



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Multicultural Education and Languages Committee (MELC)

Report for the Minister for Education, Training and Skills



Government of  
South Australia

Published by

The Multicultural Education and Languages Committee (MELC)

Department for Education

Contact

Executive Officer

Multicultural Education and Languages Committee

GPO Box 1152

Adelaide, South Australia, 5001

Email: [education.mecs@sa.gov.au](mailto:education.mecs@sa.gov.au)

Website: [www.education.sa.gov.au/department/about-department/minister-education/melc](http://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/about-department/minister-education/melc)



## Introduction from the Chair



I am pleased to present the 2023 Multicultural Education and Languages Committee (MELC) Annual Report as the newly appointed Chair.

The Multicultural Education and Languages Committee is a Ministerial Advisory Committee whose responsibility includes to contribute to contemporary research, policy and practices that promote linguistic and cultural diversity education in South Australia. The Committee provides an exciting and contemporary vision to advance intercultural capability for global learning.

The year saw the appointment of a new committee, with three meetings held during 2023. The MELC endorsed the 2023-2024 MELC Workplan as a critical priority.

The MELC contributed feedback on the Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care, the Purpose Statement for Public Education, National Framework for Respectful Relationships Education in Schools, and the Teacher's Registration Board draft Code of Conduct for teachers. Members also attended the Community Language Schools SA (CLSSA) Celebration of Multilingual Voices at Parliament House, and the National Community Language Conference at the University of Adelaide.

A snapshot of projects considered in 2023 included:

- Professional development opportunities provided by the Association of Independent Schools SA for culturally safe classrooms and reconciliation initiatives in Independent Schools
- Catholic Education SA's contribution to the Australian Curriculum languages review, language professional learning and networks, and response to the Italian Language Teacher Assistants program
- The Adelaide University Multilingual Voice Project
- Multicultural Youth SA Parent Engagement Research
- Community Language Schools SA (CLSSA) Early Learning and Raising Literacy projects.

As part of the MELC's strong continued support towards provision of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD), the committee hosted a series of online seminars through an 'Expanding Understanding of EALD' project. The seminars were open to educators, leaders and education advisory officers from the three education sectors in South Australia and were facilitated by Professor Constant Leung, a world expert in EALD from the Department for Education and Professional Studies, King's College London. MELC is also proud to facilitate Professor Leung's visit to Adelaide in 2024 as



## The committee

### Role and purpose

The MELC provides advice to the South Australian Minister for Education, Training and Skills

Table 1: MELC members during 2023

Mr Noel Mifsud	Chairperson, independent
Ms Deonne Smith	Department for Education
Ms Teresa Cimmino	Catholic Education South Australia (CESA)
Mrs Deb Dalwood	Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (AISSA)
Associate Professor Kayoko Enomoto	South Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (SAVCC)
Ms Shaza Ravaji	South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission (SAMEAC)
Associate Professor Harry Savelsberg	Multicultural Youth SA (MYSA)
Ms Sally Letcher	

Reports from members are an important part of MELC's information-sharing processes. They provide a mechanism for keeping MELC up to date with what is happening in the sectors and organisations represented on the committee. Due to the newly appointed Committee in early 2023, three meetings were held during the year (see Table 2).



## Provision of policy, strategy and advice

One of the key focus areas in the MELC 2023-

Overwhelmingly, the roundtable attendees agreed that there remains a need for further contemporary professional learning for EALD educators, leaders and officers involved in the provision of EALD support in schools. Attendees also provided advice on the proposed professional learning project involving Professor Leung.

## Teacher Registration Board – Code of Conduct

The MELC provided a response to the request from the Teacher’s Registration Board (TRB) consultation process for a proposed code of conduct for teachers.

The *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* provides TRB with the ability to publish or adopt codes of conduct and professional standards. The aim of the Code is to support the work of TRB by making the behaviour expected of teachers in South Australia transparent and to safeguard the public interest by protecting children and young people, while also promoting and maintaining public confidence in the teaching profession.

## Early learning

During 2022, MELC commissioned an advice paper on languages and early learning. The aim of this advice paper was to explore aspects of languages learning in early learning settings and investigate the use of the Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) app as well as other languages learning practices in the SA context.

Following review and synthesis of current research literature related to early-start language acquisition, consultations were conducted with key stakeholders, including those at the forefront of the provision of early childhood languages education. This included educators and educational officers from across the three educational sectors: The Department for Education, CESA and AISSA. The paper considers the research in light of current policy and government initiatives and reveals insights into what is currently happening in local early childhood languages learning initiatives, programs, and experiences.

Through this process, three key themes were established:

- Theme 1 – A vital need for a naturalistic and holistic approach to early-start languages education
- Theme 2 – Needs and issues related to policy and practice implementation and integration of languages education
- Theme 3 – Opportunities and challenges in using the ELLA app.

Current research and the firsthand perspectives of those who work in fields related to early childhood languages learning highlights



*Thomas And Coen Pearson at Australia Day Awards Ceremony*

Thomas and Coen Pearson are proud, young Ngarrindjeri men and senior leaders within the Meningie Area School. As brothers they have a strong partnership and commitment to their Ngarrindjeri language and culture and are passionate about sharing this knowledge across their school and local community.

This commitment and passion to their First Nation's culture is demonstrat.1 (-)2 N C5uwl Nshomas a4 (s)-25(i)-35.1io ihltrs27 (i)-(c)

## Award for Leadership in Languages and Cultures: Category 2

Recipient –

Ms Tahlia Reissen – Avenues College

Tahlia studied Auslan at school at the Avenues College and completed a Diploma of Interpreting, becoming a qualified Auslan/English interpreter. She has returned to Avenues College working as a Bilingual Support Officer in the Centre of

As an Ambassador for the charitable organisation Youth Opportunities, Mussa inspires confidence in young people, particularly new migrants and refugees to embrace new opportunities and to maintain and develop their linguistic and cultural heritage.

## Appendix A: Sub-committees 2023

### Award for Leadership in Languages and Cultures

*Purpose: to serve on the selection panel and provide advice in*

## Appendix B: Other forums with MELC representation

### The School of Languages Council – MELC representative

*Purpose: to represent MELC at School of Languages Council meetings.*

- Mr Brett Shuttleworth