

### **Directors' Report on Review of Operations 2021/2022**

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 is 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 continued to add 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 achieving good operating results.

#### **1. Promotion of Chinese Language & Culture**

##### ***CASS Chinese School***

- CASS Chinese School continued receiving government funding through the NSW Department of Education. It operated at 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 Kogarah also had morning session on Sundays to meet the demand for Chinese language classes 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.
- When the COVID-19 restrictions were tightened in July 2021, our School adopted online tutorial for all four campuses until the end of term 4. Our fast response in adapting to resolving situations had been successful and well received by students and parents.
- As COVID-19 restrictions remained tight at the start of 2022, our School stayed providing tutorials online until 27 February 2022 and then resuming face-to-face tutorials.
- The End-of-year Concert of the School was not held in 2021 owing to the COVID-19 situation.
- There were decreases in student enrolment in quarter 1 and quarter 2 of FY2021/2022 in all four campuses owing to the COVID-19 situation, with a total of 513 students by the end of quarter 2 of FY2021/2022. As the COVID-19 situation further improved in quarter 3 and quarter 4, the total enrolment bounced back to 542 students by the end of quarter 4 of FY2021/2022.

##### ***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, Children's Creative Workshop held in CASS Activity Hall; Martial Arts and Drawing Classes in Kogarah High School. Other classes organised in the past were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- The Ballet Academy continued to conduct 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 during school term. In early 2022, one of the classes was conducted at Campsie CASS Activity Hall.
- Line Dancing Class held in CASS Activity Hall on Saturdays was discontinued in 2022 as the venue was over booked.

#### **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. In January 2022, the grant was further extended for two years until June 2024.

- 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.
- Our 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. The aim was to increase clients' independence, knowledge and ability to navigate and access mainstream services and promote self-reliance. Since our target clients spread across Sydney, telephone, email and WeChat enquiry services were provided as part of our strategies to assist clients who might not be able to access the outreach casework venues physically.
- As health is an important element of well-being, we collaborated with various health services providers actively in the last Financial Year to foster healthy lifestyle among Chinese-speaking migrants when settling in Australia.
- Employment and education are another two important issues faced by new migrants. The "Migrant Employment Corner" provided advice and information on employment and setting up small business. The "Learning Support Program" helped young people from disadvantaged migrant families to integrate into the mainstream community.
- To tackle the problem of domestic and family violence, we received extra funding from DHA SETS for Promoting Women's Safety measure from FY2021/2022 to June 2024.

### **3. Family Day Care (FDC) Service**

CASS Family Day Care (CFDC), operated by the Vocation & Training Services Unit of the subsidiary entity, continued to run a Coordination Section under the Society for the community. Relevant information was provided to facilitate parents and families in using FDC services, including the claiming of Child Care Subsidies.

As of 24 September 2021, NSW Department of Education advised that residences used for the provision of Family Day Care must not open unless all adult residents were vaccinated. The relevant

approved provider must ensure the residence was not open on or after 8 November 2021 to provide education or care to any child unless each adult resident was able to provide evidence of 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccination, or a medical contraindication certificate. CFDC Team had followed this guidelines accordingly. All staff members, educators and educators' assistants were vaccinated as per Australian Government's requirements.

- With increasing competition in the FDC industry, efforts were made to attract families using our services in suburbs with high potential. This involved participating in and running local community events such as information sessions, parenting talks, Radio program at 2CR for promoting child care services; some of these events included "Supporting Children during the Pandemic", "Employment and Business Options in Child Care", "Burwood Lantern Festival 2022", "South Western Sydney Jobs Fair", "Promote self-help skills through daily routines", "Multicultural Festival in Canterbury-Bankstown", "Bumps, Bubs and Beyond Mini Expo" at Canada Bay Club etc. Flyers promoting various CASS Child Care services and CFDC were distributed to the participants. Relevant information was also regularly shared with potential clients on Facebook, WeChat, Xiaohongshu, newsletters and our CASS social media channels.
- As a service to help families with children in the community to cope with COVID-19 situation, we continued to provide free online bilingual "Play and Learn (PAL) Time" educational program, and this Program continued to be delivered to educators, children, families and the community in FY 2021/2022. The programs were presented in both Chinese and English. Between July 2021 and June 2022, 23 sessions were delivered to a total of 86 people that registered for the Program. This initiative will continue to run and be promoted in the forthcoming year.
- Since May 2022, CFDC had been selected to be a member of Family Day Care Australia's (FDCA) new Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to support their CALD member engagement initiative.
- On 24 June 2022, the Department of Education extended some COVID-19 measures for the early childhood education and care sector. One of which is that services can waive gap fee until

30 June 2023. Our CFDC educators were provided with the option to choose whether they would proceed with the gap fee waiver.

- The annual review of our CFDC Philosophy was carried out involving families, children, educators, and staff members to ensure that it met the needs of all our stakeholders.

#### 4. Human Resources Management

The Society did not employ any staff member in FY2021/2022. The delivery of services and activities was wholly carried out by volunteers and contractors with some work being supported by the subsidiary entity.

#### 5. General Affairs

- The Society continued holding events during the second half of 2021 to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. One of the most significant events was the holding of the inaugural Multicultural Volunteers' Thanksgiving Luncheon on 6 December 2021 at the Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club which was attended by over 180 people. In the function, the publication "CASS 40th Anniversary Souvenir Book" was launched. The book contains three language sections including English, Chinese and Korean, with information highlighting the key milestones achieved by CASS and the major events and challenges experienced by CASS over the past decade.
- Apart from the launch of CASS 40th Anniversary Souvenir Book, at the same above-mentioned occasion on 6 December 2021, the first Korean edition of "At Home on New Land - A collection of Migrants' Stories" and the 2021 Chinese edition of "The Collected Works of Kending" were officially launched as well. The books respectively present life stories of Korean and Chinese migrants settling and adapting to their new life in Australia.
- Our Foundation Chairperson and Honorary Executive Director, Mr. Henry Pan OAM, was one of the 8 winners of the 16th Compassion Award, which was announced by its founding organisation, Hong Kong Macau Taiwan Charity Fund Ltd, in a ceremony held on 12 December 2021 in Hong Kong. He was the only award recipient from overseas (outside Hong Kong, Macau, mainland China and Taiwan). The internationally renowned 'Compassion

Award' was established in 2006 to promote positive role models of compassion and enhance positive energy in the society. Henry donated the entire Award prize money of US\$160,000 to CASS Building Fund for RACF.

- Mr. Henry Pan OAM was inducted into the ZEST "Hall of Fame" in recognition of his selfless and tireless outstanding contributions to the Western Sydney community. A Presentation Ceremony for the Award was held at Sydney Olympic Stadium on 17 June 2022 attended by over 500 people. The ZEST Awards is an inspirational event led by Western Sydney Community Forum, acknowledging the extraordinary work by individuals within the community sector.
- The legal proceedings instigated jointly by our Society, Dr Bo Zhou and Mr Henry Pan OAM in mid-2018 suing the former staff member of CASS, Ms Jie Cheng for defamation had concluded with the handing down of judgment by Court of Appeal in early February 2022. The three Judges of the Court of Appeal unanimously upheld the judgment made by the Judge of the primary court. Our Society was awarded a sum of \$200,000 for the damages arising from the defamation.
- The Receptions of the Campsie Head Office and Ryde Community Services Centre were operated by the subsidiary entity. During the year being reported, a total of 9,046 telephone enquiries and a total of 3,020 walk-in enquiries were handled. 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 11<sup>th</sup> Day of October 2022.