



Syd Stirling

MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION & TRAINING

9 July 2006

DARWIN PLAYS HOST TO 500 ENGLISH AND LITERACY TEACHERS

More than 500 English and Literacy teachers from across Australia have converged on Darwin for the national Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA) and the Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE) combined conference.

The conference "*Voices, Vibes, Visions*" was officially opened by Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Syd Stirling, at Darwin High School this morning and runs until the 11th of July.

The conference will give delegates the opportunity to hear some powerful "voices" sharing their knowledge, understanding and expertise about English and literacy teaching and research.

Mr Stirling said the voice of the profession is an important one; so too are the voices that make up the individual components of teaching.

"The disciplines of English and Literacy teaching have a strong voice in Australia and this conference brings those voices together to map a way forward for teachers and students," Mr Stirling said.

"Literacy and English are strongholds in any education system and are the core values of learning and knowledge in an age where critical thinking and critical literacy are paramount," he said.

"The Territory Government is committed to improving literacy outcomes for all of our students.

"All schools are required to have a literacy and numeracy plan, and we are incorporating a number of different literacy programs – such as the National Accelerated Literacy Program, First Steps and Walking Talking Texts – and ascertaining their effectiveness as whole school approaches to literacy," he said.

Delegates will capture the "visions" that shape and reshape English and Literacy teaching in Australia and around the world. More importantly, they will feel "vibes" that deepen their understandings of what it means to be a teacher of English and Literacy in the twenty-first century.

The program for this year's conference will bring together notable international, national and local speakers to share their visions of education now and in the future.

Well-known authors such as Mem Fox, Gillian Rubinstein and Matthew Reilly will share their secrets and tricks of the trade. International speakers will include Rob Pope from the United Kingdom, Hilary Janks from South Africa and Kirsty Sword Gusmao, the First Lady of East Timor.

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