



VIETNAMESE  
COMMUNITY IN  
AUSTRALIA  
VICTORIAN CHAPTER

CỘNG ĐỒNG NGƯỜI VIỆT TỰ DO ỨC CHÂU – VICTORIA  
ABN: 99 356 098 668  
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27th April 2020

Dear Mr John Dainutis,

We write to express our reflections on the meeting yesterday.

1. We remain disappointed in the lack of engagement with the Vietnamese community from the FPS and the Department over the years since 2016.
2. We believe the rationale for abandoning the Vietnamese bilingual program, since the ministerial intervention in 2016 are biased, namely:
  - a. The bilingual program was not run as a bilingual program since the decision to continue in 2016 including additional budget allocation.
  - b. Avenues to address the lack of bilingual Vietnamese teachers was not adequately undertaken.
  - c. Financial issues facing the school should not be attributed to the cost of the Vietnamese bilingual program.
  - d. Governance transparency in the way the bilingual program was managed since 2016 remains unclear.
  - e. Engagement in the broader parents community, given the diversity of the population requires clarity.
  - f. There is no evidence to suggest the regard and effort to embrace the Vietnamese language by the school and the department since 2016.

As such, we believe it is unfair to attribute to the declining NAPLAN results on the Vietnamese language.

1. Many of our questions raised at this meeting remain unanswered, and brushed aside by the way in which the meeting was facilitated. There was little scope for our points of view to be aired or to which they could be attended. Importantly we did not feel that this was a discussion but rather a need to do and tick the box task.
2. No justifiable rationale has to date been provided as to why the Vietnamese language needs to be phased out by 2027, nor the rationale why it cannot be included as one amongst the 5 languages to be considered as a bilingual program in 2021.



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3. There are many examples of former students of FPS who have benefited greatly from the Vietnamese bilingual program over the years. Many of them are now active participants in our society at many levels. We feel proud of the track records of the FPS Vietnamese bilingual program and are at pains to rationalise why it needs to be abandoned.
4. We feel excluded and are deeply frustrated by the lack the stakeholder engagement process which occurred over a sustained period of time.
5. We are committed, as a community, to seeing the Vietnamese language continue to be taught at FPS. Whilst we understand the practical challenge in sourcing Vietnamese bilingual teachers, we believe this can be worked through with a proper recruitment and retention strategy along with an organisational culture and leadership. We are confident the latter point will be provided by the new principal and are committed to supporting her and the school Council in their educational responsibility.
6. Educating our children and future generations does not rest solely with the school. The community plays a significant role and the Vietnamese community is absolutely prepared to undertake this role, including fundraising, participation and collaboration.
7. We sincerely hope the school reconsiders the option to have the Vietnamese language be taught at the FPS and will do our utmost as a community to support the principal and the school community to ensure the FPS returns to its vibrancy and success it had over the years.

Our key question remains: What do we need to do to enable the Vietnamese bilingual program to be taught at FPS in 2021?

Yours Sincerely

Bon Nguyen  
President  
Vietnamese Community in Australia – VIC Chapter