

ALMA NEWS

October 2014

ALMA PARTICIPATION ON WORKING GROUP: ENHANCING THE LEARNING OF MANDARIN AND PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING OF CHINESE CULTURE THROUGH EDUCATION IN THE ACT

A working group chaired by the ACT Education and Training Directorate was established in June 2014 to enhance Mandarin learning and the promotion of Chinese culture in the ACT. A major impetus for this was a letter ALMA sent to the ACT Chief Minister in April 2014 after we heard her speaking on local radio about the need for more ACT students to learn Mandarin to a high level of proficiency. In the letter, we pointed out the benefits of a holistic approach, building on current educational programs and local community initiatives.

The working group (WG) includes representatives from all school systems (ACT government, Catholic and independent), as well as the ANU, UC, ACT Chinese Teachers Network, community language schools and ALMA. The terms of reference are:

- To prepare a two-year blueprint for enhancing the learning of Mandarin and promoting understanding of Chinese culture in ACT schools.
- To identify and optimize the resources available for languages.
- To identify and optimize the opportunities in the new Australian Curriculum.
- All participants of the working group have equal responsibility for achievement of the role and aims of the working group.

The first step was to build a picture of current activities and seek information about the priorities of the various stakeholders represented on the WG, ideas for building on current initiatives and funding

requirements. The Education and Training Directorate circulated a template to WG members to capture the relevant data, compiled the results and circulated these prior to the second WG meeting, which took place on 17 September 2014.

At the meeting, there was discussion of the following:

- The importance of embedding general knowledge about China, such as its history, geography, economy and culture, in other areas of mainstream curriculum; inspiring interest in one or more of these aspects can stimulate, and sustain, interest in learning Mandarin.
- The importance of IT and the benefits of sharing development and access across systems.
- The need to include teachers from all systems, including community language schools, in curriculum development for Mandarin language - now revolving around the recently released national K-10 languages curriculum.

Based on discussion at the September meeting and the possibilities for collaboration and ideas for future developments identified in the templates completed by stakeholders, the Education and Training Directorate will develop a draft blueprint for further discussion in 2015.

In the meantime, if any of the stakeholders wish to work together on ideas, they can feed this to the EDT for incorporation into the draft blueprint.

If you would like to get involved in ALMA's follow up to the September meeting please contact the ALMA secretary at canberraalma@gmail.com

REFLECTIONS FROM ALMA'S PRESIDENT BRIGDET O'CONNOR

ALMA is now coming up to its Annual General Meeting which will take place on:

Tuesday 28th October from 6.30 till 7.30pm at the Chinese Australian Early Childhood Centre, 50 Ainsworth St, Mawson, ACT.

I would sincerely encourage all ALMA members, especially CAECC parents with an interest in the centre's management and/or the promotion of learning and teaching Mandarin in the ACT to come along and participate.

My time on the ALMA committee, including being President over the last 11 months, has given me an insight into how long day care centres work, their daily pressures, the regulations and legislations they work under, and that is just the beginning! ALMA plays an important role in operating the CAECC and supporting its Mandarin program. The other important role for ALMA is promoting Mandarin education and Chinese culture in the community more broadly. Being President means you get to be involved with these activities with like-minded parents and other members.

There are numerous ways you can get involved in ALMA's activities and we would welcome your input onto the committee to maintain our strong commitment to Mandarin education as well as quality early education and care for our children. So please do come along to the AGM. ALMA relies on volunteers, and so needs your support to continue to operate. Several key members of the committee are stepping down this year, so we are looking for parents of children at the Centre to become involved as well as those individuals outside the centre who have a passion for teaching, learning and the promotion of Mandarin in the ACT. Free childcare will be available during the AGM.

Nomination forms and further information about the roles and responsibilities of committee

members are available from Judy, the Centre Director, at panda3@netspeed.com.au or the ALMA secretary at canberraalma@gmail.com

MANDARIN COMMUNITY TUTORING PROJECT

义务辅导计划

ALMA continues to coordinate this project, which puts Mandarin learners in touch with fluent speakers of the language in the ACT area who have volunteered to help others understand more about Chinese language and culture. Participants then contact each other and make their own arrangements to meet, usually once a week on a one-on-one basis.

So far in 2014, 59 participants have registered for the project: 34 learners and 25 tutors. The majority of participants are aged between 20 and 35 years old, females outnumber males, and over half are students at ANU. Tutors generally join the project to get to know more non-Chinese people in the Canberra area and to practice their English skills. Some tutors are still looking for learners to meet.

For more information about the project, or if you are interested in registering as a volunteer tutor or a learner, please contact the project coordinator, Mandy Scott, at canberraalma@gmail.com or see <http://learningmandarin.weebly.com/mandarin-community-tutoring.html>



**CHINESE AUSTRALIAN
EARLY CHILDHOOD
CENTRE (CAECC)**
澳華幼兒中心新聞

With the celebration of 30 years, this year's end of year concert is already in the planning stage with

the children and educators collaborating together to make it the best ever. When the centre first opened it was a pre-school for children aged 2 to 5 years. As time passed the centre became a 38 place LDC centre allowing children aged from 6 weeks to school readiness to attend. Facilities have been added to and updated, including a separate toddler outdoor play area, updated kitchen and toddler nappy change rooms, and new sunroom, office and reception area. We gratefully acknowledge funding and support from the ACT government for these building additions and improvements. The centre is now licensed for 46 children with 12 dedicated educators nurturing and scaffolding children's learning daily.

Children's Week is fast approaching from October 18-26. CAECC is planning a number of fun events to celebrate. We are holding a disco and an afternoon tea to allow an opportunity for families to socialize and enjoy some fun time with their children. A schedule of these events and more will appear on the centre's website (<http://chineseaustralian.weebly.com/>) from the week beginning 6th October

The centre's last day for 2014 will be Friday 19th December and we will return on Monday 5th January 2015 after a two week break.

CAECC EDUCATORS' CORNER

INTRODUCING PEI AN INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODEL: THE EDUCATOR IN CHARGE OF THE CAECC MANDARIN LANGUAGE PROGRAMME.

I started teaching in China in 1988. For the last few years I have been employed as CAECC Chinese Program coordinator. The quality of our teaching has a great influence on children's learning. I gain a great sense of happiness and fulfilment from those magical moments, when I see curious eyes become satisfied with their outcomes from collaborative involvement. To me these are more important than any other forms of extrinsic rewards; becoming knowledgeable through their exploration of their own ideas is really worthwhile.

This better clarifies my sense of professional identity. I strongly believe the development of cultural diversity depends on a large number of people to understand and recognize various cultural heritages. I believe Bilingual (Chinese-Australian) educators serve such a role. They have a strong sense of compassion, enthusiasm and dedication towards Chinese teaching along with the ability to prepare, plan, and implement lessons to cope with persistent questions/inquiries from children. Our greatest talent is to inspire and motivate our children to grow, learn and develop. I am glad that I chose teaching as my career, particularly this critical role of imparting knowledge and guidance to these young citizens in preparation for their adult lives.

ALMA WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SAY THANK YOU TO PEI FOR HER DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO THE MANDARIN IMMERSION PROGRAM AT THE CAECC.



NEWS FROM MAWSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mawson primary is delighted to announce they now have a MPS Cheer:

我们都是莫森人 The Mawson Cheer

莫森小学莫森人，
学习勤奋又刻苦
莫森价值尽体现，
尊敬老师又听话，
努力学习和娱乐，
天天开心脸上笑，
写作阅读和数学，
加上艺术样样通，
蓝色校服加白色，
能说中文也会写，
我们认同不一样，
自己形象自己爱，
朋友关心加爱护，

快乐学生到处有，
我们爱莫森，是的！
我们爱莫森，你呢？

We are Mawson, Yes we are!
We come to work and we work hard.
The SCARF Values we strive to show,
We listen to teachers and never say no.
We're here to learn and work and play,
We have smiles on our faces every day.
Writing, Reading, Maths and arts,
We do everything with all our hearts.
Our uniforms are white and blue,
We speak Mandarin and write it too.
We appreciate our differences,
We love that we all have our own images.
Our friends are always caring and kind,
A happy student here you'll find.
We love Mawson, yes we do!
We love Mawson, How 'bout you?

MPS PANDA COMPETITION SUCCESS

Mawson Primary also participated in The Panda Competition which is conducted every year and is open to students from Pre-schools, Primary schools and High schools. The topic for this year's competition was:

"The horse in Chinese history and art"

This year Mawson Primary School had 35 entries in from Kindergarten to Year 6 students. They had 12 winners in this year's competition, including two first prizes in different age groups.



Congratulations to our prize-winners:

Loki R. 3K – 1st 8 Years Old
Bella W. 4M – 1st 9 Years Old

2nd and 3rd place winners and highly commended:

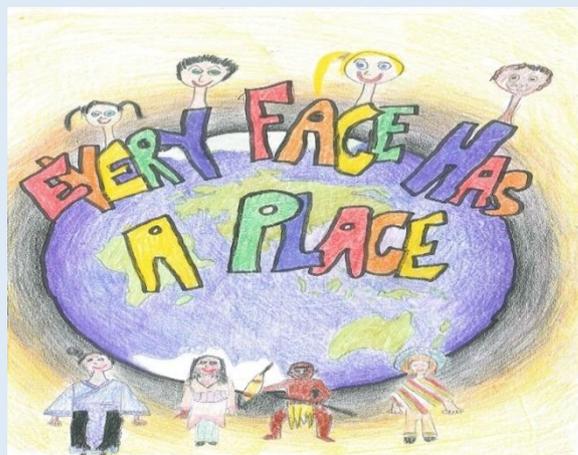
Year 4 - Lilly F.; Aleena M., Thomas D. 4M
Year 5 - Grace B., Sabrina P. 5/6MIP
Year 6 - Jack M., Shannon L., Tyler-Jean R., Jade H.,
Charlie B. 5/6MIP

Prize presentations for the Panda Competition were held at the Legislative Assembly on Monday 25 August. Minister Joy Burch presented certificates and prizes, and Ms Li Qingrui from the Cultural Office of the Embassy spoke to the assembled students, families and teachers.

KIDS MATTER SCHOOL

Mawson Primary School is a kids Matter School and Lucy V. from 5/6F was selected to represent Mawson Primary School in the National Kids Matter Primary Positive Posters campaign. Students were required to choose one of four statements and make a Positive Poster to express their understanding. These statements were:

1. Every face has a place
2. Knowing me, knowing you and getting along too
3. Schools and families caring for kids
4. Getting help is cool in a *KidsMatter* school.



Each student who entered this competition received a wrist band from the *KidsMatter* Organization.



NEW ALMA MEMBERS

We welcome the following, who have become new members in recent months:

Family memberships:

Sarah Stephens, Linda Ye, Ammar Mohammed Fadhil, Divya Seethilal, Li Tian, Jianhong Li

Individual memberships:

Megan Flynn



ACT SCHOOLS TEACHING MANDARIN

A full list of Canberra schools that teach Mandarin is available on the ALMA website:

<http://learningmandarin.weebly.com/programs-for-children-in-act-area.html>



UPCOMING EVENTS

LANGUAGE RELATED EVENTS DURING CHILDRENS WEEK 18-26 OCTOBER 2014

1. Family Fun Learning Mandarin

When: 3.20-4.50pm, Tuesday 21st October 2014.

Where: West Belconnen Child and Family Centre, Cnr Starke & Luke St, Holt

Mandarin for Fun playgroup will host this free event to support and celebrate bilingualism and Mandarin learning. Come and enjoy performances by children and parents, games, craft, singing, dancing and healthy afternoon tea. Both Chinese and non-Chinese background families' welcome.

For catering purposes please register your interest by Friday 17th October 2014 at

mandarinforfun@gmail.com. For more details contact Lucia at the email above, visit

<http://mandarinforfun.weebly.com/events/html> or call 0410 981 788

2. Languages Afternoon Tea

When: 2pm-4pm, Sunday 26th October 2014

Where: Function Room, Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic Square (near Civic Library and Canberra Theatre Centre)

The ACT Bilingual Education Alliance invite you to this free for event.

- Enjoy free games and fun activities for children in a range of languages
- Meet other families raising children with more than one language.
- Find out more about the benefits of bilingualism and learning more than one language.

Bring along a favourite snack for a multicultural afternoon tea. ALL WELCOME.

For more details and/or to book:

Canberrabilingual@gmail.com /Mandy 0408 089 235/ <http://actbilingual.weebly.com/events.html>

OTHER EVENTS

CHINESE – ENGLISH CONVERSATION 12 OCTOBER 2014

One Sunday each month, the ACT branch of the Australia-China Friendship Society (ACFS) holds a Chinese English conversation evening from 7.30-9.30pm at the home of Shirley Johns. One hour is spent speaking Chinese (for English speakers who would like to practise their Chinese) and one hour is spent speaking English (for Chinese speakers who would like to improve their English). If you would like to attend the conversation evening, please phone Shirley on 6254 4305 (after hours).

QUEANBEYAN RIVER FESTIVAL

The Queanbeyan River Festival will be held from 12noon – 7pm on Saturday 11 October on the Queanbeyan River at Trinculo Place. There will be market stalls and various other activities during the day. For the first time the ACFS is conducting a lantern-making workshop at the Festival. If you would like to come and help children make a paper lantern please email acfsevent@gmail.com

ANU CHINA SEMINAR SERIES

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF COLOUR IN MEDIEVAL CHINA: PERSPECTIVES FROM INDEPENDENT DUNHUANG, 9TH TO 11TH CENTURIES

Presented by Lewis Mayo

When: Thursday 9 October, 4:00pm–5:30pm

Where: Seminar Room A, China in the World Building 188, Fellows Lane, ANU

REPRESENTING WOMEN IN CHINESE VILLAGE SELF-GOVERNMENT: A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON GENDER, REPRESENTATION AND DEMOCRACY

Presented by Tamara Jacka and Sally Sargeson

When: Thursday 16 October, 4:00pm–5:30pm

Where: Seminar Room A, China in the World Building 188, Fellows Lane, ANU

For further information see the China in the World the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific's website. <http://ciw.anu.edu.au/>



CHECK OUT OTHER CHINA RELATED WEBSITES

Asia Education Foundation– Australian-based organisation with an excellent website that has links to other relevant sites

<http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/default.asp>

China Business Spectator - an Australian publication on business and economic news about China

<http://www.businessspectator.com.au/economy/china>

The Confucian Institute Online –the Institute is regarded as an arm of the PRC Government and plays an important part in cross cultural dissemination in English-speaking countries.

Bearing that cautionary note in mind, it has some interesting content relating to learning Mandarin.

<http://english.chinese.cn/>



CONTRIBUTIONS TO ALMA NEWS AND UPDATES WELCOME

Please email canberraalma@gmail.com

NOTE: Decisions on publication remain at the discretion of the editor

For more information about ALMA and to see past ALMA newsletters visit our website at

<http://learningmandarin.weebly.com/>