



Australian Government

Quality Teacher
Programme

National Forum
Engaging
Young
Australians
with Asia



June 2005
Report



Asia Education Foundation



The National Forum, *Engaging Young Australians with Asia*, was organised by the Asia Education Foundation and held at the National Museum, Canberra on Monday 20th June and Tuesday 21st June 2005.

This report was prepared by Zbar Consulting Pty Ltd for the Asia Education Foundation.

October 2005

Published by the Asia Education Foundation

The Asia Education Foundation is a national organisation that promotes and supports the engagement of young Australians with Asia. It is a joint activity of Asialink at The University of Melbourne and Curriculum Corporation with core funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. The AEF works in partnership with government and non-government education sectors in all States and Territories.

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This product was funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training through the Asia Education Foundation under the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme.



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Acknowledgements

The Asia Education Foundation gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the following people to the National Forum:

Forum Leadership

- ▶ Tony Mackay

Speakers

- ▶ The Hon. Alexander Downer MP, Dr Michele Bruniges, Judith Bundy, Geraldine Doogue AO, John Firth, Professor Mary Kalantzis, Professor Allan Luke, Dr Trish Mercer, Paul Minifie, Dr Paul Monk, Julie O'Keefe, Sophie Palavestra, Anil Sagaram, Dr Erica Wood, Allan Wu

State and Territory Advisers

- ▶ Australian Capital Territory: Kratai Visityuthasart and Barbara Jackson
- ▶ New South Wales: Lianne Singleton
- ▶ Northern Territory: Jennifer Ure
- ▶ Queensland: Marcia Rouen
- ▶ South Australia: Lee Grafton
- ▶ Tasmania: Jan Kiernan
- ▶ Victoria: Jill Wilson
- ▶ Western Australia: Pamela Stewart

AEF Board

- ▶ Professor Field Rickards, (Chair) Dean of Education, The University of Melbourne
- ▶ Ted Brierley, President, Australian Secondary Principals' Association
- ▶ Judith Bundy, President, Australian Council of State School Organizations
- ▶ Tom Croker, Australian Primary Principals' Association
- ▶ Ian Dalton, Executive Director, Australian Parents Council
- ▶ Norma Jeffery, Australasian Curriculum and Assessment Certification Authorities
- ▶ Professor Robin Jeffrey, Asian Studies Association of Australia
- ▶ Professor Mary Kalantzis, Australian Council of Deans of Education
- ▶ Susan Mann, CEO, Curriculum Corporation
- ▶ Dr Trish Mercer, Group Manager, Schools Outcomes Group, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training
- ▶ Jenny McGregor, CEO, Asialink, The University of Melbourne
- ▶ Dr Jane Orton, The University of Melbourne
- ▶ Dr John Roulston, Independent Schools Council of Australia
- ▶ Gillian Shadwick, General Manager, Learning and Development, NSW Department of Education and Training
- ▶ Dr Dahle Suggett, Deputy Secretary, Office of Teaching and Learning, Department of Education and Training, Victoria
- ▶ Anne Tumak, President, Australian Joint Council of Professional Teacher Associations
- ▶ Joan Warhurst, CEO, National Catholic Education Commission
- ▶ Terry Woolley, Director, Learning Outcomes and Curriculum, Department of Education and Children's Services, South Australia



Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| ▶ Background to the Forum | 4 |
| ▶ Purpose of the Report | 4 |
| ▶ Executive Summary | 5 |
| ▶ Day One: Forum Opening | |
| * Education for my future: | 9 |
| Sophie Palavestra, Year 12 student | |
| * The Forum Responds | 11 |
| * Keynote Address One: | 12 |
| <i>Making Sense of China</i> , Dr Paul Monk, Austthink | |
| ▶ Day Two | |
| * Welcome: | 15 |
| Dr Trish Mercer, Department of Education, Science and Training | |
| * Keynote Address Two: | 17 |
| <i>Asia and Australia</i> , The Hon. Alexander Downer MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs | |
| * Panel One: | 21 |
| <i>Young Australians engaging with Asia</i> Convened by Geraldine Doogue AO, ABC | |
| * Panel Two: | 25 |
| <i>The role of education in equipping young Australians to engage with Asia</i> Convened by Tony Mackay | |
| * Viewpoint One: | 30 |
| Professor Allan Luke, Dean, National Institute of Education, Singapore | |
| * Viewpoint Two: | 32 |
| Asia Education Foundation: Kathe Kirby, Executive Director | |
| ▶ Best Practice Workshops | |
| * Workshop 1: | 35 |
| <i>Developing intercultural understanding</i> Dr Julie Hamston, The University of Melbourne | |
| * Workshop 2: | 36 |
| <i>An engaging relationship — young Australians, values and Asia</i> David Brown, Curriculum Corporation | |
| * Workshop 3: | 37 |
| <i>English — An ‘Asia’ scope and sequence</i> Joan Holt & Robert Baker, Curriculum Corporation | |
| * Workshop 4: | 38 |
| <i>Linking languages across the curriculum</i> Julie Browett, University of Tasmania | |
| * Workshop 5: | 39 |
| <i>Leading curriculum change</i> Dr John Owen, Program Review Consultants, Helen McIntyre, Beechworth Secondary College, Jack Lemon, Clare Primary School | |
| ▶ State, Territory and National Team Meetings | 40 |
| * Responses to the draft National Statement | 40 |
| * Priorities and next steps for jurisdictions and organisations | 41 |
| * Priorities and next steps for the AEF | 41 |
| ▶ Forum Program | 43 |
| ▶ Biographies | 45 |
| ▶ Participants | 47 |



The highlights of the Forum were the time to listen to passionate, informed and articulate speakers like Sophie Palavestra, Allan Wu and Allan Luke and the opportunity for me as a non studies of Asia person to see firsthand how my work and that of my colleagues could sit much more closely aligned.

**Participant,
South Australia.**

The Forum certainly provided compelling arguments to support the Access Asia program – we thought it would be worthwhile to have a two day forum in future.

**Participant,
Western Australia.**

BACKGROUND TO THE FORUM

The National Forum, *Engaging Young Australians with Asia*, was an initiative of the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) with funding from the Department of Education, Science and Training under the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme (AGQTP).

The Forum invited 130 key education stakeholders to:

- respond to the draft on *Engaging Young Australians with Asia: A Statement for Australian Schools*; and
- participate in a professional learning opportunity which showcased best practice in relation to studies of Asia in Australian schools.

Participants in the Forum comprised State and Territory Teams of government and non-government representatives, school principals and teachers plus AEF Board members and presidents of peak education bodies including principals' associations, parent bodies, Deans of Education, Asian Studies academics and curriculum associations.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to summarise the contributions of Forum presenters, best practice workshops and State/Territory working group deliberations as input to the development of the draft *Engaging Young Australians with Asia: A Statement for Australian Schools* and to highlight best practice in studies of Asia and Australia in Australian schools.

FORUM PROGRAMME

The Forum Programme is included as an Appendix to this report.



Executive Summary

The National Forum, *Engaging Young Australians with Asia*, was an initiative of the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) with funding from the Department of Education, Science and Training under the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme (AGQTP).

The Forum invited 130 key education stakeholders to:

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- ▶ participate in a professional learning opportunity which showcased best practice in relation to studies of Asia in Australian schools.

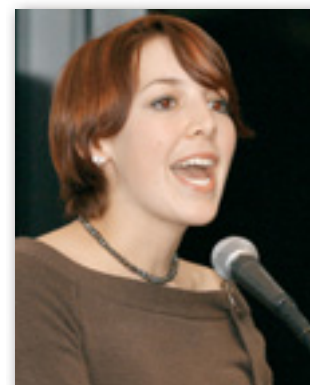
The challenge

Year 12 student, Sophie Palavestra asked Forum participants to understand how she thinks about her future as she prepares for the type of job and world she seeks. Her world, she explained, has Asia as a strong focus. She knows, in this context, what it means to be a global citizen and hoped her teachers did too. So, she challenged them, 'do you know what to teach me? Do you know what I need to learn? Are you confident you can design a curriculum which will equip me to live in my world?'

In response, China specialist Dr Paul Monk provided a compelling argument for a strategic vision and resource commitment that will do justice to our efforts as a nation to become 'a crossroads between East and West, rather than ... an enclave of Western civilization awkwardly planted on the periphery of the East by a vanished Empire'. This in turn, he argued, requires us to create 'a coherent curriculum in our schools that can introduce young Australians to the general knowledge and cognitive skills necessary for them to feel at ease in a global world, not a backward or inward looking one'. And in such a curriculum, Asia must loom large.

Foreign Affairs Minister, The Hon. Alexander Downer MP, responded to a question about the key elements of an education for young Australian students, by saying that it would involve knowing 'something about the history of Asia ... something about the geography of Asia... and more importantly they should know something about the cultures of Asia'. Knowing about the major cultures in our region is 'crucially important' and he made a 'passionate plea' to teachers to advance this agenda in positive ways.

ABC Broadcaster Geraldine Doogue AO asked a panel of young Australians working in Asia to give a sense of how their education had equipped them for their current roles. Red Cross medico, Dr Erica Wood, argued, 'depth of communication is more than just words'. 'Chinese cities', said Paul Minifie, one of many Australian architects now working in China, 'present an enormous number of pragmatic challenges like getting concrete quickly on the ground.' Managing this on a daily basis requires cultural understanding. Shanghai born Alan Wu approached it from the perspective of Asian students engaging with Australia and noted important cultural differences, including in our respective attitudes towards education, which can result in these students feeling alienated and left out. 'The playing field', he noted, 'may not be as level as you think'.



Are you confident you can design a curriculum which will equip me to live in my world?

Sophie Palavestra,
Year 12 Student,
Narrabundah College,
ACT.



Knowing about the major cultures in our region is 'crucially important.'

The Hon.
Alexander Downer MP,
Minister for Foreign
Affairs.



The Government 'accepts the challenge of ensuring all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills and values for the 21st century global, knowledge-based world'.

**Dr Trish Mercer,
Group Manager,
Schools Outcomes Group,
Australian Government
Department of Education,
Science and Training.**

From a system perspective we need to acknowledge the sort of new operating context flagged by Sophie Palavestra... 'a clarification of who we are educating and for what purpose'.

**Dr Michele Bruniges,
CEO, ACT Department of
Education and Training.**

Achievements

The existence of these challenges is not to deny substantial achievements to date in engaging young Australians with Asia in Australian schools. As Kathe Kirby (AEF) noted, and participants at the forum evening session agreed, studies of Asia were, a decade ago, seen as 'exotic, interesting and marginal'. They now are now viewed as 'an imperative' and the shared understanding of this, evident in the Forum, constitutes 'a profound and substantial shift'.

This reflects, as Dr Trish Mercer (Department of Education, Science and Training) pointed out, the significant achievements of the AEF. Which were well-attested at the Forum dinner session. They include:

- ▶ the development of a framework for teaching and learning in the form of the studies of Asia statement
- ▶ around 65 Access Asia resources of very high quality which, in some cases, have won prestigious excellence awards for educational publishing
- ▶ professional learning for thousands of teachers; and
- ▶ a network of studies of Asia and Australia advisers who play an important role.

In addition, the Australian Government has committed substantial resources over the years for the area, including the opportunity to negotiate for access to the Australian Government Quality Teaching Programme (AGQTP) funds at State/Territory level. The Government, in this context, 'accepts the challenge of ensuring all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills and values for the 21st century global, knowledge-based world'. Studies of Asia are central to that in the sort of terms Paul Monk used when describing Australia's potential role as a cross roads between East and West.

That said, there is an urgency, which Professor Allan Luke suggested may not be sufficiently evident in our discussions to date. Rather than having five to seven years to get it all right, 'the train', he cautioned, 'is leaving the station' and Australia must find ways to 'proactively' engage with what will be the centre of the world's economy and a major cultural centre as well. It is, as Minister Downer observed, a matter not of fashion, but of simple common sense.

Stakeholders

There are many stakeholders with an interest in studies of Asia and Australia but central, perhaps, are the education systems, curriculum and assessment authorities, parents' associations, teachers and their professional organisations and the Deans of Education, all of which were represented on a panel discussing the role of education in equipping young Australians to engage with Asia.

From a system perspective we need to acknowledge the sort of new operating context flagged by Sophie Palavestra... 'a clarification of who we are educating and for what purpose'. This in turn requires the 'right conditions' be established to foster connectedness and people to people relationships and capacity building support so the workforce can actually deliver what is required.

Whilst curriculum developments and the growing focus nationally and internationally on what is essential for young people to learn, create a sympathetic environment, John Firth (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority) did point to a dilemma about how much ought be made explicit

within curriculum documents. The real question that needs to be addressed with the new National Statement is how the knowledge base embedded in it, which is fundamental to the attitudinal changes that are sought, can move 'beyond a possibility to a requirement in any of our jurisdictions'.

Certainly parents, according to Judith Bundy (Australian Council of State School Organisations) see a need to engage more with Asia', but the fundamental challenge is to ensure they are involved. Echoing Firth's dilemma to some extent, NSW teacher, Julie O'Keefe listed a range of factors behind the successful implementation of studies of Asia in her school but, when pushed to nominate the most important one, suggested the thing that really would move things forward would be to ensure the view of Asia is clear and obvious in the curriculum rather than teachers having to search to find it.

And Professor Mary Kalantzis (Australian Council of Deans of Education) pointed to a number of opportunities for this sort of explicitness to be pursued such as through the current review of teacher education and the National Institute of Quality Teaching and School Leadership, the potential to revive cultural understanding as a key competency in the context of curriculum initiatives in various States and Territories, and just generally becoming more engaged in the public discourse that exists. Whilst the Deans are working on these, she noted, they 'must be done collaboratively if we want to achieve the bigger picture outcome where diversity is core and not marginal to the agenda'.

Engaging Young Australians with Asia: A Statement for Australian Schools.

With a wide range of input, including the opportunity to participate in a series of best practice workshops, participants met in State and Territory groups and one National group to consider the draft National Statement and key priorities for moving forward on the agenda as a whole. In doing so, they sought to address Kathie Kirby's three challenges to:

- ▶ secure a firm place for studies of Asia and Australia in current curriculum practice
- ▶ reach all schools — especially the 70% of Australian schools which have not previously been part of the Access Asia Schools Network; and
- ▶ provide teacher professional learning that will update teachers' Asia knowledge and support them to effect curriculum change.

The most consistent message to emerge from State, Territory and National responses was the need to clarify the audience for the Statement. It may not be possible to satisfy both policy makers on the one hand, and teachers who need to implement it on the other.

Noel Simpson (Department of Education, Science and Training) welcomed the feedback and noted the primary audience in the first instance is Ministers at the Ministerial Council of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). If such a statement was endorsed as a broad policy framework, it could be supplemented by separate documents and action plans developed by jurisdictions for schools.

The other main item of feedback consistently advanced was the need for a sense of urgency in the Statement and a more explicit approach so the Statement could be a call to action in schools.



Certainly parents see a need to engage more with Asia.

Judith Bundy,
President, Australian
Council of State School
Organisations.



...we have seen a level of urgency emerge and a convergence of ideas to underpin the finalisation of the National Statement.

Professor Field Rickards,
Dean of Education, The
University of Melbourne.



**Andrew Blair,
Australian Secondary
Principals' Association.**

Next Steps

The groups advanced a number of suggestions for priority action and next steps, primarily focused on linking where possible with other national initiatives such as civics and citizenship education and values education, and with curriculum developments in States and Territories, particularly related to specifying what is 'essential' for students to learn and know.

The continuing role of the AEF was seen as critical in this regard, as is recognised by Minister Brendan Nelson's decision, announced by Dr Mercer, to extend its core funding for another three years. In particular it was suggested the AEF should continue to add to the resources and professional learning opportunities for teachers, but could also play a key dissemination role once the National Statement was endorsed. In that sense a MCEETYA-endorsed statement would be, according to Kathe Kirby, 'a stepping off point for sustainable change'.

As Professor Field Rickards (AEF Chair) observed in closing the Forum, we have seen a level of urgency emerge and a convergence of ideas on how the National Statement could help us move to the next stage.



**Tom Croker,
Australian Primary
Principals' Association.**



Day One Forum Opening

Educating for MY future:

Sophie Palavestra, Year 12 student

The Forum opened with a Dinner Session at the National Museum, Canberra on Monday 20 June. Sophie Palavestra, a student from Narrabundah College in the ACT, began the Forum with her perspective on the future and her role in creating it.¹

Addressing participants as her teachers, the 18 year old specifically invited them 'to understand what I am learning to believe, how I think about my future and what my world-view is'; in the context of a presumed shared desire for her to be a success in the world and for which she will be responsible.

Her world is, she explained, 'already very different from the one you have grown up in. On present life expectancy figures, I will live until I am well over 80. So I will be alive and well in the 2050s, and my children will live to see the twenty-second century ... Wherever I live and work, I will certainly be mixing in a multinational, multifaith, multicultural setting. I will need to think about that when I prepare for a job.'

A planet-wide economic system, she noted, will operate during her lifetime 'controlled not so much by big nations as by big business networks and regional centres of trade like Singapore, Los Angeles, Tokyo, and Sydney. By the time I am 35, more people will live in Shanghai than in the whole of the South Pacific including Australia and New Zealand.' The really prosperous countries in this context, 'will trade in technical skills, problem solving skills and in strategic brokerage. These workers will be the knowledge workers: working across national borders; working inter-culturally; speaking more than one language, probably including an Asian language.' That, she indicated, is the kind of job she wants, which is one reason she is learning Japanese.

'Asia will', she added, 'be a strong focus of my world. The Asian continent (from India to Japan) already accounts for half the world's population. A Hong Kong bank advertises now, "There are three billion people in Asia. Half of them are under 25". They are my contemporaries. They will be my partners, my competitors.'

'It will not matter what nationality I have, because my world is smaller, people move about, and most workplaces will be internationalised. My world is likely to be borderless. I will probably be employed in an internationally owned firm, and it is likely that in my home we will speak Japanese, Korean, Spanish, or Chinese as a second language.'

The environment in which she lives also will be changed. 'In the 1950s, when my parents were born, only two cities in the world, London and New York, had more than 8 million inhabitants, and each was called a megalopolis. In 2015, there will be about thirty-four such cities, half of them in Asia. Environmentally what happens within the border of one country is no longer solely that country's business. Environmental responsibilities will be enforced



Asia will be a strong focus of my world.

**Sophie Palavestra,
Year 12 student.**

I thought the Forum was excellent at generating debate on achievements and future challenges. Importantly, the interactive highly participatory way you structured the Forum created a sense of community among participants.

**Participant,
New Zealand.**

¹ Palavestra's address drew on the work of Hedley Beare, *Creating a Future School* (Routledge Falmer 2000)



'I will study Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Tim Winton, some Buddhist texts from India, the Greek tragedies, some novels from South Korea, the history of China and the politics of South America. Do you know', Palavestra asked the Forum, 'what an international curriculum looks like, and how it can be taught?'



Next steps include recognising that whilst schools are prime movers, there also is a need to engage parents and communities if we are to take the steps we want.

**Maureen Welch,
AEF Director.**

internationally. By the time I am 50, the world could be threatened by "green wars" unless my generation does something to balance up the unequal access to clean water, to good topsoil, to electric power and to food distribution outlets.'

Together tourism and travel are, Palavestra observed, becoming the world's biggest industry and globally will employ the largest number of people. 'Do you know it has been predicted that in 25-30 years there will be 5-10 million Chinese tourists, alone, visiting Australia each year? What skills and understandings will Australians working in the tourism and travel industry need?'

What may be learned

Turning to sources of information, she pointed out that she already learns as much from television as she does from school. 'Each year I watch about 22,000 commercials which tell me what I should value, what I should eat and what sort of behaviour is acceptable. Because about 85 percent of the world's output of videos, films, CDs and TV programmes comes from the United States, my classmates and I are absorbing American culture and values.'

By far the world's largest Muslim country, she indicated in this context, is Indonesia, which means she will have to learn about Islam at school. And since the 'tigers of Asia' are largely Confucian economies, schools will also 'need to teach about those characteristics of Confucian societies which produce economic success and community cohesion. A lot of the older textbooks used around the world were Eurocentric in their thinking and out-of-date.'

Her school says she needs to be a global citizen. 'I know what that means. I hope you do. My views about the planet and the universe are probably very different from yours. To me the planet is not a machine. It is alive. It is a single, complex, living organism, and I have to nurture its health and growth. That fact has changed the way my family and I live, it influences local and world politics, it is changing my system of beliefs and my values, it influences what I buy, sell, and eat, and it is a strong factor in my choice of occupation and where we choose to live.'

All the things of which Palavestra spoke are, in her view, 'the raw materials I use to weave my life together. I want to be hopeful and happy and comfortable about my future. Most of all, I want to be wise over what to believe about me and my world. I want to know what the wisest people on earth believe. I want to know how to be a success with my life. I want the world to be a beautiful place for my grandchildren. My school-teachers are very important to me because they tell me how to deal with the future — the long, long future.'

'So', she concluded, 'do you know what to teach me? Do you know what I need to learn? Are you confident that you can design a curriculum which will equip me to live in my world? My name is Sophie. And I am a student in one of your classrooms today.'

The Forum Responds

Forum Leader, Tony Mackay (Director of the Centre for Strategic Educational Thinking), asked participants to consider this input at their tables with particular reference to the major achievements and next steps for the studies of Asia and Australia in Australian schools, if Sophie's vision for her future is to be achieved. Mackay then gathered comments around the room to provide a starting point for deliberations on the following day.

Participants were of the strong view that while much had been achieved in this area, the work was not complete. There were strong building blocks in place. The next challenge would be to sustain progress made and firmly embed studies of Asia and Australia in curriculum guidelines and debate. Key achievements noted by participants included :

- ▶ a platform has been established on which studies of Asia and Australia can be built
- ▶ the contribution of NALSAS to both languages and culture developments has been crucial
- ▶ there is now increased awareness by teachers in Australian schools that studies of Asia and Australia are necessary in our country and strong networks have developed amongst teachers and schools
- ▶ studies of Asia and Australia now occur across the curriculum with syllabuses in some jurisdictions now including some studies of Asia, including the use of Asian texts in year 11/12 English courses
- ▶ Asian languages are now taught from kindergarten to Year 12
- ▶ professional learning programmes on engagement with Asia are in place for Australian teachers: AEF teacher study tours were cited as providing crucial 'on the ground experience,' with Asia EdNet considered 'an excellent resource.'

Next steps to be taken in light of these achievements could include:

- ▶ educators really addressing the question of 'who we are educating and for what purpose'
- ▶ ensuring that studies of Asia are in the teacher training curriculum to make it sustainable
- ▶ linking to other initiatives in the way the draft National Statement proposes
- ▶ actually engaging young Australians with Asia rather than just focusing on studies of Asia in curriculum
- ▶ recognising that whilst schools are prime movers, there also is a need to engage parents and communities 'if we are to take the steps we want'.



Lee Grafton,
AEF Adviser,
South Australia.



Forum discussion.



... both talk of China and interest in it come more naturally to today's young Australians than to us in the past.

Dr Paul Monk, Austhink.

The working dinner was an excellent idea and a fantastic way to open the Forum. The discussion topics set the wheel in motion for the next day's sessions.

Participant, Victoria.

Keynote Address One

Making Sense of China

Dr Paul Monk

Professor Field Rickards (Chair, AEF Board) introduced Dr Paul Monk to deliver the first keynote address. In planning the Forum, Rickards explained, the AEF looked at 'the sheer size of China in both economic and global terms' and hence the major influence it would have on our children's future world. As a recent Time magazine article observed, he quoted

... whether they're consumers or producers, shareholders or voters, labourers or art mavens, citizens of the world or school children, Australians can feel the dragon's heat. China is at once an old friend, a potential foe, a buyer, a seller, an alien nation and a muse. It's the face and spirit of globalisation.

As co-founder of Austhink, a critical thinking skills research, training and consulting firm, and former senior intelligence analyst in the Defence Intelligence Organisation with a PhD in International Relations, Dr Paul Monk is, Rickards explained, well qualified to speak on China with reference to what it makes sense for us to know.

'When I was in school', Monk explained, China 'simply did not feature in the curriculum ... nor was it other than a fleeting background presence in everyday life'. His first contact was as a nine year old who received a Ladybird book on Marco Polo for his birthday.

In the 1980s, because he was interested in the Cold War, he undertook a PhD that included a focus on what was, in today's terms, terrorist movements and activities including those in East Asia. This in turn led him to seek employment in the intelligence community so as to 'make a difference' to his own country.

In 1994, Monk was promoted to 'head of China analysis' in the Defence Intelligence Organisation which, he conceded, 'may sound rather glorified ... but when I took over as head ... I was China analysis'. Ten years earlier there had been 20 people doing it and many more in the Defence Signals Directorate but, with the opening of China, and the perception it no longer was a threat, resources had diminished. Monk shared some anecdotes from the time to demonstrate the 'extraordinary dearth' of knowledge that existed about China.

The reason Monk told these stories is that he suspects they are similar to the difficulties educators experience in preparing the younger generation to understand Asia, and China in particular, where there are 'too few people with too little training and too few resources trying to handle such a task.'

We all, he argued, are 'roughly aware of how dramatically things have changed' since 1969 and especially since the opening up of China in 1979. China has an enormous impact on Australia which will only deepen in coming years, including on our education system. We now encounter China in ways that previously were not the case and both talk of China and interest in it come 'more naturally' to today's young Australians than to us in the past.

Education response to the rise of China

The question is, he suggested, do we have in place the educational infrastructure, the strategic vision and the resource commitments to do justice to it and to enable young Australians to seize the opportunities that are opening up?

We could, for example, look to our relationships with the US and Japan as models to follow, since we have absorbed their impact in organic ways. 'Perhaps'. We need, Monk argued, 'to give very energetic thought to how we can incorporate into our curriculum a quite new approach to what it means to be an educated and enabled young Australian in the first decades of the 21st century.'

That new approach should 'pivot on a vision of Australia as a cross-roads between East and West, rather than as an enclave of Western civilization awkwardly planted on the periphery of the East by a vanished Empire. We must look to our future and there are some important guidelines as to how we might best do so.'

Education's role in this context is to introduce young people to 'a real world for which, in their turn, they will have to assume responsibility'. And it's a world where the rise of Asia and China in particular is central.

Quoting the palaeo-anthropologist Richard Leakey's view of change in the biosphere as an example of movements that transcend history and dwarf our perception of 'ancient' history in particular, there is a need he identified to 'rethink and modify our ideas right down to their roots'. More specifically, we need to view China's rise in the same way — as a significant 'paradigm shift'. It goes beyond developing a few skills, such as learning the language, and involves instead putting China's history in perspective 'as part of the larger human story and then seeing the global significance of that history and of China's current resurgence'.

That, he explained, 'demands a large vision and much imagination. It entails finding, translating or actually conceiving and writing new histories and stories; it involves transcending clichés about China's so-called 5,000 years of history and its modern grievances about Western imperialism, to access more of the human complexity of China's past and open up more of the divergent possibilities for its future.'

Understanding how China has got to the current point, and of the struggle for political modernisation, must become 'as central a part of our school curriculum as the histories of Greece and Rome, Britain and the US have long been'.

Similarly, we 'should educate young Australians to appreciate the voices and testimonies of those many Chinese thinkers from Yan Fu in the late nineteenth century to Wei Jingsheng in the late twentieth, who saw China as having a more open and freer future. That is the common human China; that is the China we can all relate to; that is why it is the China we should draw to the attention of young Australians, all of whom will have to understand the phenomenon of China in their lifetimes, even if they do not themselves learn Chinese, or specialise in matters directly to do with China.'

Understanding how China has got to the current point... must become as central a part of our school curriculum as the histories of Greece and Rome, Britain and the US have long been.



Kratai Visityuthasart,
AEF Adviser, ACT.



We need, Monk argued, 'to give very energetic thought to how we can incorporate into our curriculum a quite new approach to what it means to be an educated and enabled young Australian in the first decades of the 21st century'.

If, he concluded, he was to leave participants with a single message, it would be that 'we should be creating a coherent curriculum in our schools and universities that can introduce young Australians to the general knowledge and cognitive skills necessary for them to feel at ease in a global world, not a backward or inward looking one.'

In such a curriculum, China must bulk large, both because of its impressive place in the global human story and because of its current resurgence and emerging importance. We should cast all this as a vast and rich enlargement of the old idea of a classical education and encourage our best young scholars to delve into the great conundrums of the past as well as the big challenges of the future. If we do that, we will give Australia its best chance of dealing comfortably and creatively with a world that is changing in rapid and fascinating ways. We shall also deepen our own humanity and enlarge our living culture in the process.



Mackay asked, 'what is the most compelling advocacy we could take up to advance the purpose of engaging young Australians with Asia?'

It comes down to 'a capacity to communicate and a desire to learn'. The capacity to communicate empowers people and the capacity of citizens to communicate empowers the nation. So the question is, he concluded, 'what is most going to empower our young people to communicate effectively in our modern, global world?'

In thanking Paul Monk on behalf of the Forum, Sue Mann (CEO, Curriculum Corporation) reminded the audience of what 'Sophie told us tonight...half a billion young Chinese are her contemporaries. It is with those contemporaries that she and our students will do business with, cooperate with, communicate with, study with and make friends with. Your speech tonight Paul has assisted us to identify what might be important to include in our childrens' education – and that's one of the purposes of this Forum'.

The capacity to communicate empowers people and the capacity of citizens to communicate empowers the nation. So the question is, what is most going to empower our young people to communicate effectively in our modern, global world?

Day Two Welcome

Dr. Trish Mercer

**Group Manager, Schools Outcomes Group, Australian Government
Department of Education, Science and Training**

After an acknowledgment of the Ngunnawal people on whose land the meeting was being held, Dr Mercer formally greeted delegates and set the scene for the day. Mercer began by apologising for Minister Nelson who was unable to attend due to commitments in the last sitting week of Parliament before the winter recess but who had asked her to represent him and make an announcement on his behalf.

The Forum, she noted, includes very wide representation which 'speaks volumes for your commitment to the studies of Asia in Australian schools'. She was particularly pleased to be associated with the event not just because DEST provides funding, but also because of her own and Noel Simpson's roles on the AEF Advisory Board.

She then reflected on the achievements to date, on DEST's support for studies of Asia and Australia and on the new Statement in its draft form.

AEF's achievements were, she indicated, well-attested at the Forum dinner session. They include:

- ▶ the development of a framework for teaching and learning in the form of the studies of Asia statement;
- ▶ around 65 Access Asia resources of very high quality which, in some cases, have won prestigious excellence awards for educational publishing;
- ▶ professional learning for thousands of teachers; and
- ▶ a network of studies of Asia and Australia advisers who play an important role.

The Government, in this context, 'accepts the challenge of ensuring all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills and values for the 21st century global, knowledge-based world'. Studies of Asia are central to that in the sort of terms Paul Monk used when describing Australia's potential role as a cross roads between East and West.

The AEF, Mercer observed, has played a significant role in supporting the education of our young people consistent with the National Goals for Schooling contained in the Adelaide Declaration. Through DEST, she explained, the Government supports the work of the AEF through:

- ▶ a core grant of \$1.3 million for the AEF and its programmes which Minister Nelson yesterday approved to flow as core funding for the next three years;
- ▶ \$1 million under the Australian Government Quality Teaching Programme (AGQTP) to support professional learning programmes on studies of Asia and Australia;
- ▶ an additional \$1.2 million under the AGQTP related to Asian languages learning;
- ▶ \$1 million per year till 2007 for Endeavour Scholarships for language learning; and
- ▶ around \$0.5 million for a range of resources including a forthcoming student driven investigation book for middle and upper secondary students on interfaith issues and a middle years' global and regional resource.



The AEF has played a significant role in supporting the education of our young people.

**Dr Trish Mercer,
Australian Government
Department of Education,
Science and Training.**



Forum participants.



Professional Learning is a particular focus as part of efforts to overcome an acknowledged knowledge gap.

Professional learning, Mercer explained, is a particular focus as part of efforts to overcome an acknowledged knowledge gap. The AGQTP is now entering a new phase with \$139 million over the next four years. Studies of Asia, she pointed out, is now a priority area under the cross curriculum perspective which States and Territories can access funding in the context of forthcoming bilateral negotiations, and which participants are therefore in a position to influence.

The theme of the Forum, *Engaging Young Australians with Asia* is, she suggested, apt as we deliberate on the challenges of the 21st century and the preparation needed for the different type of world that Sophie Palavestra described. Studies of Asia and Australia is more than just learning about countries, but 'engaging with Asia'. Events in the region such as the tragic tsunami disaster, and our responses demonstrated our relationship with countries in the region and our willingness to respond in times of need.

The third iteration of the studies of Asia and Australia Statement, which was the subject of a significant part of the Forum programme 'doesn't just provide a cross curriculum perspective but importantly links to other key government initiatives such as Civics and Citizenship, Values Education, Statements of Learning, ICT and the National Statement and Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools'.

The Forum constitutes, Mercer explained in concluding, the second round of consultations on the draft Statement and is an opportunity for frank and fearless input. She looked forward to the development of 'a truly national statement' that would be endorsed by MCEETYA for use in all Australian schools.



Jill Sykes,
Global Education Project.

Keynote Address Two

Asia and Australia

The Hon Alexander Downer, M.P. Minister for Foreign Affairs

The forum was, in Minister Alexander Downer's view, helping to provide young Australians with the means to engage in Asia as increasingly they must. He noted the work of Asialink and the AEF in 'helping to promote public understanding of the countries of Asia and creating links with Asian counterparts'. This in turn, he suggested, is helping to unlock the potential that exists for us in the people and economies of Asia.

Foreign policy challenges

Minister Downer began his address with a discussion of the key foreign policy challenges for Australia in the region in the context of 'a very strong set of relationships that already exist' through relevant agencies, trade, tourism and education.

Many of our bilateral relationships, he argued, are deepening and strengthening and arguably are better than ever, as illustrated by our relations with Japan, China and Indonesia and our increasing engagement with India. In the South Pacific, Australia is taking 'a more hands-on approach' to assisting governments to improve not only their economies but their governance and security as well.

The threats of terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction have led to closer joint work and activity with countries such as Indonesia and we are actively promoting the Proliferation Security Initiative in our region. At the same time the government is, he explained, keenly aware of the challenge presented to the region by HIV/AIDS and is taking a leadership role in ensuring appropriate attention is paid by the international community to Asia in this regard.

Economically, Australia has free trade agreements and strong economic relationships across the region and has a long term vision with New Zealand of establishing an ASEAN/Australia/New Zealand free trade area.

'So we are', he summed up, 'an active contributor to the region'.

The place of education

Turning his attention to education in particular, the Minister noted there is much to do if the United Nations' Millennium Development Goal, that by 2015 children everywhere will be able to complete a full primary education, is to be met. The major concern to Australia in this context is the degree of illiteracy within our own region, despite the obvious improvements that have occurred, much of which can be credited to China's work. Australian expertise, he explained, is helping our regional neighbours to address this gap and we have much to offer.

Australia also is a major supplier of international education both here and in Asia to the point where education services is one of our fastest growing export sectors. The Asia-Pacific region is far and away the main source of international students for Australia, with China accounting for more than one quarter of all overseas students in 2004. And through such things as ongoing



Downer was clear in his view we need to focus young people's attention on Asia. 'That is not driven by fashion but by common sense'.

The addresses by Paul Monk (intellectually challenging, well read and researched) and Alexander Downer (knowledge, willingness to reflect and sense of commitment) were a highlight.

**Participant,
NSW.**



John Gore,
Department of Education
and Training, NSW.

Students should 'know something about the history of Asia ... something about the geography of Asia... and more important they should know something about the cultures of Asia'.

The Hon.
Alexander Downer, MP.

alumni associations, education has long played an important part in developing closer linkages between Australia and the region.

The Colombo Plan, for instance, 'enormously affected' Australia by introducing many Asian students into our institutions and hence our society; and it turned out to be an important vehicle for our engagement with the region. As the Colombo Plan wound down, other mechanisms emerged and effective aid programmes, for instance, have become an important means of building human capital in the Asia Pacific region to reduce poverty and sustain economic development.

Major education programmes are, Downer observed, part of our aid assistance in many of our partner countries, particularly focused on basic education and vocational education and training support.

In providing education to the region the government seeks to make the most of the technological advances that exist to help develop distance education options, particularly through the Virtual Colombo Plan launched jointly by the Australian Government and the World Bank in 2001. It provides 'a new platform for Australian expertise' to share its knowledge and skills across the region.

People to people links

Noting that the Forum theme is about engaging young Australians with Asia, the Minister expressed delight that Asia does choose Australia very much as its destination of choice for so many of its students, as this promotes greater people to people contact around which serious engagement revolves.

One important initiative he cited in this context is the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development programme which he launched in 1998 and has offered young people 'wonderful opportunities' to undertake short term assignments in the region and hence to learn more about it. This very effective programme is continuing to expand and, by 2006, will provide up to 400 young people with the opportunity to engage in activities in Asia with the support of business and industry which places them. In a similar vein, he also noted the important work of the Australia Asia Young Leaders Programme conducted by Asialink.

'So', Minister Downer concluded, education has many advantages and contributions to make in the region which ought not be underestimated. 'The role of people to people links in promoting stability and harmony in the region sounds', he conceded, 'like rhetoric, but can't be underestimated'; as captured by the old Chinese proverb with which he ended his address:

*If you plan for one year, plant rice.
If you plan for ten years, plant trees.
And if you plan for 100 years, educate mankind.*



Responding to a question from Forum leader, Tony Mackay, about whether he is still surprised there are questions about the level and intensity of our engagement with Asia, given the extent of relationships he had described, the Minister noted that there is commentary from ‘a whole series of angles on this’. There is positive commentary which supports it; and then there is the partisanship of our political arrangements which won’t make any concessions to the government of the day regardless of its hue. There is, in this context, what he sees as a different and more serious issue at play — and that’s ‘a degree of community resistance’ that exists to Asia. This can be seen in the reaction to the Corby trial which ‘reveals some reservations about our relationship with Indonesia at the community level’ despite the fact our relationship is better than ever. Now that this is dying down a bit, we are seeing a bit of an outbreak of ‘Sinophobia’ which the media does tend to ‘razz up’ to some extent.

Given that the Forum is focused in large part on the draft National Statement, Field Rickards asked the Minister his view on the key elements of an education for young Australian students about Asia.

Students should, he noted in response, ‘know something about the history of Asia ... something about the geography of Asia... and more important they should know something about the cultures of Asia’. He has, he explained in this context, a view that despite talk of racism amongst people at times, few people really are racist but rather are ‘culturalist’; by which he meant they are ‘intolerant of how other people do things differently’. This is, however, transformed when they actually go and see the cultures concerned and see how they are relevant to the real circumstances in which those people live. Education, he argued, can help people understand this — and he illustrated this with reference to Kingscote School in Kangaroo Island in his electorate which has a ‘fantastic teacher of Indonesian’ who goes beyond just language to teach about Indonesian culture. This remote and fairly homogeneous area sees, as a result, children exiting school knowing quite a lot about Indonesian culture and far more tolerant as a result.

Knowing something about the major cultures in our region, he added, ‘is crucially important’. The idea that Indonesians cannot run a judicial system, for instance, is born out of ‘complete ignorance’. The challenge for the education sector is, therefore, to advance this agenda and, in this context, he made a ‘passionate plea’ to teachers to take on the task.

Questioned about his suggestion that language is not as important as culture, the Minister indicated it is ‘more complex than a simple yes or no’. There is a debate about language and culture for another time, but inevitably, he conceded, ‘if you learn a language you will learn about culture’. That said, you can be ‘culturally sensitive without having learnt an Asian language, and you don’t need to learn the language to learn about the cultures’. He rates the importance of language learning highly, but suggests we won’t fail if we do not know the languages en masse. We do, however, need to know about the cultures, which is the reason for his earlier plea.

Downer was clear in his view we need to focus young people’s attention on Asia. That, he explained, ‘is not driven by fashion but by common sense’. Over

Over the next hundred years, when we think about the changes taking place in the world, dealing with China and India will become increasingly important. It is Australia’s future.



Tony Mackay and Minister Downer.



**Jenny McGregor,
CEO, Asialink, The
University of Melbourne.**

the next hundred years, when we think about the changes taking place in the world, dealing with China and India will become increasingly important. 'It is Australia's future', especially as an East Asian Community really starts to emerge and we are there at its birth later this year. We do not know, the Minister ended the Q & A, what it will be like, but it will embroil us in the region in ways we haven't yet experienced. 'So young people need to know something about the cultures of the region, to understand 'they are not scary places full of bad people ... the badlands we go through until you get to Heathrow'.

Thanking the Minister, Jenny McGregor (CEO, Asialink) noted his longstanding involvement in, and commitment to enhancing engagement with Asia and the way in which his participation in the Forum reflects the importance he attaches to the area. She particularly thanked him for the breadth and depth he brought to the interactive question and answer session and the openness and value of the responses he gave.



Panel One

Young Australians *engaging with Asia*

Convened by **Geraldine Doogue AO**

ABC broadcaster Geraldine Doogue interviewed four young Australians about how they are engaged with Asia, both in Asia and in Australia, and the skills and knowledge that best equip them for this role, and the session was taped to be aired as an ABC *Life Matters* programme later in the year.

The panel comprised:

- ▶ Anil Sagaram, an IT professional from GBST Pty. Ltd.
- ▶ Paul Minifie, an architect with Minifie Nixon
- ▶ Dr Erica Wood, a scientist with the Red Cross Blood Bank; and
- ▶ Alan Wu, a member of the Australian Youth Affairs Commission and the ABC Advisory Board.

Opening the session, Doogue noted that the task of the session is to talk with some young Australians who are engaging with Asia and get a sense of what did and did not equip them for this. From her own perspective, engaging with diverse cultures of Asia is something the media has difficulty with, and there is an assumption the population isn't interested unless it is 'dealing with a crisis'.

She explained in this context how she did have the opportunity to do a series of radio programmes in Indonesia focused on aspects of people's cultures and lives and the degree of turmoil they experience rather than being, as many people assume, preserved in aspic and without change. Near the end of her work, however, she conducted an interview at the Australian Embassy just five days before the Jakarta bombing which meant that all the material she had collected came back at a crisis point and this again became the context.

It will, she argued, take a long term, ongoing commitment and increased people to people contact as the Minister outlined, to ensure the crisis reports that come land on a 'bedrock of deeper understanding' and hence a base of more informed views about Asia and its many cultures.

Anil Sagaram, IT professional.

Responding to a question about what he has learned working in Asia, Sagaram provided some background on his own role and that of the company for which he works which develops technology to service the financial services sector. His company is, he explained, seeking to expand into Asia, with the result its staff want to increase their relevant skills. Personally, he grew up in a cultural environment of an Asian background and also travelled extensively overseas; though his actual education did not equip him particularly well for working in Asia and he didn't learn a language or much about different cultures. 'The shock of what I deal with' is now evident in dealing with an Indian company at the moment where 'the layers of communication are much deeper than the English we use to communicate'. And he illustrated this with reference to differences over meeting a particular deadline which 'requires me



**Geraldine Doogue AO,
ABC Presenter.**



...the layers of communication are much deeper than the English we use to communicate.

**Anil Sagaram,
IT professional,
GBST Pty Ltd.**



I had no formal cultural awareness training to fall back on.

**Dr Erica Wood,
Blood Specialist,
Red Cross.**



I need 'to develop skills to work in and reflect cultures in various Asian cities.'

**Paul Minifie,
Architect.**

to be less aggressive and blunt and to focus more on getting to know people in a much more relaxed way'. This in his view could have been addressed at school by conveying to him the opportunities which could flow from greater engagement with Asia and access to languages 'would have helped'.

Dr Erica Wood, Blood Specialist.

In her field of blood transfusion, Wood is part of a process of health and social development and, as Minister Downer mentioned in relation to HIV/AIDS, ultimately part of 'the broader regional security picture'. As the child of a diplomat she was, she explained, 'fortunate enough to live in Jakarta' but when she returned to Australia found herself unable to study Bahasa at school. She also would have liked to learn Mandarin for the work she currently undertakes. 'Depth of communication', she argued, 'is more than just words and I rely on a translator so I am even further weakened in ways'. That is one reason why she would have valued the opportunity to learn an Asian language at school. 'In some ways I feel well equipped because I have strong technical skills for my role and my skills are in demand in Asia.' Having lived in Asia she also felt she had different preconceptions about Asia than perhaps was the norm. But actually working in Asia has made her realise that 'I had no formal cultural awareness training to fall back on'; though she was fortunate to have some 'excellent mentors' who helped her overcome the 'naivety' that accompanied her technical expertise.

Paul Minifie, Architect.

From Minifie's point of view, architectural work amounts to 'working in the cultural sphere'. Engaging with Asia is 'interesting, challenging and presents a number of particular difficulties'. He needs, for example, to develop skills to be able to work in and reflect cultures in various Asian cities. Chinese cities present an enormous number of 'pragmatic challenges', such as getting concrete quickly on the ground, which then conflicts with the desire to express his own identity and ensure a high level of liveability. Thus he seeks to better understand the culture and especially the history of the built culture there, along with gaining a clear sense of what is happening now. Developing the requisite knowledge for this is something with which he and his colleagues 'really are struggling'. And they need, in this context, to be careful 'not to replay Chinese history to them, in potentially patronising ways', but to discover what they are seeking' in a more expansive way. In trying to equip his own students at RMIT for this, he continues to teach the traditional historical forms of development, but also uses tools of analysis to develop an appropriate local vision which interacts with and draws on what already is in place. In terms of his preparation at school he did, he explained, do 'some Japanese and Chinese history', which he has brought to his work in Asia in the initial stages at least.

Allan Wu, Australian Youth Affairs Commission.

Having been born in Shanghai and grown up in Brisbane in a Chinese family, Wu felt himself in something of an 'advantageous position' in the discussion and in dealing with Asia. So he chose instead to look at cultural negotiation the other way around. Asian cultures are, he argued, in a period of great turmoil and this impacts on relations with the West. Returning to Shanghai, he

observed enormous expansion and growth accompanied by the wholesale adoption of the mechanisms (though not the social norms) of Western society. It is easy in his view, therefore, to underestimate the value the Chinese put on education in a country such as Australia. From his own experience, that does present a real challenge for the students involved to integrate in some way in Australia's culture and interact with it. Asian students are, he noted, high achievers academically and particularly in the performing arts because of the importance attached to this, but Australian culture doesn't necessarily share this same emphasis. In a related, though different vein, these students often have strong formal English language skills, but experience difficulty in dealing with idiom. It points to a need for more understanding and sympathy not just with their language skills, but their cultural understanding and mores as well. 'The playing field', he suggested, 'may not be as level as you think'.

The single greatest mistake made towards Asian students, Wu argued in response to a question from Doogue, is the 'subtle, easy to miss feeling that is conveyed that they do not belong or are, in some ways, inferior'; which perhaps comes from too much of an assumption of shared cultural values and a consequent failure to recognise the differences that exist. The differences, he argued, ought not be ignored, but rather openly acknowledged and addressed. On the other side of the coin, 'the thing we get right is that there is now a wider acceptance and enthusiasm to engage with Asia which is really appreciated'.

It is difficult, Wu noted in response to a question from the floor about how institutions could show 'more routine curiosity' about the lives of their Asian students to bring them into the 'in' group, in part because the students themselves are highly focused and not as open to group interaction in areas such as sport which Australian society values more than the performing arts where many Asian students are engaged. In addition, the nature of a lot of our sports (and he specifically cited rugby at the school he attended) is not conducive to their involvement. Beyond this, he suggested there is something of a tendency in Australia to think things from the UK are less different for us than things from the US, whereas many Asians tend to think the reverse; which he partly illustrated with reference to his observation that many Asians turn off the ABC because of the number of British programmes it shows which they find less accessible to them.

Sagaram indicated a slightly different experience however, as a person of Indian background, perhaps because of the common British heritage we share.

In response to a question from the floor about the apparent difference between these young people's views about learning a language and the comments that Minister Downer had made, Wood was keen to assure the Forum she did not seek to minimise the importance of cultural interaction in any way at all. Rather, she just was of the view that 'it would be simpler, faster and more accurate to engage in the actual language of the people' with whom she meets in her work. She pointed out in this context that she is not disadvantaged by the lack of an Asian language and she still can make 'a positive contribution and learn, to my own benefit, about the different cultures in which I have worked'.

The lack of language competence is not, Minifie contended, specific to



The playing field may not be as level as you think.

Allan Wu,
Australian Youth Affairs
Commissioner.



The inclusion of young people's voices was a highlight – as was the high level involvement of Minister Downer.

Participant,
Tasmania.



**Marcia Rouen, AEF
Adviser, Queensland (right)
and QLD team members.**

Asian languages and he confessed to a 'sense of mild shame' compared to his European colleagues who are multilingual at the fact 'I don't have competence in another tongue'. He didn't see it as 'fundamental' to his engagement and work in Asia, but 'it would be an advantage'.

So how, Doogue asked Minifie in drawing the session to a close, does he develop the collaborative skills needed for the sort of approach he earlier outlined? Doing real collaboration is, he responded, something 'we really are working out'. It's an 'enormous challenge because we are learning to operate in new ways that involve finding common ground', and then building on that in often unpredictable ways.

This, and the previous comments of all of the panel members led Doogue to conclude that, if nothing else, equipping young Australians well to engage with Asia, to link back to the Forum title, is certainly 'a great adventure'.

Doing real collaboration is...an 'enormous challenge because we are learning to operate in new ways that involve finding common ground and then building on that in often unpredictable ways'.

**Paul Minifie,
Architect.**



Panel Two

The role of education in equipping young Australians to engage with Asia

Convened by **Tony Mackay**

Mackay led a discussion session on how panellists from a range of education constituencies are contributing to the type of learning that will enable students to make the most of studies of Asia and Australia.

The panel comprised:

- ▶ Dr Michele Bruniges (Chief Executive, Australian Capital Territory Department of Education and Training)
- ▶ John Firth (General Manager, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority)
- ▶ Judith Bundy (President, Australian Council of State School Organisations)
- ▶ Julie O’Keefe (Teacher, Blackheath Primary School, New South Wales and President, Asia Education Teachers’ Association); and
- ▶ Professor Mary Kalantzis (Australian Council of Deans of Education).

Dr Michele Bruniges, CEO, ACT Department of Education and Training

Bruniges focused her remarks on five key points:

- ▶ Systems, she argued, need to acknowledge the new ‘operating context’ flagged by Sophie Palavestra in her opening address and reflect it in professional learning for their teachers.
- ▶ There is a need to ‘take stock of who we are educating and for what purpose’ for, despite ‘the best curriculum in the world’, it will mean little if ‘we do not develop the capacity of the workforce to deliver’.
- ▶ When we think of the curriculum we find ‘the structural organising principles have not shifted’ for as long as we can remember. For the first time, perhaps, we now are seeing movement in States and Territories towards a bigger picture focus and this is an important step.
- ▶ Forging ‘people to people relationships’ is very important and we need to ‘establish the right conditions for this connectedness to occur’.
- ▶ Thinking about languages, we need to look at establishing networks of provision to overcome the fact that schools can’t do it all on their own. The point is to provide ‘choices for students to learn.’

Asked by Mackay to comment where studies of Asia and Australia fits, given there also have been forums over recent weeks on such priorities as civics and values education, Bruniges acknowledged that, as a priority, it arguably still is fairly low. Finalising the Statement and getting it through MCEETYA is ‘incredibly important’ in this context as it effectively ‘gets more blips on the radar’. And it then comes down to systems ‘to really deliver at the local level’. An important aspect of this work, she argued, must be efforts to ‘build sustainability rather than a quick fix, as the AEF has been managing to do’.



**Forum Leader
Tony Mackay,
Director of the Centre
for Strategic Educational
Thinking.**



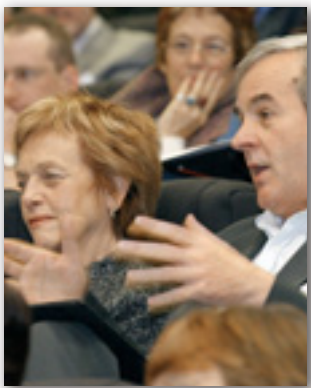
There is a need take stock of who we are educating and for what purpose.

**Dr Michele Bruniges,
CEO, ACT Department of
Education and Training.**



The VCAA is being 'more explicit than ever before about saying it's a global curriculum framework and we are preparing students to act globally in an increasingly global world'.

**John Firth,
General Manager,
Victorian Curriculum and
Assessment Authority.**



**Terry Woolley and
Maureen Cochram,
SA Department of
Education and Children's
Services.**

**John Firth, General Manager,
Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority**

Speaking from the perspective of a curriculum authority, Firth put his comments in the context of the language of essential learnings which are emerging nationally and internationally as an attempt to frame 'what is essential when there are competing priorities and a crowded curriculum'.

The approach in Victoria, like other jurisdictions, is founded in an 'explicit sense' of an outward-looking, global curriculum and the need to prepare students for success in a modern, knowledge-based world. The problem he noted is, that whilst the framework is there, a tension also exists for curriculum authorities about how 'explicit' they then ought be in relation to particular disciplines (like history and geography) and their links to the personal and social as well as interdisciplinary domains. In LOTE, Victoria has for the first time included intercultural understanding and awareness, but it remains true, that although a 'sympathetic foundation' exists, there is a 'continuing struggle about the level of specificity to apply'.

Victoria is, Firth explained, using 2005 as what it calls a 'validation year' to allow schools to reshape not the essential structure, but the detail of the curriculum that has been developed. In early responses there has, he noted, been some resistance to 'any specification at all'. The point is that there is not a 'professional agreement' about how for example studies of Asia and Australia might fit in apart from the view that 'if you publish good materials, people will use them'. So the real dilemma of the draft Statement in Firth's view is how the knowledge base embedded in it, which is fundamental to the attitudinal development sought, can move 'beyond a possibility to a requirement in any of our jurisdictions'. Two other points of relevance he raised in this context were:

- the profession's 'competence' to deliver on the expansiveness of the draft Statement and the fact it requires a substantial degree of systemic capacity-building support; and
- the relationship between school-based curriculum development and national goals — 'the continuing community ambivalence mentioned by Minister Downer calls this into some question and raises issues of the national strategic agenda versus local community control'. Using the Statement as a lever, he suggested, becomes critical in 'helping define that balance'.

The VCAA is, Firth observed in response to a question about whether or not it is prepared to talk about curriculum being international as such, being 'more explicit than ever before about saying it's a global curriculum framework and we are preparing students to act globally in an increasingly global world'.

Taking up Firth's dilemma, Terry Woolley from the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services argued that 'the level of assertion that jurisdictions should exercise is very important indeed'. If we are serious, he suggested, 'we have to be clearer about what we are prepared to assert ... (and) the proof will be in how MCEETYA progresses it'. And, Trish Mercer added, 'professional learning support will be equally important'.

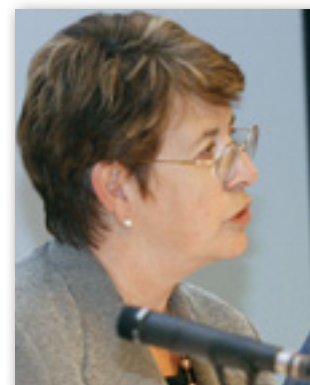


**Judith Bundy, President,
Australian Council of State School Organisations**

Studies of Asia, in Bundy's view, is an area where parents want the Australian Government to be taking a leadership role. Parents, she argued, do want children to develop language skills regardless of where in the country they reside. They particularly support primary schools as the starting point for language development, with a cultural emphasis, but there must be 'effective relationships and transition between the primary and secondary sectors'. There is a need to acknowledge the diversity of student background and capacities, which throws up the importance of both pre and in-service education for teachers. Finally, principals and teachers need to communicate effectively with parents 'why it all matters' and to encourage and support their involvement. In that sense, rather than 'engaging young Australians with Asia', the Statement might better be called 'engaging young Australians and their families with Asia'.

Asked about community receptivity in the context of the remarks the Minister made, Bundy acknowledged it sometimes is difficult for parents to shift from their own experiences of school to a more open view of the schooling required by their children today. Parents do, however, want a relevant and forward looking education and, despite some blips that do occur, 'would see a need to engage more with Asia'. Ian Dalton from the Australian Parents Council added from the floor that 'some parents have had bad experiences which affect their views, particularly with the lack of continuity between primary and secondary schools'. In this context he endorsed Bundy's view that parents do want their children 'to engage with the world in which they live' and suggested that uncertainty about this all does support her call for government leadership.

Responding to a principal's question from the floor about what schools can do to bring parents more on board, Bundy highlighted the need to 'be talking and listening to parents and engaging them as partners regardless of the focus'. And she suggested in this context that principals could seek strategies from the draft Families/Schools Partnership Framework which can be found on the ACCSO website (<http://www.acsso.org.au>).



Parents do want a relevant and forward looking education and... would see a need to engage more with Asia.

**Judith Bundy,
President, Australian
Council of State School
Organisations.**



**Principal, Alex Robins,
Highvale SC, Victoria.**



Showing teachers how is critical to their engagement and support.

Julie O'Keefe,
President, Asia Education
Teachers' Association.



...we need to clarify what the national purpose is for doing Asian studies or languages.

Professor Mary Kalantzis,
Australian Council of Deans
of Education.

Julie O'Keefe Teacher,
Blackheath Primary School, New South Wales

From the perspective of 'an implementer from where it all happens in the classroom' Julie O'Keefe, who has been working in the area since 1990, explained that success in her school has depended upon:

- ▶ clear statements in curriculum documents as 'statements of expectation' that studies of Asia and Australia are an important area of learning;
- ▶ time for teachers to analyse their curricula and identify the opportunities to include this area of learning;
- ▶ unwavering leadership commitment and support;
- ▶ demonstration of that commitment within core belief statements, professional learning plans, strategic plans and the like which lets parents know that their children will engage with an Asia-focused curriculum from K through to Year 6;
- ▶ involvement of parents and the wider community to ensure they are informed and understand the school's approach, but also because it helps identify additional resources on which the school can draw;
- ▶ taking students out on excursions to experience cultures in various ways and taking parents along when they are able to attend;
- ▶ a whole school approach and not just a teacher working on their own in their class;
- ▶ a supportive school structure which, in her school, occurs through stage teacher teams which support each other along the way including through joint professional learning activities;
- ▶ opportunities for teachers to reflect on their own views and attitudes about Asia, and professional development for school leaders as well; and
- ▶ in-country experience where possible for teachers and leaders from the school.

'Showing teachers how is critical to their engagement and support', she summed up, 'and the why will follow'. And if she had to choose one thing above all to really move things forward, it would be ensuring that the view of Asia in the curriculum is clear and obvious, rather than having to search for it.

Professor Mary Kalantzis,
Australian Council of Deans of Education.

Responding to Alan Wu's challenge related to the actual experience Asian students in Australia have, Professor Mary Kalantzis suggested there has, over the last decade, been something of a 'withdrawal from robust engagement' and a focus instead on 'how we make them become more like us'. This 'ambivalence' about engagement is reflected in our teacher education courses as well. At the previous night's dinner, she explained, she asked Sophie's father, who is a teacher, how he responds to the challenges she posed and he indicated in response that he takes on 'some but not all of it'. This, she argued, holds good for the Deans of Education too. 'We respond to some of the challenge, but not all'. That, she acknowledged, is an educator's response and we wouldn't accept a surgeon, for example, saying the same thing in relation to a problem we have. The difficulty is, however, the capacity of the tertiary sector to deliver when, for example, resources for languages has shrunk to the extent they have. The result is 'we tend to do bits — on boys, on

Indigenous education, on cultural understanding and so on'. The higher education workforce is, she noted, very homogeneous and very professional but also a very conservative 'cadre of workers'.

Certainly the broader context that Minister Downer outlined is, for Kalantzis, very important. Purpose, she argued, has particular relevance in this regard and we need to clarify what the national purpose is for doing Asian studies or languages; especially since we know the racism experienced by so many of our international students 'is out there'. There are, she suggested, four possible ways that educators ought consider and adopt:

- ▶ the current review of teacher education provides an opportunity for the Deans to promote 'root and branch reform' without losing 'our fabulous tradition';
- ▶ we can promote the studies of Asia to the agendas that the National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership and the new Carrick Foundation will adopt;
- ▶ we can seek to revive cultural understanding as a key competency that state and territory departments can adopt; and
- ▶ we can become more engaged in the public discourse in which parent organisations have a particularly important role to play.

The Deans, she concluded, are working on these but it 'must be done collaboratively if we want to achieve the bigger picture outcome where diversity is core and not marginal to the agenda'.



Sheryl Saunders,
Catholic Education Office,
Brisbane.



What worries Luke is that the debates he is hearing suggest a five to seven year time frame for Australia to get its act together, whilst Asia is simply developing and moving too fast for that.

Viewpoint One

From Asia:

**Professor Allan Luke, Dean,
National Institute of Education, Singapore.**

Speaking via video link, Alan Luke spoke about the imperative of Asia skills for Australia's future and what is happening in Asia in the education arena, prior to taking questions from the floor.

When he arrived in Singapore a senior Minister invited him to work with schools to 'take them to the next level'. When questioned about how achievable this may be, his response to Luke was that 'you in Australia can afford an out of date education system because of the natural resources you have. In Singapore, however, we take the human capital development argument very seriously because otherwise there will be no Singapore'.

This sort of thinking, Luke explained, has led to a 'stunning commitment' to educational excellence. The level of investment in teacher education, for instance, is four times what he had experienced in Queensland and it 'all is just more urgent than Australia seems to realise'. Put simply, he argued, 'the train is leaving the station' and this is true beyond just Singapore but in much of Asia.

The point is that 'the more the various parties in Australian education seek to protect the status quo, the more you will fall behind'. As a metaphor for it all, he then explained how fast food proprietors in Singapore have had to put up signs saying 'no studying' to stop students loitering in their premises to do homework. That is 'inconceivable in Australia' because the same commitment to education simply does not exist.

Asia, Luke concluded, isn't going away. It is going to be the centre of the world's economy as well as a major cultural centre. Australia must recognise it is only a small player and hence has to 'proactively buy its way in'.



Responding to a question from Tony Mackay about whether recognising this requires a crisis, in the way the PISA results spurred action in Germany, Luke noted that, having worked in state government and the university sector, Australian institutions often are 'loathe to take on something new'. That said, if we look back, national debates on things like gender, Indigeneity and so on have produced substantial change. 'We could do the same here if we accept the responsibility for it'. Australian curriculum authorities could, he suggested, 'continue to be fairly inward looking, but the Asian institutions are moving incredibly quickly to figure out how the Western economies and cultures work so they can learn from it'.

Presented with one participant's 'concern about the degree of contestability between priorities in the curriculum', Luke acknowledged the importance of the question and the fact that 'everyone wants their piece of the pie'. That said, the question around Asia has to be 'the hard one about Australia's economic future'. We could, he argued, 'go on ignoring Asia and Asia won't notice or mind. That shows why it's so serious for Australia'.



Asked about how Singapore is looking to educate its children for the 21st century, Luke explained how, having been 'Maths/ Science crazy' it now is working to 'put some balance into that'. This is, however, happening in the context of a strong continuing focus on cultural cohesion, intercultural communication and citizenship and identity which, in part, is the response to a degree of racial tension that existed in the past. These aspects are 'not negotiable, and an essential part of the curriculum in Singapore'.



The panel of young Australians was enlightening while the cross-link to Singapore made me feel an urgency and importance of this issue that I hadn't felt before.

**Participant,
Northern Territory.**



...the range of education stakeholders represented at the Forum are the studies of Asia's greatest asset.

Kathe Kirby,
Executive Director, Asia
Education Foundation.

Viewpoint Two

Asia Education Foundation

Kathe Kirby, Executive Director

Kathe Kirby finished off the morning by drawing together some of the major achievements to date and outlining the challenge for participants that afternoon.

She began by acknowledging the participants in the Forum, and the range of education stakeholders represented, as 'the studies of Asia's greatest asset' and singled out Trish Mercer, Noel Simpson and the staff at DEST as 'pivotal contributors to the whole strategy and its success'.

At the first AEF national forum in 2003, she explained, Asialink Chairman, Carrillo Gantner said in his opening address:

It is our shared vision that by 2020 we will live in an Australia in which our children can speak with respect and knowledge about Islam, an Australia that can communicate with its largest and nearest neighbour — Indonesia; an Australia that can take up the opportunities offered by the intellectual and economic powerhouses of China and India ... An Australia in which a unique, vibrant, creative culture has blossomed, a culture that understands its Indigenous connectedness to land and is fed as much by the influences of the great civilizations of Asia as by those of Europe.

These words, she noted, introduce the new draft Statement, *Engaging Young Australians with Asia*, and feedback on that Statement is one of the 'important purposes of today's Forum'.

The AEF, she explained, hopes to gain approval of the Statement by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) which then will provide 'an important policy context for Australia/Asia studies in our schools'.

The AEF's role

Using an image from the Access Asia card kit, *Inspirations: Art ideas for primary and middle years*, Kirby cited a range of resources the AEF either has released or has under development to support the studies of Asia in Australian schools.

Australia Kaleidoscope, for instance, which focuses on the Asia that is in Australia was released recently and is the subject of discussion in one of the Forum workshops offered to participants.

Four other resources are under development, including the *Really Big Beliefs Project* for young children and *Global and Regional Issues* for the middle years. The AEF is developing a series of online curriculum support tools. First to be completed is a scope and sequence framework for the English learning area.

The AEF's goals for 2005 are:

1. To provide advocacy and leadership for Australia/Asia engagement in schools

2. To develop partnerships and alliances to expand the reach and support for Australia/Asia engagement in schools
3. To provide a range of services to teachers, schools and education jurisdictions.

Whilst Kirby said she did not have enough time to do justice to the work of the studies of Asia and Australia programmes in each state and territory — which include the professional learning of close to 7000 teachers each year — and to the full range of national initiatives to achieve these goals', she wanted to take the opportunity to acknowledge that 'the drivers of these achievements are state and territory studies of Asia Advisers' whose 'commitment' and 'inspiring optimism' ought be saluted.

She also drew participants' attention to three important national partnerships:

- ▶ one between the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council, the AEF and studies of Asia programmes in each state and territory to conduct awareness raising forums for over 370 primary and secondary school principals across the nation in May/ June;
- ▶ a new partnership with the Australian Council of State School Organisations and the Australian Parents Council which will survey parent opinion about the importance of studies of Asia later this year; and
- ▶ the implementation by the AEF during 2005 of three Australian Government funded national professional learning programmes to support languages education including The Asian Languages Professional Learning Programme in partnership with the Australian Federation of Modern Languages Teachers Associations.

Challenges

There is no doubt, according to Kirby, that 'the sorts of knowledge, understandings and skills required of young Australians to effectively engage with Asia are more sophisticated than was foreseen a decade ago when the AEF began its work'. And in this context, three particular challenges stand out.

1. Securing a firm place for studies of Asia and Australia in current curriculum policy and practice

In developing curriculum for the 21st century curriculum policy makers have, she argued, 'understandably been focused on identifying the sorts of "new skills" required of young Australians to equip them for their futures. Studies of Asia and Australia is clearly connected to the sort of skills related to cross cultural communication and intercultural understanding, to vocational skills and others. But to achieve these skills, new knowledge, new curriculum content, is also required. This has implications for all education stakeholders. Ensuring a "regional" emphasis is embedded alongside a "global" one in guiding curriculum development will mean that the Asian region is not optional or ignored. The choice of texts students study in English, the art traditions they explore and the histories, geographies and environments they research and analyse will all be impacted by the sort of new knowledge required for the 21st century.'



Jill Wilson,
AEF Adviser, Victoria.



Lianne Singleton,
AEF Adviser, NSW.



Geraldine Doogue called for Asia to become a great national project which draws in all Australians. As school educators, that's our challenge, our shared challenge, to ensure that our children are equipped for their world.

2. Reaching all schools – especially the 70% of Australian schools who have not previously been part of the Access Asia Schools Network

The AEF and studies of Asia and Australia programmes in each state and territory have been developing new approaches to school change in the past year. The target now, she observed, 'is to influence all schools'. One way to achieve this is to work in partnership with a range of curriculum strategies including values education, civics and citizenship, literacy, ICT, leadership and curriculum improvement. Beyond this, professional learning programmes are being promoted to all teachers in each state and territory and, in a new awareness raising strategy, 65,000 copies of AEF News will find their way into every school in Australia twice a year.

3. Teacher Professional Learning

Updating teachers' Asia knowledge and supporting teachers to effect curriculum change are more important than ever, as the Asian region constantly undergoes rapid change. Successful leading edge programmes are already developed, but the challenge remains 'to leverage adequate resources for this task. The new round of QTP funding mentioned by Trish Mercer', Kirby noted, 'may well go towards addressing this issue'.



Janine Davison,
Department of Education
Tasmania.

Best Practice Workshops

Participants were able to attend one workshop out of five on offer showcasing innovative, best practice strategies of engaging students with Asia. Brief summaries of each of these workshops are provided below.

The Workshops were:

- ▶ Workshop 1: Developing intercultural understanding
- ▶ Workshop 2: An engaging relationship — young Australians, values and Asia
- ▶ Workshop 3: English — An 'Asia' scope and sequence
- ▶ Workshop 4: Linking languages across the curriculum
- ▶ Workshop 5: Leading curriculum change

Workshop 1 Developing intercultural understanding

Dr Julie Hamston (The University of Melbourne) discussed the *Australia Kaleidoscope* Middle Years resource which she co-authored with Kath Murdoch for the AEF's Access Asia Series to develop students' understanding of the contributions of Asian peoples, traditions, beliefs and practices to Australian life. Through a focus on rich texts and learning experiences teachers can, she explained, engage students with Asia and Australia and support them in learning about important issues of identities and difference.

The texts used in *Australia Kaleidoscope* are authentic in that they are based on real people, places, beliefs and traditions, and therefore demonstrate how texts construct understandings of the world through shared and unshared cultural knowledge. In addition, through the narratives of Asian Australians who have contributed to life in Australia, and the experiences of other Australians who have been enriched through contact with beliefs, traditions and peoples of the Asian region, students can engage with the 'voices' of human experience.

The six components of the resource are:

- ▶ the influence of Chinese circus arts on Australian circuses
- ▶ Broome — a multicultural history of pearling
- ▶ Phuoc Tan — life as a Buddhist monk
- ▶ Daniel Godell — my work in Chinese medicine
- ▶ Kate Beynon — an artist promoting good spirits; and
- ▶ Aisha Novakovich — a campaigner for peace and harmony.

The workshop provided participants with the opportunity to work together in groups to explore some of the narratives and 'voices' of *Australia Kaleidoscope* and to examine the strategies and activities designed for teachers to support their students' intercultural understandings.



Dr Julie Hamston,
The University of
Melbourne.

...to develop students' understanding of the contributions of Asian peoples, traditions, beliefs and practices to Australian life.



**David Brown,
Curriculum Corporation,
and the Workshop Group.**

Workshop 2

An engaging relationship – young Australians, values and Asia

From tsunami aid to the Corby trial and howls for boycotting tourism to Bali, there are, according to David Brown (Curriculum Corporation), compelling contemporary issues for engaging young Australians with Asia and for a study of the underpinning values of that engagement.

This workshop explored key teaching and learning issues in this engagement with a focus first on the national context and, in particular, the links between the new values education agenda and the draft national statement on *Engaging Young Australians with Asia*.

The focus then shifted to an examination of two new AEF resources designed to support teachers and students with a variety of materials, themes and activities to foster the connection between young Australians, their values and studies of Asia.

CrossCurrents is a resource developed by the AEF as part of the Access Asia series which invites students to travel and explore key issues of law, justice, rules, values and identity in Asian contexts and to make connections with how these issues permeate their own lives and the lives of others both within Australia and in the Asian region. The journey contains a variety of text types (fiction, historical narrative, news reports, speeches, song lyrics, poems, maps, photographs and paintings). It includes stories from the past and present, young voices, old voices, men's voices and women's voices, voices from China, Australia, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and a number of other countries.

Regional and Global Issues — another resource developed by the AEF — takes up four resonant, contemporary themes in which Australian and Asian communities share a common engagement. Using an inquiry based approach students are drawn into issues through focus questions and materials offering various perspectives before they are invited to expand their own understanding and propose their own answers through further critical research. Each issue invites an examination of the values that underpin the different responses and strategies adopted by various communities and individuals.

The new Access Asia resource, Regional and Global Issues, takes up four contemporary themes in which Australian and Asian communities share a common engagement.

Workshop 3

English — An 'Asia' scope and sequence

Robert Baker and Joan Holt (Curriculum Corporation) discussed the draft *Asia Scope and Sequence for English* document and the English Access Asia texts as a response to the need identified by AEF stakeholders in 2004 to consolidate and reposition the studies of Asia agenda in schools. Stakeholders had agreed a need existed to develop K-10 scope and sequence curriculum support documents to guide teachers, schools and systems in the four learning areas of English, the Arts, Studies of Society and the Environment (SOSE) and Languages Other Than English (LOTE); and the *Asia Scope and Sequence for English* curriculum support document is the first to be developed in 2005 with funding from the Department of Education, Science and Training.

Two English curriculum writers, Lynne Darkin and Debbie de Laps, have been contracted to develop the *Asia Scope and Sequence for English* with advice from a project reference group comprising subject matter experts and representatives of the AEF and DEST.

The *Asia Scope and Sequence for English* will:

- ▶ articulate key curriculum concepts and content for the studies of Asia in the English Key Learning Area (KLA) across the compulsory years of schooling K to 10;
- ▶ support teachers of English in their efforts to infuse studies of Asia and Australia within the English KLA;
- ▶ connect with the national Statements of Learning for English, developed by MCEETYA, to progress greater curriculum consistency among Australian States and Territories;
- ▶ point to the KLA specific existing studies of Asia resources that will further assist teachers to locate appropriate studies of Asia and Australia classroom materials; and
- ▶ provide a curriculum product that can be available online and which can connect to a repository for additional curriculum materials over time, and be freely available and accessible to all teachers in Australian schools.

The workshop described the relationship of the *Asia Scope and Sequence for English* to the national *Statements of Learning for English* and the draft *Engaging Young Australians with Asia: A National Statement for Australian Schools*, and to State and Territory English curriculum frameworks and syllabuses. Participants had an opportunity to hear about and discuss the curriculum models that were considered and see progress to date on the final model. A number of Access Asia publications for the English KLA displayed at the forum were also referenced in the workshop.

More information on the resources available can be obtained from the Access Asia website at <http://www.curriculum.edu/accessasia>.



**Robert Baker
and Joan Holt,
Curriculum Corporation.**

The Asia Scope and Sequence for English will articulate concepts and content for the studies of Asia in the English Key Learning Area from Kindergarten to Year 10.



Julie Browett,
University of Tasmania.

Workshop 4

Linking languages across the curriculum

Julie Browett (University of Tasmania) outlined the *Asian Languages Professional Learning Project (ALPLP)* for which she was a principal writer, and which supports the teaching of Asian languages in schools through the delivery of innovative professional learning for language teachers and school teams. The focus, in this context, is on languages methodology, with particular reference to intercultural language learning and the links across the curriculum.

Intercultural language learning is not simply a 'method' of 'embedding' language, culture and learning, but rather an overall orientation, a way of thinking and doing, a stance and an overall perspective which influences all decisions regarding curriculum. Given this, and the integrated nature of curriculum, change in any area will result in change in another — ie, planning, teaching, resourcing, assessing, evaluating and reviewing.

Participants were then engaged in a discussion about intercultural language learning — its goals, principles, professional learning programmes and outcomes for students — and how the particular language teaching stance outlined differs from previous language education practices. The workshop included a consideration of the positive outcomes for teachers and students who participate in intercultural language programmes, and especially those that develop transdisciplinary links across the curriculum, and engaged participants in an activity drawn directly from the package.

Further information about the project and resources developed for it, which teachers and others can download, can be found at <http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/aef/alplp>.

...the focus is on languages methodology with particular reference to intercultural language learning and the links across the curriculum.

Workshop 5

Leading curriculum change

Dr John Owen (AEF Evaluator), with the support of Jack Lemon (Principal, Clare Primary School, South Australia) and Helen McIntyre (Senior English Teacher, Beechworth Secondary College, Victoria) outlined the outcomes of a small research project commissioned by the AEF in 2003 to examine the curriculum outcomes of schools that have more than three years involvement in the AEF's programmes.

The study described what a commitment to studies of Asia meant in terms of the practices of teachers and others in schools, and outlined the strategies and conditions that encouraged and supported the development of this commitment.

The workshop began by exploring the stories of change from each of the two schools. In the case of Clare Primary the school was concerned to address what it saw as: the isolation of the language teacher and the language (Japanese); the lack of depth in language provision; classroom teachers feeling they lacked language and cultural understanding; and school structures which did not allow for language to be integrated into classrooms.

In response, the school developed a new vision for language in the school, gave ownership to more teachers, provided structures within the school to allow for joint planning, implementation and assessment, and initiated a wide range of other whole school initiatives including becoming involved in the Asian Languages Professional Development Project (see above).

Dr Owen provided an outline of detailed findings from his study which found that 'securing a commitment to teaching about Asia was a complex undertaking. It is multifaceted and involves school and classroom levels. At the very least it consists of a policy statement and/or a strategic plan, the teaching about Asia in many areas/year levels of the curriculum and, in addition, whole school activities such as a festival or school performance involving the whole school community'.

Participants were encouraged in this context, to share their own experiences during the workshop. They also received a copy of the report *Curriculum Outcomes in Access Asia Schools*, May 2003.



Helen McIntyre,
Beechworth Secondary
College, Victoria.

The study described what a commitment to studies of Asia meant in terms of the practices of teachers and others in schools...



AEF Adviser Tasmania, Jan Kiernan (right) with team members.

State, Territory & National Team Meetings

DISCUSSION:

Draft “Engaging Young Australians with Asia: A National Statement for Australian Schools” and Priorities for Action.

Participants met in eight State/Territory groups each chaired by a Studies of Asia Adviser, and one National group chaired by Maureen Welch from the AEF, to consider:

- ▶ whether the revised draft, *Engaging Young Australians with Asia: a Statement for Australian Schools*, provides adequate impetus and guidance for the development of Australia/ Asia curriculum by schools and jurisdictions in 2006 and beyond; and
- ▶ the key priorities for progressing the studies of Asia both in their own jurisdiction and for the AEF.

Forum leader Tony Mackay then elicited responses from each group on the outcome of their deliberations.

Responses to the draft National Statement

State, Territory and the National team reported back to the Forum on their responses to Draft Two of the National Statement. In summary, discussion highlighted the following key points:

- ▶ it was recognised that the draft does take teachers much further than previous statements and has a more explicit whole school focus
- ▶ there is a need to clarify the audience of the statement as it is ‘a multi-layered audience and while much of the document may be all right for jurisdictions, it may not be so useful for teachers in classrooms’
- ▶ endorsing the view it should get to ‘hearts and minds’ of school educators, participants urged the adoption of ‘stronger language to support philosophical change’ – to ‘reflect the sort of discussion that had occurred throughout the Forum re a ‘greater sense of urgency’
- ▶ what is needed is a ‘national statement which highlights a national plan’; there is a need for discussion about processes for progressing the Statement once it is finalised and the need for follow up action plans; it was suggested the Statement could ask jurisdictions to audit what they do and map out the opportunities that exist
- ▶ the Statement needs to start from the perspective of curriculum concepts and be written in the language of ‘our common curriculum documents’
- ▶ there needs to be ‘more emphasis on mutuality and interdependence.’

Asked by Mackay to respond to the calls he hears for a stronger sense of purpose and intention, a greater sense of urgency and explicitness, and more of an invitation to action, Noel Simpson (DEST) welcomed the feedback and pointed out that the first draft of this statement was stronger than this second one in terms of national urgency. The feedback then was that there was not sufficient educational focus and maybe there now is a need to ‘swing the pendulum back again’. Beyond this he noted the call for follow-up action plans.



Noel Simpson, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

The primary audience for the statement, Simpson explained, is Ministers in the first instance, so it perhaps ought to be called a 'national statement' rather than a statement for schools, with separate documents and action plans then developed for jurisdictions and schools. In taking up a greater sense of urgency we should continue to aim high in terms of the outcomes we expect, so these then can be broken down and specified in the relevant action plans.

Priorities and next steps for jurisdictions and organisations

The following suggestions were collated from group reports:

- ▶ Professional teaching associations should become more actively involved in supporting teachers to practically bring studies of Asia and Australia into classrooms.
- ▶ There is a need to map the Asian influence in different jurisdictions as the 'first logical step for our activity'.
- ▶ We can take the opportunity to link in with the values education forums that will be happening across the nation.
- ▶ The next iteration of the Statement could, as part of the consultation process, draw on the young people engaged in the forum and their peers as 'scrutineers'.
- ▶ States and Territories could mirror a proposed forum in Tasmania to work on the process for linking the Statement to the Essential Learnings and develop materials to support this and other relevant priorities — 'get out the "how" for teachers so they don't feel it's totally about creating something new'.
- ▶ Draw on work already undertaken by the Australian Principals' Associations Professional Development Council (APAPDC) to make sense of the national agenda for schools and school leaders, and how to apply it at the local level.
- ▶ States such as Victoria can strengthen the links with their new Essential Learning Standards (VELS) whilst WA can conduct forums as part of compulsory professional learning for teachers in that State.
- ▶ Seek links across the curriculum for national priorities and assist teachers to see where explicit opportunities exist in this regard.
- ▶ Draw on broader communication strategies in place such as the ACT's professional learning for principals and executive teams, and broader support for beginning teachers and ongoing professional learning.
- ▶ Ensure that work with the tertiary sector is not limited to pre-service teacher education, but enables all students in universities to learn about Asia.

Priorities and next steps for the AEF

Suggestions for how the AEF itself could best progress its strategic influence included:

- ▶ Inclusion of interactive distance learning as part of the overall professional learning approach.
- ▶ Provision of resources and time for teachers to be strategic about the use of these to meet what is a very ambitious agenda — as one participant put it, 'I have heard history mentioned lots through the forum, but we don't have a really good Access Asia history text'. Noel Simpson did point out in this context that the scope and sequence document which was the subject of a workshop currently is being mapped out, and it will show schools and



Dr Deborah Henderson, Queensland University of Technology, and Deb Cohen, Queensland Curriculum Council.



Pamela Stewart, AEF Adviser, Western Australia, providing team response.



**Professor Robin Jeffrey,
Asian Studies Association
of Australia in the National
team meeting.**

teachers how to infuse Asian content and perspectives in English up to Year 10. This will then be done for SOSE, the Arts and Languages, and this process will both provide a level of cohesion and also identify the gaps we need to fill. Beyond this, he reminded participants of Trish Mercer's advice that the Australian Government Quality Teacher Programme funding includes studies of Asia and Australia as a cross curriculum priority

- ▶ When the Statement is endorsed, there is a need for a dissemination strategy to bring principals and teachers on board.
- ▶ There is also a 'definite imperative' to involve parents and communities which the AEF can lead.
- ▶ The need to continuously link to existing national and state/territory priorities was emphasised.
- ▶ Continue to strengthen the collaborative relationships which exist and form the 'bedrock on which we can build'.

Asked about whether all this means merely an intensification of the current approach or something new, Kathe Kirby noted we are 'entering a new phase of engagement' as captured in the forum theme. We need, she suggested, to 'put our collective minds to a new whole change approach based on where we have reached'. Reflecting on the change strategies that can be used she suggested a need to 'look at using a MCEETYA-endorsed statement as a stepping off point for sustainable and consolidated change'.

When the AEF first started studies of Asia were 'exotic, interesting and marginal'. The discussion over the course of the Forum shows they now are 'an imperative' and the shared understanding of this constitutes a 'profound and substantial shift located firmly in what it means for Australia's future'. People simply are 'more serious about embedding this whole area into curriculum policy, documentation and practice in schools'.

Offered the last word at the forum, Field Rickards noted we have seen a level of urgency emerge and a convergence of ideas to underpin the rewriting of the Statement that now will occur as we move to the next stage.

The opportunity for all stakeholders to come together in a national forum is a statement in itself on the debate of 'engaging young Australians'.

**Participant,
ACT.**



Engaging Young Australians with Asia – Program

National Forum

Program - Monday 20th June

- 6.30-6.50pm **Introduction:** Tony Mackay, Conference Leader
I am the future: Sophie Palavestra, Student, Narrabundah College, ACT
Vote of Thanks: Kratai Visityuthasart, Studies of Asia Adviser, ACT Department of Education and Training
- 6.50-7.15pm **Table Discussion:** In your view, what are the major achievements and next steps forward for studies of Asia in Australian schools?
- 7.15-7.30pm **What's our starting point for the forum?**
Tony Mackay will take comments from around the room in response to table discussion.
- 8.10-9.00pm **Keynote Address**
Introduction: Professor Field Rickards, Chair, AEF Board, Dean of Education, The University of Melbourne
Address: 'Making Sense of China'
Dr Paul Monk, Principal, Austhink
Q & A
Vote of Thanks: Susan Mann, CEO, Curriculum Corporation

Program - Tuesday 21st June

- 8.50-9.10am **Welcome to Forum**
Dr Trish Mercer, Group Manager, Schools Outcomes Group, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training
Asia Education Foundation
Kathe Kirby, AEF Executive Director
- 9.10-9.50am **Opening Address:**
Asia and Australia: the next decade
The Hon. Alexander Downer MP,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Q & A - Facilitated by Tony Mackay
Vote of Thanks: Jenny McGregor, CEO,
The Asialink Centre of The University of Melbourne
- 9.50-10.50am **Young Australians Engaging with Asia**
Panel Interview by ABC broadcaster,
Geraldine Doogue AO
The session will focus on how young Australians are engaged with Asia - both within Australia and internationally - and what skills, knowledge and understandings best equip them to do so.
 - **IT Professional:** Anil Sagaram, GBST Pty Ltd
 - **Architect:** Paul Minifie, Minifie Nixon
 - **Scientist:** Dr Erica Wood, Red Cross Blood Bank
 - **Community:** Alan Wu, Australian Youth Affairs Coalition; ABC Advisory Board
- 11.15am-12.15pm **Equipping young Australians to engage with Asia – what is the role of education?**
Panel Discussion with Tony Mackay
This session will focus on the role of a broad range of education stakeholders in equipping young Australians to engage with Asia. The audience will be invited to contribute to the discussion.
 - **Education System:** Dr Michele Bruniges, CEO, Department of Education and Training, ACT
 - **Curriculum Authority:** John Firth, General Manager, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
 - **Parents:** Judith Bundy, President, Australian Council of State Schools Organizations
 - **Teachers:** Julie O'Keeffe, Teacher, Blackheath Primary School, NSW; President, Asia Education Teachers Association
 - **Teacher Educators:** Professor Mary Kalantzis, Australian Council of Deans of Education
- 12.15-12.30pm **Link up: a view from the region**
Professor Allan Luke, Dean, National Institute of Education, Singapore



- 1.10-2.10pm **Display of Access Asia Resources**
Showcase Good Practice: Five Workshops
Workshop 1: *Developing Intercultural Understanding*
Presenter: Dr Julie Hamston, The University of Melbourne, co author of Access Asia resource, Australia Kaleidoscope
Chair: Pamela Stewart, Studies of Asia Adviser for Western Australia
Workshop 2: *An Engaging Relationship – Young Australians, Values and Asia*
Presenter: David Brown, Curriculum Corporation; Editor of Crosscurrents, a forthcoming Access Asia reader
Chair: Jan Kiernan, Studies of Asia Adviser for Tasmania
Workshop 3: *Asia Scope and Sequence English Curriculum*
Presenters: Joan Holt & Robert Baker, Curriculum Corporation
Chair: Jill Wilson, Studies of Asia Adviser for Victoria
Workshop 4: *Linking Languages Across the Curriculum*
Presenter: Julie Browett, University of Tasmania
Chair: Lee Grafton, Studies of Asia Adviser for South Australia
Workshop 5: *Leading Curriculum Change*
Presenters:
 - Dr John Owen, AEF Evaluator
 - Jack Lemon, Principal, Clare Primary School, South Australia
 - Helen McIntyre, Teacher, Beechworth High School, VictoriaChair: Marcia Rouen, Studies of Asia Adviser for Queensland
- 2.10-3.10pm **State, Territory and National Teams Meet**
Chairs: State/Territory Team Leaders
National Team
Chair: Maureen Welch, AEF Director
Two issues for discussion:
1. Response to Draft Statement
Does the draft Statement provide adequate impetus and guidance for the development of Australia/Asia engaged curriculums by schools and jurisdictions 2006 and beyond?
2. Future action
Identify one or more key priorities to progress Australia Asia engagement in schools for both your state/territory/organisation and the AEF.
- 3.10-3.40pm **State/Territory/National Team Responses**
Tony Mackay will seek responses from nominated team representatives.
- 3.40-3.50pm **Plenary**



Biographies

Tony Mackay

Tony Mackay is Executive Director of the Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria (IARTV) and Director of the Centre for Strategic Educational Thinking (CSET). He is a Senior Fellow, Faculty of Education, The University of Melbourne; Vice President of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association; Governing Council Member and Think Tank Chair, National College for School Leadership, UK; Chair, Innovation Unit Strategy Group, UK; OECD Consultant, Schooling for Tomorrow Project; DEMOS International Associate; Visiting Fellow, London Leadership Centre. Tony is on the Board of the Australian Centre for Educational Research, a Member of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority; and a Governing Body Member of two Prep to Year 12 Melbourne Schools. Tony's consultancy work at school, state, national and international levels focuses on conference and think tank facilitation; strategic directions in education; school effectiveness, improvement and review; teacher professionalism; and curriculum and assessment policy P-12.

Sophie Palavestra

Sophie Palavestra is a student in year 12 at Narrabundah College, ACT. She has studied Japanese language and culture since kindergarten and has participated in many Japanese speech contests. In addition, Sophie has represented her school in numerous public speaking forums. She has been an active member of the Scouts and as such, Sophie lead a group of 35 youths to the Solomon Islands in July 2004 to perform urgent repairs on a Red Cross school.

Dr Paul Monk

Paul Monk is Co-Founder of Austthink, a critical thinking skills research, training and consulting firm. Its clients include major law firms, banks, intelligence organisations and audit agencies. Dr Monk is a former senior intelligence analyst, whose work at the Defence Intelligence Organisation, in the 1990s, concentrated on China, Taiwan, the Koreas and Japan, with some work also on South Asia. He has a PhD in International Relations from the Australian National University, where he undertook a comparative study of United States interventions in the Philippines, Vietnam and El Salvador between 1950 and 1984. He is a frequent essayist in major newspapers and magazines across the country, especially the Australian Financial Review and Quadrant. He has recently completed a book on China and Taiwan, *Thunder from the Silent Zone: Rethinking China*.

Dr Trish Mercer

Trish Mercer is a senior manager in the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). Her career has spanned six departments and agencies and included policy advising, programme and contract management and direct service delivery, with extensive representational experience in Commonwealth/State programmes in the education, employment and community services sectors. Trish currently has responsibility for the Schools Outcomes Group, involving major initiatives such as the implementation of the reporting and accountability requirements under the Schools Assistance Act 2004; projects to progress national consistency in schooling across Australia such as a common school starting age; the development of the next phase of the flagship Quality Teacher Programme and national initiatives under the Languages Programme. Trish's first career was as an historian, with postgraduate qualifications in Australia and the USA and a range of publications in social history and race relations.

Kathe Kirby

Kathe Kirby has been with the Asia Education Foundation since 1993. She currently holds the positions of AEF Executive Director and Executive Director, The Asialink Centre of The University of Melbourne. She has a long background in school education having worked as a secondary school teacher, university lecturer in education and as a senior policy officer in the Department of Education, Victoria, prior to joining the AEF. In 2001 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to investigate studies of Asia in the United States, UK, Japan and Korea.

The Hon Alexander Downer MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr Downer has been Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs since the election of the Howard Government in March 1996, and has held the seat of Mayo for the Liberal Party continuously since 1984. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Politics and Economics and is a Doctor of Civil Laws (honoris causa). Prior to entering Parliament, Mr Downer held a number of senior positions in

government and the private sector as an economist, diplomat and Political Adviser to the former Prime Minister, the Hon. Malcolm Fraser and the Federal Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Andrew Peacock.

Since becoming Foreign Minister in 1996, Mr Downer has overseen a range of important developments on the international stage, including:

- The adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1998, which bans all nuclear weapons test explosions and all other nuclear explosions for all time; A leadership role in the Bougainville Peace Process, which has brought peace to an area which had seen terrible bloodshed through civil war;
- Delivering an independent East Timor by urging Indonesia to give the people of East Timor a vote on their future and then successfully negotiating at the UN for a Chapter Seven resolution to deploy peace-keepers;
- A key part in National Security Committee of Cabinet deliberations on Australia's role in the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts;
- Increased co-operation with our regional partners on the crucial issue of counter-terrorism;
- A new era of co-operation with Indonesia through the co-hosting of a Ministerial meeting on Counter Terrorism, the establishment of the Indonesia Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation and the co-hosting of two Ministerial meetings on combating people smuggling;
- Establishing Human Rights Dialogues with China, Iran and Burma;
- The Regional Assistance Mission for Solomon Islands (RAMSI), which has seen the restoration of peace and stability to a deeply troubled Pacific neighbour;
- Campaigning for a comprehensive response in the region to HIV/AIDS through the establishment of a \$600 million aid program and chairing the first ever regional summit on HIV/AIDS which was hosted in Australia in 2001, and co-chairing the second regional summit on HIV/AIDS in Thailand in 2004;
- Reform of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service;
- Realigning the foreign aid program to focus on improved governance, assisting developing countries maximise the benefits of globalisation and strengthening regional security; and
- Overseeing two white papers on foreign policy.

Geraldine Doogue AO

Geraldine Doogue's media career began in 1972 and encompasses print, television and radio, both commercial and public. Ms Doogue is the recipient of two Penguin Awards and a United Nations Media Peace Prize for her role in ABC TV's reporting of the Gulf War. She has also been awarded a Churchill Fellowship for social and cultural reporting and in 2003, she was recognised as an Officer in the Order of Australia for her services to the community and the media. She currently hosts ABC TV's Compass program, which looks at issues of spirituality, philosophy and belief, every Sunday evening. Ms Doogue joined ABC Local Radio in 2004 to present the award-winning Sunday Profile program.

Anil Sagaram

Anil grew up in the North West of Australia. He has a Bachelor of Economics from the University of Western Australia, followed by a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment at the Securities Institute. Since graduation, he has worked as a business analyst in a number of investment banks in Australia and London, and is currently employed as a Business Development Analyst for GBST (Global Banking Securities Transactions) in Sydney. In addition to his work, he is studying a Masters of International Law at Sydney University. Anil has a strong interest in international affairs and believes Australia is at a critical point in terms of relations with a fast changing Asian region. His Indian heritage has given him a strong interest in Australia's relationship with India in particular.

Dr Erica Wood

Erica has lived in Sydney, Melbourne, Jakarta, Hong Kong and Tokyo. She received her medical degree from the University of Melbourne, and completed specialist training in haematology in Melbourne and the US, working in clinical haematology and bone marrow transplant, and with the American Red Cross. Since returning to Australia she has been with the Australian Red Cross Blood Service. Her work involves laboratory and clinical transfusion practice, teaching and research. She holds honorary positions at The Royal Melbourne Hospital and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, and has served with the World Health Organization as regional adviser in blood safety at the Western Pacific regional office.



Alan Wu

Born in Shanghai, Alan Wu, 21, is currently completing a combined Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) / Bachelor of Laws course at the University of Melbourne. Alan currently serves as Independent Chair of the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (Australia's non-government youth affairs peak), and on the Advisory Council of the ABC and the Fund for Individuals committee of the Foundation for Young Australians. After serving as Youth Representative on the Australian Delegation to the 2002 United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development, Alan was invited to join the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Youth Advisory Council. In August 2003 he was appointed Special Envoy for Young People to the UNEP Executive Director.

Paul Minifie

Paul Minifie is a principal of Minifie Nixon Architects (MNA), which he began with Fiona Nixon in 2000. MNA projects are characterised by an interest in emergent and generative design processes. Paul is a lecturer at RMIT and is a member of the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory. MNA have exhibited at ArchiLab in France and the Beijing biennale. Notable MNA projects include the Centre for Ideas at the Victorian College of the Arts, and the Australian Wildlife Centre at Healesville Sanctuary, currently under construction.

Dr Michele Bruniges

Dr Michele Bruniges began her teaching career working in primary and secondary schools. In 1991, she was appointed National Coordinator responsible for the management and development of the National Mathematics subject profile. Between 1993 and 1999, Michele held the positions of Senior Curriculum Adviser, Assessment and Reporting, Chief Education Officer, Mathematics and Assistant Director of School Assessment and Reporting and Director of Strategic Information and Planning for the NSW Department of Education and Training.

During 1999, Michele received an award for excellent service to public education and training in NSW. She was also awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study the analysis, monitoring and reporting of student achievement in education systems and research studies in the United States and the Netherlands.

Michele was appointed Assistant Director-General, NSW School Education Services in 2003 with a strong interest in educational measurement issues, school culture and the process of managing change. In early 2004, Michele was appointed Regional Director, Western Sydney with priorities including a renewed focus on supporting frontline teachers and school staff. In January 2005, Michele took up the position of Chief Executive of the ACT Department of Education and Training.

She has a Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Measurement, a Masters Degree in Education from the University of NSW, a Graduate Diploma in Educational Studies and a Diploma in Teaching from Goulburn College of Advanced Education.

John Firth

John Firth is General Manager Curriculum, at the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. He manages the operations of the Curriculum Branch which is responsible for school curriculum from Prep to Year 12. Units within the Branch manage the development, implementation, monitoring and review cycle of curriculum for the P-10 years, VET and the two senior secondary certificates the VCE and VCAL.

This year the dissemination of the new Victorian Essential Learning Standards is a major VCAA project. In addition, 9 VCE studies are being reviewed. John is also actively involved in national work on Nationally Consistent Curriculum Outcomes, VET in Senior Secondary Education and the Employability Skills Framework.

Judith Bundy

Judith Bundy has been involved in many ways in the Victorian and South Australian schools attended by her five children including being a member of the parent bodies. She firmly believes that a strong partnership between school and family is critical to the success of young people. At the state level she has held a number of positions within the SA Association of School Parents Clubs and was President during 1993-1997.

Since 2002, she has been President of the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO), the peak body representing, at a national level, the parent and school council organisations in Australia of 7,000 government schools. In this position she represents ACSSO on a number of boards and committees including the Curriculum Corporation Board and the Asia Education Foundation Board. In the time she has spare from these voluntary positions, Judith manages a small specialist publishing house.

Julie O'Keeffe

Julie O'Keeffe is a primary teacher who has been involved actively in the studies of Asia since 1993 and was a studies of Asia Network leader for 8 years. She devised and ran a series of three workshops on embedding studies of Asia in the curriculum for the NSW Dept of Education and Training which engaged up to 3,500 teachers over a period of three years. Julie also wrote the DET website resource, "Where the sun rises", and will be creating another resource on China. She is President of the Asia Education Teachers Association and writes sample K-6 units of work on the studies of Asia. Julie has been a presenter at many conferences and has travelled extensively in Asia.

Professor Mary Kalantzis

Mary Kalantzis holds a Chair in Education and is a Research Professor with the Globalism Institute at RMIT University in Melbourne. She is also the immediate past president of the Australian Council of Deans of Education. She has been a Commissioner of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Chair of the Queensland Ethnic Affairs Ministerial Advisory Committee and a member of the Australia Council's Community Cultural Development Board.

Her academic research and writing crosses a number of disciplines, including history, education and sociology; and examines themes as varied as Australian history, leadership and workplace change, diversity, pedagogy and literacy learning. With Bill Cope, she is co-author of a number of books, including: *The Powers of Literacy*, Falmer Press, London, 1993; *Productive Diversity*, Pluto Press, Sydney, 1997; *A Place in the Sun: Re-Creating the Australian Way of Life*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2000; and *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*, Routledge, London, 2000.

Professor Allan Luke

Allan Luke is Professor and Dean at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang University, Singapore. He previously taught language and literacy education, sociology and discourse analysis at the University of Queensland, James Cook University and Simon Fraser University in Canada. He is a Canadian trained primary teacher who taught primary and secondary English, ESL and Drama in British Columbia. He was Deputy Director General of Education and Ministerial Adviser in Queensland 1999-2001. His current work is on school reform and pedagogy in new Asian economies and cultures, working closely with teachers, schools and Ministry of Education in Singapore. His most recent work includes *Struggles over Difference: Texts, Curriculum and Pedagogy in the Asia Pacific* (State University of New York Press).

Dr Julie Hamston

Dr Julie Hamston is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Language, Literacy and Arts Education at the University of Melbourne. Julie has worked as a consultant to the Asia Education Foundation since 1992 and has contributed to the development of studies of Asia through her professional development of teachers, postgraduate and undergraduate teaching, research and publications. Julie's research interests focus on how language constructs social and cultural identities. She has applied this interest in researching how primary students engage in dialogue around discourses of race and ethnicity, and in studying the impact of English as a global language in China. Her most recent publication, *Australia Kaleidoscope* (Curriculum Corporation 2004), aims to inform students in the middle years of schooling about the rich 'Asian presence' in Australia's past, present and future.

David Brown

David is a Senior Project Manager at Curriculum Corporation. Currently he is responsible for a number of major national projects: Civics and Citizenship Education, Values Education Good Practice Schools - Stage 1, Values Education Resources and the Success for Boys - Stage 1 professional learning resource development project. David has a background as a teacher of English, history and drama in secondary schools and tertiary education institutes. After postgraduate studies in Asian history and international relations in the Far East at the University of London he taught in TAFE and worked in the film industry. David joined Curriculum Corporation in 1999 to manage curriculum materials development for the Commonwealth's civics and citizenship education program *Discovering Democracy*. Since that time he has managed curriculum materials development for National History Project, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Federal Court of Australia. In 2003 he managed the Values Education Study and in 2004 was commissioned to write the new studies of Asia resource, *CrossCurrents*, for the AEF.

**Joan Holt**

Joan Holt is the Acting General Manager, Curriculum Solutions, Curriculum Corporation. She is currently the director of a major national initiative in Australian education requested by the Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) which aims to achieve greater consistency among the curriculums of the different States and Territories. Joan has extensive expertise in School Reform, Curriculum Development and Assessment, Project and Program Evaluation, and School Effectiveness and School Improvement. Joan established the Assessment Services unit at Curriculum Corporation. She has worked in Indonesia supporting the Ministry of Education in the reform of their national curriculum, and is currently working with UNICEF Iran and the Ministry of Education in their plans for the development of a new national curriculum. Prior to coming to the Corporation, Joan worked for the Department of Education in Victoria in policy and management roles in the areas of curriculum, training and vocational education. She worked as a teacher and curriculum manager for 17 years in schools in Melbourne.

Robert Baker

Robert is the Manager, Curriculum & Learning Technologies, Curriculum Solutions, Curriculum Corporation. He is an experienced educator, curriculum developer, materials development manager and consultant. He has worked on a series of national curriculum development and research projects. In 2003/4, he developed a report for the Australian Ministers of Education recommending how national consistency in curriculum outcomes might be achieved. Subsequently, he worked as an advisor to the national curriculum reform project developing Statements of Learning in English at years 3, 5, 7 and 9 (2004). He currently manages the development of the Asia Scope and Sequence English Curriculum (2005). He has participated in educational programs involving Thailand, China, Korea, and Sri Lanka on Australian curriculum development, assessment and learning technologies innovation. He has been involved in study tours to China (1998) and represented Australia at the University of Hawaii's international Consortium for Teaching Asia and Pacific Studies (1999).

Julie Browett

Julie teaches in the areas of literacy education, foreign languages methodology and global education in undergraduate programs at the University of Tasmania, Launceston campus. At the post-graduate level Julie delivers on-line modules concerned with Studies of Asia. She is also involved with professional development programs for teachers concerned with intercultural language learning. Julie was a writer for the Asian Languages Professional Learning Project, Phases 1 and 2. She is currently working with secondary schools in Tasmania to make links between language programs and the rest of the school through intercultural learning. This is a collaborative project with the Tasmanian Department of Education. Julie's current research interest is the intercultural understandings developed by Australian primary school students in their first year of an Indonesian language program. Through previous research Julie investigated the conceptual frameworks of culture held by Australian generalist primary teachers.

Dr John M Owen

John Owen is Principal Fellow at the Centre for Program Evaluation at The University of Melbourne. John is interested in the dissemination and use of knowledge created through research and evaluation and other forms of social enquiry. In particular he is concerned with the design and conduct of evaluative studies to inform decision making by individuals and groups. He also has a strong conceptual understanding of implementation and change in organisational settings, and in particular in educational systems. In 2002, he was visiting professor sponsored by the International Centre for Cooperation in Education, based in Hiroshima. In 2003/04 he was a consultant to the Republic of Maldives on a project designed to improve the quality of strategic planning and evaluation in schools. He has also given seminars in Thailand and Sri Lanka. He is a member of the American Evaluation Association TIG on International and Cross-cultural Evaluation. In 1994, he was awarded the ET&S prize for outstanding contributions to evaluation by the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES), and was made a Fellow of the Society in 2003. He is currently AES Chair of the Publications Committee.

Jack Lemon

Jack Lemon is the Principal of Clare Primary School, in South Australia. He has been a teacher for 27 years and has held a variety of leadership roles in rural schools, set in primarily mono-cultural communities. This has led to an interest in providing cultural experiences for students through curriculum and

school activities. He has travelled to Japan to develop his Japanese language skills in an attempt to support the school's language teacher. His latest venture into providing experiences for students, and enhancing a successful language programme, has been whole school change incorporating Intercultural Language Learning. Jack has also been a member of a district team to review the delivery of Languages Other Than English in an attempt to overcome the difficulties faced by rural school communities in providing personnel and resources.

Helen McIntyre

Helen McIntyre has been the English Coordinator at Beechworth Secondary College and an Access Asia Schools network leader for several years. Beechworth is located in north-east Victoria near the NSW border and is well known for its Chinese heritage. After an AEF study tour to Guangdong, China, in the 1990s, Helen led her school along a journey of change so that it now has an exemplary and sustainable Asia-inclusive curriculum. She is the writer of Asian Texts and Contexts for Yr 7 & 8 English students, Great Stories From Asia in Mosaic Four, MacMillan. 2004, for Year 10 and A Window on Australia's Chinese (2004), and with Jill Wilson has co-authored Inside Stories – A Year 12 English Guide for Voices and Visions from India, the multimedia CD Rom. She was awarded the 2001 Victorian Studies of Asia Teacher prize. Helen continues to visit Nepal, China and Vietnam.

Participants

Warren Anderson, Belconnen High School, ACT
Dr Pamela Andrew, Program Review Consultants
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Yvonne Arpino, Access Asia Cluster Coordinator, WA
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Maureen Dospot, Catholic Education Office ACT
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Anil Sagaram, Global Banking Securities Transactions
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Noel Simpson, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training
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Gail Spence, Ministry of Education, New Zealand
Michael Spurr, History Teachers' Association of Victoria
Pamela Stewart, Studies of Asia Advisor, Department of Education and Training, WA
Lindsay Swan, NSW Board of Studies
Jill Sykes, Global Education Victoria Project
Trish Tranfa, Modbury South Primary School, SA
Mary Verwey, Victorian Primary Principals Association
Sandy Vincent, Access Asia Network Leader, ACT
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Joan Warhurst, National Catholic Education Commission; AEF Board Member
Maureen Welch, Asia Education Foundation
Charlotte White, Harristown State High School, QLD
Jill Wilson, Studies of Asia Advisor VIC, Asia Education Foundation
Dr Erica Wood, Australian Red Cross Blood Service
Carla Woodruff, Catholic Education Office, VIC
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Vic Zbar, Zbar Consulting Pty Ltd





Asia Education Foundation