



# AFMLTA

**Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations**

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Ms Tanya Plibersek  
Member for Sydney  
Deputy Leader of the Opposition  
Shadow Minister for Education and Training  
Shadow Minister for Women  
1a Great Buckingham St  
Redfern NSW 2016

30 September 2018

Via email: [Tanya.Plibersek.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tanya.Plibersek.mp@aph.gov.au)

Dear Ms Plibersek

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 have enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the Department of Education and Training and working with the Minister for Education. 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.

We would like the opportunity to meet with you to discuss current issues for our Federation including:

- 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 Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group [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 discuss the work of our Federation, and are keen to meet with you and to understand your vision for languages education in Australia. We are able to meet at either your Parliamentary office in Canberra or at your electoral office in Sydney.

Should you require any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me at [president@afmlta.asn.au](mailto:president@afmlta.asn.au), mobile 0402 821 651 or Sherryl Saunders, AFMLTA secretary, at [secretary@afmlta.asn.au](mailto: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**