department of Education and Training, working with Ministers Pyne and Birmingham in the more recent years. We have advised on languages education including development of the Australian Curriculum for languages since 2010, Year 12 retention strategies, facilitating intercultural language teaching and learning in line with the Melbourne Declaration on National Goals for Schooling, using professional standards for accomplished teaching of languages, fostering leadership in languages education, developing programs for pre-schools (most notably in the Early Learning Languages Australia [ELLA] apps program), and recently providing a commissioned report with Education Services Australia for the department around expanding ELLA into the early years of primary school.

We have been the recipients of a number of national project grants for several million dollars from the Federal Government over the last several decades, to improve languages teaching and learning, and to promote the importance of intercultural understanding and skills for all young learners in Australia. We have been able to achieve a great deal over these decades, collaboratively, to position languages teaching and learning at world standard in Australia, and to include in our community leading researchers in the field.

The AFMLTA Executive includes leading tertiary, secondary and primary researchers, teachers and languages consultants from across the states and territories, who are nationally and internationally renowned for their contributions to the field, and who have influence in all education jurisdictions across Australia, including government, Catholic and independent schools, and senior secondary boards of studies. We have held advisory roles with state and territory, and national education authorities including AITSL and ACARA. We have also worked closely with Education Services Australia (ESA) in developing digital and material resources including those of the Language Learning Space and the ELLA resources.

Prior to the recent formation of the Morrison government, we had an appointment with Minister Birmingham on 19 September, to progress discussions on:

- our report on expanding ELLA into the primary years
- collaborative plans to increase languages teaching and learning and further develop retention strategies across schools
- the urgent needs of diverse learners and languages and the variable engagement with these by different background cohorts of students
- increasing opportunities for and improving the quality of languages teachers, including language teacher supply issues
- advising on primary teacher specialisation programs in initial teacher education programs (a recommendation from the TEMAG report)
- developing a national database on languages teachers and programs
- and a plan to introduce a National Institute of Languages Education (NILE).

We are hoping your office will be able to find a time for us to continue these discussions, and are keen to meet with you and to understand your vision for languages education in Australia.

Should you require any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me at president@afmlta.asn.au, mobile 0402 821 651 or Sherryl Saunders, AFMLTA secretary, at secretary@afmlta.asn.au or mobile 0409 878 091.

We look forward to a favourable response and to meeting with you in the near future.

Yours faithfully



Amanda Pentti
President
AFMLTA