



NSW Adult Literacy & Numeracy Council

The Hon. Simon Crean, MP.

Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations; Minister for Education; Minister for Social Inclusion

PO Box 6022

House of Representatives

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

5 July, 2010

Dear Minister Crean

The NSW Council for Adult Literacy and Numeracy is the NSW peak professional body representing adult literacy and numeracy practitioners. I am writing on behalf of our members who have expressed significant concerns about some aspects of the recent announcement of the successful tenders for the provision of the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) over the next period to 2013.

Many of our members have worked for many years in established LLNP providers in NSW during the previous contract periods. Teachers employed by some of these providers have been amazed when they learned that their colleges were unsuccessful in their tenders to provide the LLNP again, despite continued assurance during the life of the previous contract that they were delivering high quality provision.

On behalf of many of our members, I am conveying their key concerns about the outcomes of the recent LLNP tenders:

1. Our members are concerned about the uncertainties they have about the capacity of some of the new providers to provide the kind of supportive learning environment and pathway opportunities that the former providers were able to provide:
 - many of the former providers had established effective and sustained working relationships with their community stakeholders including services such as Centrelink to ensure that that LLNP participants' needs and goals were well understood and responded to by the different stakeholders;
 - many of the former providers are well established and highly visible in the communities in which the LLNP participants lived, and consequently have sound knowledge of and connections with these communities;

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- the larger, public providers have within their institutions important support infrastructures such as counselling and special needs support; infrastructures such as canteens and libraries; and vocational pathways within the same institutions for the LLNP participants.
2. Many of the former providers invested resources to recruit well qualified teachers and supported their work in the LLNP program. Many of these teachers will now lose their jobs, and their experience and knowledge will be lost unless they are able to obtain gainful employment with the new providers. It is of concern that a nationally significant programme like the LLNP is reliant on a teaching workforce that is employed on such a highly precarious basis.

A number of LLNP participants themselves voiced their concerns at a public forum held at the NSW Parliament House. For one learner, the idea of transferring their study in the LLNP from a college close to their home, where they had got to know and trust the teachers, to a still unknown new destination was a source of significant uncertainty. These are, almost by definition, fragile learners and such changes to their learning environment can be damaging to their outcomes.

I am sure that the Government would share the Council's concern that LLNP learners' needs are sensitively and adequately addressed by experienced and qualified professionals with specialist expertise; that the LLNP is delivered in pedagogically sound and effective manner that will maximise the chances of success for the learners; and that teachers who dedicate their time and energy into making the programme work for the learners are treated respectfully.

Given the high level of concern expressed by the members of the NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council, would you or your Department provide me with information that could give assurance to our members regarding the concerns they have expressed?

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Keiko Yasukawa

President, NSW Adult Literacy & Numeracy Council