

Directors' Report on Review of Operations 2019/2020

For the Financial Year (FY) being reported, our Company, the Chinese Australian Services Society Ltd (to be referred to as "the Society" hereinafter) continued to work on the achievement of our aims of communal nature, including promoting the learning of Chinese language, cultivating artistic appreciation amongst young children and fostering mutual understanding and cooperation between various communities. The aim to provide community and social services to the multicultural communities was achieved through the operation of our subsidiary entity, CASS Care Ltd.

This Report records only the work carried out by the Society in the subject Financial Year. The operation regarding the provision of community and social services by the subsidiary entity is not reported here. The Society with the subsidiary entity collectively are commonly known in the community as "CASS", our brand name.

The operating environment in the period being reported was complex, comprising of new business opportunities, changing operating mode in the industry and having sensitive and competitive atmosphere in maintaining relationship. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 also added extra challenges to our work. However, with concerted efforts of our dedicated team of hardworking and enthusiastic volunteers and members, the Society was able to continue to achieve good operating results.

1. Promotion of Chinese Language & Culture

CASS Chinese School

- CASS Chinese School continued to operate in four locations, namely, Campsie (using the premises of Harcourt Public School), Hurstville (using the premises of Hurstville Public School), Kogarah (using the premises of Kogarah High School) and Connells Point (using the premises of Connells Point Public School). Both Campsie and Kogarah had morning and afternoon sessions on Saturdays, while the morning session on Sundays at Kogarah has been established since July 2019 to meet the increasing demand for Chinese language class in the area. Hurstville had morning and afternoon classes on Sundays.

Connells Point only ran on Mondays after school.

- Our School had become an approved Creative Kids Program provider, allowing it to accept Creative Kids Voucher from students as an option of paying the school fee since July 2019.
- The End-of-year Concert of the School was held at the Marana Auditorium on 10 November 2019. There was an audience of about 800, including board members of our Society, politicians, students and parents of the School. The Concert was well received by the community, and parents and students considered it a good opportunity to present children's talents and their understanding of Chinese culture.
- There were increases in student enrolment in quarter 1 and quarter 2 of FY2019/2020 in all four campuses, reaching a total of 598 students by the end of quarter 2 of FY2019/2020. The enrolment in quarter 3 and quarter 4 decreased due to COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a total enrolment of 442 students by the end of quarter 4 of FY2019/2020.
- Owing to the COVID-19 situation, our School started offering online lessons through the software ZOOM, incorporating multimedia resources and online games. This new form of lesson delivery had been successful and well received by students and parents.

CASS Academy of Arts

- Interest/hobby classes continued to be organised in the first half period being reported and received favourable responses from the community. Classes included: Ballet, Martial Arts and Lion Dance, Tai-chi, Line Dancing, Children's Creative Workshop held in CASS Activity Hall; Hua Jin Social Dance in Kingsgrove Community Centre; Martial Arts, Drawing, STEM Programs, Debating, Chinese Calligraphy, Go Classes in Kogarah High School; Debating and Public Speaking Classes in Hurstville Public School; and Chess Class in Harcourt Public School.
- CASS Ballet Academy held its end of year concert on 7 December 2019 at the School Hall of the Harcourt Public School, and the feedback from participants and families was positive.

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- Since the beginning of 2020, the Ballet Academy has started Jazz class and additional entry level ballet classes using the Community Hall of premises owned by CASS located at 46 Third Avenue, Campsie on Saturdays.
- Hua Jin Social Dance Class continued to be conducted at the Kingsgrove Community Centre, a venue provided by the Georges River Council free of charge. The lessons were given by a professional social dance teacher and managed by 2 volunteers.
- Line dancing class held in CASS Activity Hall on Saturdays continued to be conducted by a professional line dance instructor.
- Majority of our interest/hobby classes were suspended since mid-March 2020 to comply with the Government's restrictions on social gathering, and have gradually resumed since early June 2020 when the restrictions were lifted.

2. Settlement Services

Funding was provided to the Society by the Federal Department of Home Affairs (DHA) under the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support – Client Service (SETS). A three-and-a-half-year grant was awarded in January 2019 until June 2022.

- The delivery of the funded settlement services continued to be provided through the Settlement & Health Team of the subsidiary entity, CASS Care Ltd, targeting newly arrived Chinese-speaking migrants residing in Sydney.
- Settlement workers provided casework, referral services and settlement information to target clients through the provision of face-to-face meetings, information sessions, workshops or expos aiming to increase clients' independence, knowledge and ability to navigate and access mainstream services and promote self-reliance. Since the target clients spread all over Sydney, telephone, email and WeChat enquiry services were also provided as strategies to assist clients who might not be able to physically access the outreach casework venues.

3. Family Day Care (FDC) Service

CASS Family Day Care (CFDC), operated by the Vocation & Training Services Unit of the subsidiary entity, continued running a Coordination Section under the Society for the community.

Relevant information was provided to facilitate parents and families in using family day care services, including the claiming of child care subsidies.

- As a measure to manage the impact of COVID-19, the Australian Government introduced the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package, providing 'Free Child care' from 6 April 2020 until 12 July 2020. Parents using FDC service were covered.
- Our CFDC as a whole took up a free Quality Support Program offered by the NSW Department of Education in partnership with the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). The program started in late January 2020, and was scheduled to run for approximately 18 weeks with the goal to improve quality practices. Owing to COVID-19, the face-to-face support and visits were changed to online and phone support.
- The Coordination Section of CFDC started to use the updated version of the Harmony Software package to conduct online enrolment from April 2020. The revised enrolment process reduced paperwork, provided better document recording and saved time.
- With increasing competition in the FDC industry, efforts were made to improve our marketing strategies to attract families to use our service in suburbs with high potential, including participating in community events, such as information sessions, parenting talks, Lunar New Year Events and Moon Festival celebrations. New flyers promoting various CASS child care services and CFDC business cards were also distributed in targeted suburbs and local libraries. Relevant information was regularly shared with potential clients on Facebook, WeChat and our CASS social media channels.
Three online ZOOM workshops were run in 2020 on Chinese parenting programs with financial support successfully obtained from the Sydney District Small Grants. A total of 118 participants attended the workshops. Topics included were:
 - Improve your child's focus and concentration through play (2 May 2020);
 - Raise a bilingual child through home environment (9 May 2020); and
 - Promote self-help skills through daily routines (16 May 2020).

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- CFDC initiated a free online bilingual educational program called “Play and Learn (PAL) Time” starting from early June 2020. The activities were delivered in Chinese and English. Between 2 June 2020 and 30 June 2020, 5 sessions were delivered to a total of 77 people registered for the Program. This initiative will be continued and promoted in the forthcoming years.
- A new CFDC Facebook page was created in June 2020 to replace the old Facebook page.

4. Human Resources Management

The Society did not employ any staff member in FY2019/2020. The delivery of services and activities were wholly carried out by volunteers and contractors with some work being supported by the subsidiary entity.

5. General Affairs

- In view of the severe Bushfire in New South Wales, the Society initiated a campaign urging people in the community to donate to the Relief Fund set up under the CASS Charity Trust Fund. Over \$15,000 was received, and with a sum added by our Society, making up a total amount raised of \$16,000. We donated \$10,000 and \$6,000 to Killara Rural Fire Brigade and Hornsby Rural Fire Brigade respectively.
- The Society continued publishing articles in Chinese under the pen-name of Kending. A total of 52 articles were released to the media in the year.
- Dr Leng Tan, our Emeritus Chairperson, won the 2020 Premier’s Multicultural Community Medals (SBS Lifetime Community Service Medal). The Award was presented by the Acting Minister for Multiculturalism Geoff Lee via a virtual Ceremony held on 1 June 2020.
- The Reception of the Campsie Head Office was operated by the subsidiary entity. During the year being reported, it handled a total of 10,523 telephone enquiries and attended to a total of 4,667 walk-in enquiries. The bulk of the enquiries was about services or activities provided by the subsidiary entity.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors for and on behalf of the Board of Directors



Dr. Bo Zhou – Director



Mr. Anthony Pang – Director

Dated this 27th Day of September 2020.