

**FSM Languages Conference<sup>1</sup>**  
**Sea Breeze Conference Center**  
**March 22 -25, 2004**

**Recommendations of FSM Languages Conference**

The following are the major recommendations resulting from the FSM Languages Conference held at Sea Breeze Conference Center in Kolonia, Pohnpei from March 22 – 25, 2004. The conference had representatives from all State Departments of Education, National Division of Education and the College of Micronesia – FSM.

The FSM Languages Conference recommends the implementation of the FSM Language Policy and improvement of FSM Languages instruction be priority activities of the nation. The following were key components discussed during the conference that are needed for immediate action. Some of the components will require substantial time, resources and commitment.

**Language Policy**

Public Information

- Educate stakeholders on the importance of strengthening and expanding literacy in local languages and English.
- Educate stakeholders on current trends in local languages that indicate language loss and language shift is becoming a critical concern for FSM language experts (if we lose our languages we lose our identity, values and cultures). It has been predicted that if action is not taken at this time, local languages in the FSM could be lost within two generations.
- Educate stakeholders on the importance of teaching local languages throughout the child's complete schooling period (K – college).
- Educate stakeholders on how languages are learned and acquired.

Instructional program review – Each state department of education and the COM-FSM needs to conduct a language instructional program review for local languages and English to determine where we are in implementing programs to improve student and teacher language competence.

The College of Micronesia – FSM is the national college of the FSM. It should have courses in all major FSM local languages. Graduation requirements should include FSM local languages. The development of FSM local languages courses and requirements should be a priority as COM-FSM allocates it resources.

---

<sup>1</sup> The FSM Languages Conferences was hosted by the FSM National Division of Education's Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant (TQEG) Program with assistance of the College of Micronesia – FSM Career Ladder Grant Program.

Local language components should be added into high school entrance examinations in each state.

The National Language and Cultural Institute (NLCI) is a vital part of the FSM Language Policy. It will provide a forum and focus for research, technical assistance, clearinghouse, continued documentation of FSM local languages and assist in training and improved teaching of both FSM local languages and English. Core funding for the NLCI should be from local sources. The National Division of Education is requested to submit legislation to the President for review and consideration and transmittal to the FSM Congress for funding of the NLCI.

### **Development of FSM local language training modules**

The National Division of Education through the Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant (TQEG) and COM-FSM will assist each State Department of Education in developing teacher training modules for each of the FSM major languages and other local languages as funding permits.

As part of FSM local language modules development for teacher training, assessment systems for teacher competence in FSM local languages will also be developed. The National Division of Education will also work with the State Departments of Education and COM-FSM to develop national methods of assessing student competence in FSM local languages.

Once the FSM local language teacher training modules are developed, the delivery of those modules will be a priority for each state department of education and COM-FSM.

### **Teacher Certification**

Endorsement programs will be developed for FSM local languages as part of the revised FSM Teacher Certification System.

### **Pacific Islands Bilingual/Bicultural Association (PIBBA)**

The Pacific Islands Bilingual/Bicultural Association (PIBBA) is the only existing organization for promoting languages and cultures in schools and society in Micronesia. We recommend all levels of government and the society support the activities and concept of PIBBA. The Pohnpei Chapter of PIBBA will host the upcoming 23<sup>rd</sup> International Conference from June 22 – 24, 2004 at PICS High School. The theme of the conference will be “The Pacific Family: Foundation of our Languages and Cultures”. Each State Department of Education, COM-FSM and the NDOE are encouraged to provide presentations at the International Conference of PIBBA this summer. As the issue of FSM languages is a high priority for improving the education system and supporting economic growth and social development, entities should allocate resources to support participation in PIBBA.