



Ethnic Communities'
Council of NSW Inc.
Representing all communities

**NSW Migrant & Refugee
EDUCATION WORKING PARTY**



**REBUILDING CAPACITY:
ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE AND
REFUGEE EDUCATION IN NSW PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

AN AGENDA FOR NSW GOVERNMENT 2019-2023

February 2019

INTRODUCTION

As the state's key access and equity program designed to meet the English learning needs of migrant and refugee students in the English-medium curriculum, the English as an additional language or Dialect (EAL/D) Program¹ is a strategic state resource essential to achieving the NSW Government's access, equity and literacy goals in education and fulfilling its service obligations under the *Multicultural NSW Legislation Amendment Act 2014*.

With the increasing linguistic diversity of the student population in the early years of schooling; immigration comprising an increasing proportion of NSW population growth;² and ongoing pressure from international crises on Australia's refugee and humanitarian intakes, student demand for EAL/D teaching support in NSW Government schools will continue to grow in the coming decade.

To meet this challenge, the NSW Government must ensure the maintenance and development of a strong statewide system of EAL/D provision is as part of its commitment to quality public education in a multicultural society.

In recent years, school-based management reforms promoted by national and state governments of both political persuasions have eroded EAL/D programs in schools and weakened public education's capacity to meet the ongoing English language and literacy learning needs of refugee and migrant students. These impacts put at risk the successful resettlement, school participation and completion, and employment of migrant and refugee young people over the long term.

As Australia's largest immigration state³, the EAL/D Program in NSW Government schools cannot be taken for granted. The agenda below outlines a set of systemic changes an incoming NSW Government needs to make over its term of office in order to build a public education infrastructure that addresses the English learning needs of its growing linguistically diverse school population.

1. NSW Legislative Council inquiry into the English language education of students with English language proficiency needs

Initiate a NSW Legislative Council inquiry into the English language education of migrant and refugee students with English language proficiency needs in NSW Public Schools and the impact of Local Schools Local Decisions on this provision

The NSW Government introduced its school-based management reform agenda, *Local Schools Local Decisions* in 2012 with the stated aim of giving NSW public schools more authority to make local decisions to best meet the needs of their students. Under the

¹ Formerly the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program. The term English as an Additional Language or dialect (EAL/D) was adopted nationally by ACARA in 2012 to include Indigenous students learning English as their additional language or dialect.

² Cully, M. & L. Pejowski, L. (2012) Australia unbound? Migration, openness and population futures. In *A Greater Australia: Population, policies and governance*. Committee for Economic Development. p. 70.

³ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/66CDB63F615CF0A2CA257C4400190026?OpenDocument>

reform, principals have a greater say over their staffing, budgeting, resourcing and use of available resources, including the targeted provision of EAL program support to migrant and refugee students.

With key decision-making responsibilities for EAL/D provision being devolved to schools, state-wide oversight, planning, resourcing, staffing, professional support and accountability for specific-purpose English language support programs for migrant and refugee students has suffered. NSW public education's EAL/D Program has been eroded by the down-sizing and sidelining of the state Multicultural Programs Unit, the loss of frontline specialist consultancy and professional development support to schools, and the effective untying of specific-purpose EAL teaching under new policies of flexible staffing.⁴ Similar policies impacting on EAL/D programs are occurring in other State and Territory education systems.⁵

These impacts have severely weakened the state's systemic capacity to respond to the increasing English language and literacy learning needs of growing numbers of refugee and migrant students arising from Australia's ongoing immigration and humanitarian programs.

A localised, schools-only approach to EAL/D provision cannot provide a coherent systemic educational response to the continued growth of school-aged migrant and refugee students in NSW Government schools. Devolving responsibility for EAL/D to schools fragments and undermines the specific program structures that support the successful school participation and resettlement of school-aged migrant and humanitarian entrants and reflects an abrogation of state responsibility for this vital equity provision.⁶

Since its introduction in 2012, no evaluation has been conducted on the impact of the *Local Schools, Local Decisions* reform on the educational access, equity and effectiveness of EAL/D provision. Evaluation of the school-based management pilot in 47 NSW public schools did not include tied grants and program funding due to data extraction problems.⁷

A recent evaluation of *Local Schools, Local Decisions* was similarly unable to determine exactly what schools spent their Resource Allocation Model (RAM) equity loading (English Language Proficiency funding) allocation on.⁸ Consequently, three crucial issues surrounding schools' use of this funding are yet to be determined:

- the quantum of unspent English language proficiency (ELP) funds;
- the extent to which ELP funding is being used to support EAL/D learners, and
- schools' access to specialist expertise and advice necessary for the effective use of these funds in the effective organisation and delivery of the school's EAL/D program.

⁴ <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/nsw-education-department-funding-changes-hit-esl-support-program-20131124-2y41g.html>

⁵ ACTA submission to the 2017 Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes at: <http://www.tesol.org.au/Advocacy/Media-Room>, p. 57-73.

⁶ https://www.nswtf.org.au/files/passing_the_buck_-_final_report_plus_executive_summary.pdf

⁷ NSW Department of Education and Communities (2012) *Final report of the Evaluation of the School-Based Management Pilot*, p10, at: https://www.cese.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/PDF/Eval_Rep/Schools/School_Based_Management_Pilot_Evaluation_Final_Rpt_2012.pdf

⁸ NSW Department of Education, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, (2018) *Local Schools, Local Decisions: Evaluation Interim Report*. p.14, at: <https://www.cese.nsw.gov.au//images/stories/PDF/LSLD-interim-report.pdf>

The evaluation found strong similarities and overlaps between how schools spent their ELP funding (i.e. EAL/D) and other equity loading funding, particularly disability and socioeconomic background. This included use of ELP funding to employ non EAL/D specialist teachers such as School Learning Support Officers, Learning and Support Teachers and Community Liaison Officers.⁹

The NSW Legislative Council has yet to conduct an inquiry into the English Language education of migrant and refugee background students with English proficiency needs.¹⁰ Its terms of reference could be appropriately modeled along the lines of those of the NSW Legislative Council *Inquiry into Education of Students with a Disability or Special Needs in New South Wales* completed in 2017.¹¹

With its capacity to take direct evidence from teachers, educators and administrators, the inquiry will provide the necessary evidence base for a long overdue assessment of the adequacy of the department's current EAL/D Program policy and planning in the context of Australia's migration program and the *Local Schools, Local Decisions* reform, and be able to set key policy directions for public education in multicultural NSW. **Initiating a NSW Legislative Council inquiry into EAL/D education is a priority for urgent implementation.**

Cost implications: Within existing resources

Implementation: Inquiry initiated and completed in 2019

2. Unmet English language and literacy learning needs

Allocate an additional 250 EAL/D teaching positions to address the unmet English language and literacy learning needs of EAL/D students in NSW Government Schools

Each year, the Department allocates EAL/D teaching support to schools from a fixed state pool of 896 EAL/D teaching positions. Over the last two decades, the number of EAL/D teacher positions in this pool has not kept pace with increased need for EAL/D teaching support.

NSW Government school indicator	2007	2017	% difference
Total student enrolments ¹²	738,636	791,763	7%
Students with language backgrounds other than English	207,031 ¹³	274, 446	32%
LBOTE ¹⁴ students assessed as needing EAL/D support	126,400	166,000 ¹⁵	31%
EAL/D learners as proportion of all students	17%	21%	4%

⁹ NSW Department of Education, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, (2018) *Local Schools, Local Decisions: Evaluation Interim Report*. p.16, 19, 23, 24.

¹⁰ <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/pages/inquiries.aspx>

¹¹ <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2416/170921%20-%20Final%20report.pdf>

¹² NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2007*, p.4,6.

¹³ NSW Department of Education *2007 Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement* p.4

¹⁴ Students from this broad group who are assessed as needing English language support are identified as EAL/D learners. Currently, about 60% of all LBOTE students are EAL/D learners.

¹⁵ NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2017*, p.32, 85. The 166,000 EAL/D students are LBOTE students identified as needing EAL/D. The report assumes that all these students received EAL/D support from the \$24m allocation of flexible funding to schools.

at: <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/2015-nsw-state-election-esl-crisis-faces-students-20150323-1m5f7t.html>

As indicated in the table above, there has been 31 per cent increase in the number of students needing EAL/D support in NSW Government schools over the last decade, outstripping the 7 per cent growth rate of the general student population. At the same time, there has been no increase to the state pool of 896 EAL/D teacher positions since 2009.¹⁶

The table below shows the deterioration in EAL/D provision over the decade as a result of continued application of a ‘within existing resources’ policy to EAL/D resourcing.

NSW Government school indicator	2007¹⁷	2017	% difference
EAL/D FTE	886 ¹⁸	896 ¹⁹	1.1%
LBOTE students assessed as needing EAL/D support	126,400	166,000	31.3%
LBOTE students receiving EAL/D support	85,000 ²⁰	111,200 ²¹	30.1%
LBOTE students unable to receive EAL/D support ²²	41,400	54,700	32.1%
EAL/D student to EAL/D teacher ratio - primary and secondary schools ²³	1: 140	1:185	32.1%

This effective freeze on the allocation of EAL/D resources has created a growing backlog of unmet EAL/D need of some 47,000 students each year.²⁴ Continued failure to address the chronic underfunding of EAL/D especially disadvantages schools in Greater Western Sydney, where the majority of refugees settle and this, in turn, impacts NSW’s long tail of low literacy performance and under-achievement.²⁵

The National Education Reform Agreement between the NSW and the Commonwealth Governments secured an additional \$5 billion (‘Gonski’ funding) for NSW public schools over 2014-2019²⁶. The NSW Government allocated additional funding to schools to supplement the 896 EAL/D teaching positions - \$14m in 2015²⁷ and \$24m respectively in 2016 and 2017.²⁸ However, instead of being directed towards increasing the state pool of EAL/D

¹⁶ NSW Department of Education 2007 *Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement* p. 17 at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/MPSP-report-2007.pdf> and NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2017*, p.85, at: https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/Annual_Report_2017_Full.pdf

¹⁷ NSW Department of Education 2007 *Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement* p. at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/MPSP-report-2007.pdf>

¹⁸ NSW Department of Education 2008 *Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement* p.38 at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/MPSP-report-2008.pdf>

¹⁹ NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2017*, p.27.

²⁰ NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2007*, p.81; 2007 *Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement* reports 83,163 students, p. 17.

²¹ Estimated figure based on similar proportion of EAL/D learners able to receive EAL/D support in 2007.

²² Calculated as the difference between the number of LBOTE students assessed as needing EAL/D support and the number of LBOTE students receiving EAL/D support.

²³ Calculated as the number of LBOTE students assessed as needing EAL/D support divided by the number of EAL/D teaching positions.

²⁴ <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/2015-nsw-state-election-esl-crisis-faces-students-20150323-1m5f7t.html>

²⁵ The underachievement of English language learners can be seen within the characteristic bipolar distribution of LBOTE students’ literacy outcomes wherein the percentage of high performing LBOTE students is greater than average but the percentage of low performing LBOTE students is also greater than average. See Thomson, S., De Bortoli, L., & Underwood, C. (2016). *PISA 2015: A first look at Australia’s results*, p.69. at: <https://research.acer.edu.au/ozpisa/21/> See also: https://www.nswtf.org.au/files/passing_the_buck_-_final_report_plus_executive_summary.pdf p.15 and <https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/columnists/geoff-masters/the-long-tail-of-underachievement> .

²⁶ NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2017*, p.31.

²⁷ *Multicultural Plan Progress Report 2015-2016*, p. 15 at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/MPSP-report-2015-16.pdf>

²⁸ NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2016*, p. 82. and *Annual Report 2017*, p.27.

teaching positions to address the shortfall in specialist teaching support, this additional funding was allocated as a discretionary, ‘flexible resource’ to schools. Use of the funds was not subject to any specific accountability reporting requirements and the Department currently has no way of knowing how the funds have been used.²⁹

Recent research on NSW public school teachers’ workload commissioned by the NSW Teacher Federation has highlighted the urgent need for the provision of additional specialist teacher support for students with special needs in order to help teachers address the increasing diversity of student needs in classrooms.³⁰

Allocation of an additional 250 EAL/D teaching positions would provide the extra specialist teacher targeted support needed to improve the English language literacy performance of EAL/D students and would address the long-term structural inequity in the Department’s EAL/D resource allocation by substantially reducing the EAL student to EAL/D teacher ratio to 1:145, approximating 2007 levels of support. **Allocation of additional EAL/D teaching positions for schools is a priority for urgent implementation.**

This resource allocation could be substantially funded from the flexible, non-staffing component of RAM English Language Proficiency funding intended for EAL/D students. Should Labor win both NSW and federal elections, the allocation could be fully funded from Labor’s promised \$917 million three year funding boost to NSW schools.³¹

Cost implications: an additional \$26.67m recurrent salary costs from 2022³²

Implementation: staged allocation of FTE positions coordinated with action 7 below.

Roll out	2019	2020	2021	2022
EAL/D FTE	N/A	100	200	250
Additional funding allocation	\$0	\$10.67m	\$21.34m	\$26.67m

3. Planning of Intensive English provision

Improve the planning and provision of Intensive English support across the NSW Public School system

In 2017, some 9,900 newly arrived students, including humanitarian entrants, required intensive English language assistance and enrolled in NSW public schools.³³ Under its New Arrivals Program, the Department provides on arrival intensive English programs for these students through 14 secondary Intensive English Centers (IECs) and the Central Sydney

²⁹ NSW Department of Education, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, (2018) *Local Schools, Local Decisions: Evaluation Interim Report*.p.15.

³⁰ McGrath-Champ, S., Wilson, R., Stacey, M., & Fitzgerald, S. (2018). *Understanding Work in Schools: The Foundations of Teaching and Learning* at: <https://news.nswtf.org.au/application/files/7315/3110/0204/Understanding-Work-In-Schools.pdf>, p.86.

³¹http://www.tanyaplibersek.com/plibersek_dib_media_release_labor_to_transform_public_schools_with_biggest_investment_in_australian_history_friday_12_october_2018

³²NSW Department 2019 standard teacher salary rate of \$106,716 including 18.18% on costs.

³³ NSW Department of Education, *Annual Report 2017*, p.85, at: https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/Annual_Report_2017_Full.pdf

Intensive English High School (IEHS), some intensive English classes at a small number of Sydney primary schools and short-term, part-time intensive English staffing at a small number of rural schools.

Intensive English provision is a key front-line state resource developed to respond to the immediate English learning needs of fluctuating enrolments of migrant and refugee students flowing from Australia's ongoing immigration and humanitarian programs by preparing them for assisted participation in mainstream classes. Each IEC/IEHS functions as a system resource and feeder school that prepares students who go on to enroll in different high schools in the local area.

To operate as a state resource, IECs and classes need to be located in and service an identified area of community need, be accessible by public transport, and operate as distinct cost centers able to exercise its own management, staffing and budgeting processes. The latter requirements are not guaranteed under current administrative arrangements in which principals of the high school on which the IEC is located have responsibility for budget, staffing and management of IECs or where IECs operate as a subject faculty of the high school.

Currently, there is no overall forward planning of Intensive English support that considers changing migrant settlement and enrolment patterns across schools. Specific IEC/IEHS location and accommodation needs have been ignored in recent school property planning.³⁴ Currently, IECs are at risk of losing control over their specialist staffing and budget as there are no guidelines specifying the principal's role in the appropriate allocation of funding to IECs or the special role of IECs in the public education system. There is still no statewide approach to the transition of students from IECs to high school, moderated assessment and monitoring of their English learning outcomes on IEC exit, determining optimum length of stay in an IEC/IEHS, reviewing the IEC temporary to permanent staffing ratio, or addressing the uneven intensive English provision in primary and rural schools within the New Arrivals program.³⁵

Systemic approaches to the successful transition of IEC/IEHS students to high schools have been prevented by reliance on individual, local school responses under *Local Schools Local Decisions*. A 2014 Department report which recommended orderly, semester-based intakes of IEC/IEHS students into high schools with bridging program support³⁶ has been ignored. Researchers have identified the critical EAL pedagogy recently arrived at risk students require in order to learn in mainstream classrooms and successfully transition and integrate in those schools where these students enroll.³⁷

³⁴ The Intensive English High School at Cleveland St. has being relocated to make way for the building of a new inner city, multi-story high school. Chatswood IEC is being relocated to an inaccessible site to make way for an expanded accommodation at Chatswood High School.

³⁵ Newly arrived students in grades 3-5 face a particular service gap. These students require intensive language and learning support, in intensive/ semi-intensive classes but are not able or eligible to attend secondary Intensive English Centres.

³⁶ Hammond, J. (2014) *The Transition of Refugee Students from Intensive English Centres to Mainstream High Schools: Current Practices and Future Possibilities*, and NSW Department of Education Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018), *Its Complex! Working with Students of Refugee Backgrounds and their Families in New South Wales*, p.50, 51.

³⁷ Hammond, J., & Miller, J., eds. (2015) *Classrooms of possibility: Supporting at-risk EAL students*, PETAA.

Effective planning and provision of intensive English provision needs to be part of whole-of-department EAL/D planning informed by research evidence on the time it typically takes second language learners to attain the academic literacy in English on a par with their Australian-born peers.³⁸

Government commitment to planning improved Intensive English provision across the NSW Public School system will safeguard, strengthen and maximise effective use of this key state equity provision.

Cost implications: Within existing resources

Implementation: Cross Departmental Intensive English provision planning group established in 2019, operation ongoing.

4. Transparent accountability reporting on the EAL/D Program

Ensure effective whole of Department and school level accountability for EAL/D Program provision through transparent annual public reporting

Currently, NSW has no systematic, annual accountability reporting of EAL/D provision or the English language learning progress of EAL/D students. Department Annual Reports and Multicultural Programs reporting reflect a ‘scatter gun’ approach to reporting on EAL/D. There are significant gaps in student numbers and funding and, if they are provided, little year-to-year consistency in reporting of student numbers, funding and respective categories and break-ups. After ten years of NAPLAN testing, the Department is still unable to identify the EAL/D student target group within the broad LBOTE student cohort and report on their English language and literacy outcomes or progress.

Current accountability reporting arrangements for EAL/D apply only to annual reports published by individual schools on their school websites. Although guidelines have been issued to assist schools in reporting on EAL/D in their annual reports,³⁹ these are only followed when principals have sufficient expertise and guidance to satisfactorily complete the report.

Information about the allocation and use of targeted EAL/D teaching resource in schools is not publically available. Since the introduction of new EAL/D resourcing arrangements under the RAM, there has been no public reporting of schools’ EAL/D staffing and non-staffing component allocations. School websites report only aggregate RAM funding amounts which

³⁸ Typically it takes 5 to 7 years for students with complete schooling to develop peer equivalent school academic literacy and up to 12 ten years for students with disrupted schooling to attain this level. See Collier, V. (1989). How Long? A synthesis of research on academic achievement in a second language, *TESOL Quarterly*, 23(3), 509-531; *bilingual children*, Cambridge: CUP; Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement; Cummins, J. (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction. In *Encyclopedia of language and education* (pp. 487-499). Springer US; Hakuta, K. (2000). How long does it take English learners to attain proficiency? *University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute*; Demie, F. (2013). English as an additional language pupils: how long does it take to acquire English fluency? *Language and Education*, 27(1), 59-69.

³⁹ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/annual-reporting/annual-reporting-frequently-asked-questions>

conceals the schools' EAL/D teaching allocation.⁴⁰ Specific information on the school's EAL/D staffing and funding is provided to principals only. EAL/D teachers, on whom schools rely to accurately complete annual surveys of EAL/D student need for their EAL/D staffing, are often not informed of the school's subsequent EAL/D staffing allocation or RAM ELP funding.

Transparency and accountability can be effectively implemented by establishing state level, annual reporting of the EAL/D program against a set of key equity and quality indicators. These indicators would include EAL/D FTE resource allocations, number of EAL/D qualified teachers, number of EAL/D students and English language learning outcomes by schools, school sector, year levels, geographical areas and the system, and would provide the basis for state level strategic planning. The Department has data analysis and reporting capability for this task through its Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation. **Establishing systematic, transparent annual state reporting of the EAL/D Program is a priority for urgent implementation.**

Cost implications: Within existing resources

Implementation: First report published in 2019, operation ongoing.

5. Education planning and coordination of support for students from refugee backgrounds

Extend system planning and coordination support for students from refugee backgrounds to the NSW Public School system

NSW Government schools receive the great majority of the NSW refugee student intake with the main settlement being in Greater Western Sydney. Each year, NSW public schools enroll approximately 1,500 newly-arrived students from refugee backgrounds with high support needs.⁴¹ These students have fled war and civil strife in countries from the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Recent major source countries (top ten counties of birth) include Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Bhutan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan and Somalia.⁴²

The NSW Premier's 2015 decision to resettle in NSW up to 7,000 of the 12,000 of Australia's intake of refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria and Iraq added a cohort of some additional 2,000-3,000 school aged new arrivals requiring intensive EAL/D support to the NSW public schools.⁴³ To ensure a coordinated state response to the special humanitarian intake across government, government agencies and NGOs, the Premier appointed Professor Peter Shergold as NSW Coordinator-General for Refugee Resettlement.

⁴⁰ Schools in Western and South Western Sydney found that their staffing allocations had reduced when the RAM equity loadings that provided support for Aboriginal students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds was first applied in 2014.

⁴¹ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/refugee-students-in-schools>

⁴² Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018), *Its Complex! Working with Students of Refugee Backgrounds and their Families in New South Wales* p.16.

⁴³ No figures have been reported for NSW Government school enrolments of students from the special Syrian and Iraqi intake to NSW. These can only be estimated as the school aged proportion of the NSW intake.

Consultation and coordination activity across government, NGO and private sectors around the housing, health, education and welfare needs of additional arrivals from Syria and Iraq resulted in allocation of \$146m in the NSW 2016/17 Budget.⁴⁴ Within this allocation, an additional \$93m was allocated for education to meet the ‘core schooling costs of refugees alongside intensive English language education’.⁴⁵ The wording of this budget item suggests that additional funding was made available only for the general education, not the intensive English language tuition, of this group.

Analysis below of NSW Government funding of the New Arrivals Program in the decade since the Commonwealth Government handed over responsibility for the program to states and territories shows incomplete and inconsistent reporting of New Arrivals Program students and funding. Although IECs/IEHS student numbers are reported, it appears that funding for IECs/IEHS are not included in the New Arrivals funding figures.

**NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEW ARRIVALS PROGRAM AND REFUGEE STUDENT FUNDING 2007-2017**

Year	New Arrivals Program funding	NAP students (Primary, IECs/IEHS & High schools) ⁴⁶	Newly arrived refugee students	Funding for refugees	Total funding for new arrivals and refugee students
2007	N/A ⁴⁷	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2008	N/A ⁴⁸	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2009	N/A ⁴⁹	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2010	N/A	7553	N/A	N/A	N/A
2011	N/A	7287	778	N/A	N/A
2012	N/A	7000	890	N/A	N/A
2013	N/A	7877	1056	N/A	N/A
2014	N/A	8946	1406	N/A	N/A
2015 ⁵⁰	\$23,694,245	9554	1218	\$2,147,167 ⁵¹	\$25,841,412
2016 ⁵²	\$23.7m	7462	3586	\$2,320,846	\$26,020,846
2017 ⁵³	\$30m	9900	3700	\$2.4m	\$32,400,000

A state resettlement plan was not published and there has been no public reporting of resettlement funding expenditure, initiatives or outcomes. Efforts appear to have been

⁴⁴ 2017 NSW Government Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes at: [file:///D:/Users/z3281608/Downloads/NSW%20Government%20Submission%20on%20Migrant%20Settlement%20Outcomes%20\(1\).pdf](file:///D:/Users/z3281608/Downloads/NSW%20Government%20Submission%20on%20Migrant%20Settlement%20Outcomes%20(1).pdf)

⁴⁵ Refugee Council of Australia website, *Refugees and the NSW Budget 2016-2017* at:

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/getfacts/settlement/livinghere/nsw-budget/>

⁴⁶ 2007-2010 *Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement* reports; 2011-2016 *Multicultural Policies and Services Program* reports.

⁴⁷ Combined funding of \$107.31m for ESL New Arrivals and ESL General Support.

⁴⁸ Combined funding of \$133m for ESL New Arrivals and ESL General Support.

⁴⁹ Combined funding of \$133m for ESL New Arrivals and ESL General Support.

⁵⁰ *Multicultural Plan Progress Report 2015-2016*, p.9, 15. It is unclear whether the New Arrivals funding figure includes IECs/IEHS.

⁵¹ Funding allocation (via the individual targeted funding component) to support recently arrived refugee students’ earning, well being and settlement needs.

⁵² *NSW Department of Education Annual Report 2016*, p.25, 82. It is unclear whether the New Arrivals funding figure includes IECs/IEHS.

⁵³ *NSW Department of Education Annual Report 2017*, p.27, 85. It is unclear whether the New Arrivals funding figure includes IECs/IEHS.

directed towards resettlement support through community-based and employment initiatives in collaboration with not-for-profit and corporate organisations.⁵⁴

At the same time, the Australian Government provided \$827.4 million over four years 2015/16 to 2018/19 to support the permanent resettlement of the 12,000 Syrian and Iraqi refugees. Despite school aged children comprising an estimated 30 percent of the total Syrian and Iraqi refugee intake to Australia⁵⁵, the Commonwealth Government has confirmed that it made no provision for the on arrival English learning needs of this group.⁵⁶ Given that NSW received the majority of the special refugee intake, this decision suggests a serious failure of advocacy in NSW Government's Commonwealth funding negotiations.

NSW will continue to receive significant numbers of refugees in the years ahead. Should Labor win the next Federal election, Australia's annual refugee intake will increase to a total of 32,000.⁵⁷ The NSW support infrastructure developed for the Syrian and Iraqi refugee intake needs to be maintained and extended to English language learning and wellbeing support in NSW public education.

Successful resettlement and school participation of school-aged humanitarian entrants requires a state commitment to maintaining English language learning and wellbeing support both during and beyond their initial settlement period. Extending planning and coordination support for students from refugee backgrounds to the NSW Public School system will help ensure timely, targeted provision of English language and related wellbeing support throughout their schooling.

Cost implications: Within existing resources.

Implementation: Report on 2015-2018 initiatives published in 2019, a 2019-2022 plan including English language learning and wellbeing support in schools issued by 2020.

6. Health and wellbeing support for students from refugee backgrounds

Strengthen health and wellbeing support for students from refugee backgrounds in the NSW Public School system

Newly arrived migrant and refugee students frequently experience health conditions such as vision impairment and iron and vitamin deficiencies which impair learning but can be easily identified and treated through routine health screening and appropriate GP referral.⁵⁸ Not all refugees receive health screening on arrival in Australia as community-sponsored

⁵⁴ <https://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace/corporates-join-state-government-to-help-refugees-get-jobs-20170526-gwe2yg.html>

⁵⁵ Collins, J., Reid, C., Groutsis, D., Watson, K., & Ozkul, D. (2018) Working Paper No 1, *Syrian and Iraqi Refugee Settlement in Australia* at: https://www.uts.edu.au/sites/default/files/article/downloads/Collins.Reid_.Groutsis.Australia.Syrian-Conflict%20Refugee%20Settlement%20in%20Australia.pdf, p.6.

⁵⁶ Response to 2018 Senate Estimate Questions on Notice SQ 18-666.

⁵⁷ <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/bill-shorten-pledges-500-million-to-un-and-confirms-labor-will-increase-refugee-intake-20181217-p50moj.html>

⁵⁸ Zwi, K., Morton, N., Woodland, L., Mallitt, K. A., & Palasanthiran, P. (2017). Screening and Primary Care Access for Newly Arrived Paediatric Refugees in Regional Australia: A 5 year Cross-sectional Analysis (2007–12). *Journal of tropical pediatrics*, 63(2), 109-117.

humanitarian entrants may not be prioritised and automatically linked to free, on arrival health services.⁵⁹ In addition, major obstacles are language barriers and a lack of knowledge about local health care services. Timely access to health services is a concern expressed by schools with refugee enrolments.⁶⁰

These barriers have been overcome by Intensive English Centres (IECs) providing a supportive environment that introduces students and their families to the Australian health care system, hosting a two day per week health screening service by specialist refugee nurses and linking them with local GPs who speak their language. IEC-based, nurse-led screening was established at Beverly Hills Intensive English Centre in 2011 and then expanded to Kogarah, Evans, Holroyd and Fairfield IECs. This model proved to be highly effective in increasing the detection of health conditions likely to impact on student health and learning; linking newly arrived students and their families with primary health care; and coordinating care across primary health and specialist services.⁶¹

Further funding for this program was provided by NSW Health to services including NSW's Refugee Health Service as part of an expanded outreach health screening program to new schools, including primary schools with large numbers of refugee students. Funding was allocated in response to the 2015 announcement of an additional Syrian refugee intake to NSW and strong support by the Shergold committee for school based 'hubs' to provide health and other support services.

IECs are ideally placed as to provide nurse-led health screening, parent education and linkage with General Practitioners for newly arrived students and their families. By ensuring early access to school-based health screening, IECs can reduce the disadvantage experienced by refugee and other vulnerable newly arrived students and improve their ability to integrate and succeed in mainstream schooling. The program reflects a best practice model of health access intervention for newly arrived school aged children.⁶²

Currently, the future of this successful program is uncertain. State and local health district plans which underpinned funding for the program expired in 2016 are currently being reviewed and updated but have not been released.⁶³ The additional funding that has supported school-based nurse led screening programs has been allocated on a contingency basis to meet the immediate health needs of the Syrian and Iraqi intake. Future enhancement funding, beyond June 2020, has not been announced. If not secured in future refugee health plans, these programs are at risk of being discontinued.

Currently, only a limited number of IECs/IEHS have access to this program. School-based nurse-led screening programs should be extended to all IECs and more key primary schools,

⁵⁹ <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/refugee-and-humanitarian-program/community-support-program/how-can-you-help> and Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018) p.37.

⁶⁰ Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018), p.39.

⁶¹ Woodland L, Kang M, Elliot C, Perry A, Eagar S and Zwi K. (2015) Evaluation of a school screening program for young people from refugee backgrounds, *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health* at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jpc.12989>

⁶² Zwi, K., et. al (2017).

⁶³ https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2011_014.pdf and https://www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/migration/Multicultural_Health/docs/2013_SESLHD_Refugee_Health_Implementation_Plan.pdf

supported with recurrent health funding secured by current department and local health district refugee health implementation plans.

Cost implications: \$3.6m partnership funding (Health NSW),⁶⁴ covering a total of 30 primary and IEC sites, over four years.

Implementation: Roll-out of the program to all IECs/IEHS and key primary schools in 2019, ongoing.

Enrolment in NSW schools of refugee background students with complex mental health needs impacts on their school adjustment and classroom behavior and significantly increases the teacher pastoral care workload and counseling case load for individually tailored support.⁶⁵

In 2016, the Department established two state Refugee support teams with eight Psychologist, Refugee support officers to provide additional counselling services and specialist support to school counsellors in its core school counselor program.⁶⁶ However, schools with significant numbers of refugee students still report that schools' access to counselling services is insufficient to meet the increased incidents and complexity of refugee students' counseling needs.⁶⁷

Refugee factors or refugee student enrolment data were not included as indicators of student need in the Department's calculation of its core school counselling allocation to schools for 2016-2018. The 2015 Commonwealth Report on the Second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, which informed the Department's 2016-2018 allocations, makes no reference to refugees.⁶⁸ Thus, high schools where one in every six students is an asylum seeker may only receive two days counsellor support per week. It is unclear whether the formula for allocating counsellors to schools with refugee populations has been changed to reflect current needs.

With the NSW Government's recent announcement of funding for a full-time counsellor or psychologist and a student support officer in every high school,⁶⁹ there is an urgent need to review the current formula for allocating counseling positions in light of current refugee student enrolment trends and to ensure that any increase specialist counseling provision is well targeted to meet the complex needs of refugees in these schools.

Cost implications: Review within existing resources

Implementation: Review conducted in 2019.

⁶⁴ Calculated as \$30,000 (0.2 FTE nurse and equipment) x 15 IEC/IEHS and 15 primary school sites.

⁶⁵ Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018), p.36-39.

⁶⁶ NSW Department of Education, *Multicultural Plan Progress Report 2015-2016*, p.10 at: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/media/schools-operation/MPSP-Report-2015-16.pdf> and *NSW Government submission to the Joint Committee on Migration Inquiry into Migrant settlement Outcomes*, p.8.

⁶⁷ Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018), p. 89.

⁶⁸ Commonwealth of Australia (2015) *Mental Health of Children and Adolescents: Second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing* at:

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/9DA8CA21306FE6EDCA257E2700016945/\\$File/child2.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/9DA8CA21306FE6EDCA257E2700016945/$File/child2.pdf)

⁶⁹ <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/all-nsw-high-schools-to-get-two-mental-health-experts-in-berejiklian-election-pledge-20190219-p50yr2.html>

7. School staffing of EAL/D qualified teachers

Ensure EAL/D qualified teachers are appointed to all EAL/D positions across IECs, high schools and primary schools

EAL/D qualifications equip specialist EAL/D teachers with the essential knowledge and skills required to provide needs-based English language and literacy instruction and assessment for migrant and refugee students and fulfill their specialist roles in program and curriculum development and professional support to schools. This expertise is crucial to the effective delivery of EAL/D programs in schools.

Despite the importance of EAL/D qualifications, untrained EAL teachers continue to be appointed to EAL/D positions in primary schools, high schools and IECs.⁷⁰ This is particularly the case with the large numbers of unqualified teachers in K-6 EAL/D positions due to the historical non-recognition and accreditation of EAL/D as a specialist area in NSW primary schools.

The school-based, flexible resource management policies of *Local School Local Decisions* have made the problem worse. Principals' school-based staffing decisions have led to the re-deployment of EAL/D qualified staff to non EAL/D teaching positions and increased the number of fractionalised and casualised EAL/D teaching positions filled by teachers without EAL/D qualifications.⁷¹ EAL/D positions are routinely filled by EAL/D untrained casual teachers when the permanent EAL/D teacher is on leave.

Below are sample cases showing how local school-based decision-making has eroded schools' needs-based EAL/D teaching allocation, sidelined EAL/D teaching expertise, fragmented and residualised EAL/D program delivery and denied EAL/D learners access to the targeted English language and literacy support they need.

LOCAL SCHOOLS, LOCAL DECISIONS: EAL/D CASE STUDIES

School	School EAL/D need	EAL/D resources allocated 2018	Actual use of the EAL/D allocation	Impact on EAL/D students
Sydney metropolitan primary school A	LBOTE students comprise 67% of school enrolments. 106 students assessed as needing EAL/D support.	EAL/D teacher allocation: 1.0 FTE Resource Allocation Model (RAM) - English Language Proficiency (ELP) funding: \$40,280	School has not employed a qualified EAL/D teacher in 4 years. EAL/D allocation used for Release from Face to Face. RAM ELP funds used for teachers aide	EAL/D learners not receiving EAL/D support
Sydney metropolitan primary school B	LBOTE students comprise 26% of school enrolments. 33 EAL/D students including 8 New Arrivals students.	No EAL/D resources allocated - the school would be eligible to receive 2½ days EAL/D tuition for 8 new arrivals students RAM ELP funding: \$21,374	School did not apply for on arrival EAL/D support because no one knew about it or how to apply. RAM ELP funds used for 'additional teacher support'.	New arrivals students enrolled in school without any on-arrival EAL/D support

⁷⁰ Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018) p. 43, 54-57, 89.

⁷¹ ACTA submission to the 2017 Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes, p. 57-73.

Sydney metropolitan primary school C	LBOTE students comprise 76% of school enrolments. 238 (68% of school enrolments) assessed as needing EAL/D support.	EAL/D teacher allocation: 1.6 FTE RAM ELP funding: \$37,225.	School executive decided to use 5 day per week of its EAL/D and New Arrivals Program teaching allocation to create a stage one non-composite class. RAM ELP funds used for 'professional learning and resources'.	3 day per week EAL/D teacher allocation left over to support 274 EAL/D learners and an unknown allocation of NAP funding for 25 New Arrivals.
Sydney metropolitan primary school D	LBOTE students comprise 66% of school enrolments. 75 students assessed as needing EAL/D support.	EAL/D teacher allocation: 0.6 FTE RAM ELP funding: \$30,333	School executive decided to timetable EAL/D teachers to provide executive and teacher release. RAM ELP funds used for 'professional learning'	EAL/D learners not receiving EAL/D support
Sydney metropolitan primary school E	LBOTE students comprise 87% of school enrolments. 611 students assessed as needing EAL/D support.	EAL/D teacher allocation: 3.6 FTE RAM ELP funding: \$46,676	2 of the EAL/D teachers put on a single class to create smaller class sizes RAM ELP funds used for bilingual teacher's aide.	EAL/D learners not receiving EAL/D support
Sydney metropolitan primary school F	LBOTE students comprise 27% of school enrolments. 82 students reported as needing EAL/D support. No recent EAL/D assessment	EAL/D teacher allocation: 0.8 FTE RAM ELP funding: \$26,672 Principal unclear about the 2019 allocation	Only 2 days/week (0.4FTE) being used. .	Only 49 out of 82 EAL/D students receiving EAL/D support

At the state level, EAL/D is not included as a priority or a teaching area in the Department's human resource or strategic planning. Increasing teacher retirements, staff turnover, changing teacher workforce and lack of specialist workforce planning means there is a continuing loss of EAL/D teaching expertise in the system which is not being replenished to meet the growing linguistic and cultural diversity of the NSW school population.

The NSW Education Standards Authority has recently issued subject content knowledge requirements for EAL/D as specialist a teaching role K-12.⁷² These standards need to be supported by statewide Department staffing processes that ensure EAL/D qualified teachers are appointed to both permanent and part time EAL/D positions in primary and secondary schools. **Reestablishing Department staffing mechanisms to ensure that EAL/D trained teachers are appointed to EAL/D teaching positions in primary, high schools and Intensive English Centres is a priority for urgent implementation.**

As well as strengthened specialist staffing processes for EAL/D teachers, there is an urgent need for teacher retraining and accelerated teacher training programs in EAL/D that target qualified primary and secondary teachers who:

- have either permanent or temporary Department status and are working in Department schools and Intensive Language Centres

⁷² <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/1bea4323-19a6-4af6-b657-95ae4cea954b/subject-content-knowledge-requirements-policy.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=>

- are currently appointed to an EAL/D position
- have not completed a formal qualification in EAL/D.

In 2009, the Department used to deliver such a program with teacher mentoring and practicum placements for up to 30 trainees in a part-time flexibly delivered course over two semesters through contracted tertiary service providers. This program is now effectively defunct due to Department cost cutting, restrictive funding application criteria and requirements that teachers find their own course provider.

This program can be readily re-established by a Department request for tender process from universities to develop and deliver an accredited, purpose-designed, post Graduate Certificate course specifying content, practicum, TESOL methodology, English language, programme planning, and whole school EAL/D and by the Department supporting teachers' course participation through school-based mentoring and teacher relief.

Cost implications:

1. Strengthened specialist EAL/D staffing processes: within existing resources
2. Tertiary EAL/D course design, delivery and school-based support over three years: total of \$1.98m, comprising \$1.44m for course design delivery and \$480,000 for school-based support.

Implementation:

1. 2019, ongoing
2. as below

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Totals
School EAL/D course tendering, contract and delivery (40 teachers per annum @ \$12,000)	N/A course tender and contract	\$480,000	\$480,000	\$480,000	\$1.44m
School based support (per teacher mentoring and teacher relief - 10 days @\$453 ⁷³)	N/A	\$181,200	\$181,200	\$181,200	\$543,600
Totals	N/A	\$661,200	\$661,200	\$661,200	\$1.98m

8. EAL/D teaching skills for all teachers

Boost the EAL/D teaching skills of all NSW Public school teachers across the curriculum through a whole school EAL/D program and professional development allocation supported by pre-service EAL/D training requirements for all teachers and a statewide EAL/D professional development program for mainstream teachers and school leaders

The scale and distribution of EAL/D student need across NSW Government schools means that all teachers in the public system need to be equipped with EAL/D teaching methods to ensure inclusive, language scaffolded classroom instruction in their key learning area. In many Sydney metropolitan schools, EAL/D learners comprise the *majority* of student enrolments. The additional, complex language literacy learning and welfare needs of

⁷³ NSW Department 2019 standard teacher casual rate including 18.18% on costs

increasing numbers of refugees requires a systematic whole-school approach to EAL/D program development, professional collaboration and practice.

In addition to direct EAL/D teaching of targeted students in classes or groups, effective EAL/D program delivery in schools requires EAL/D teachers to work together with class teachers in collaborative EAL/D planning and teaching and with school leaders as a professional resource across the school.⁷⁴ These latter modes of program delivery involve the practical, on-the-job sharing, application and development of crucial EAL/D teaching expertise. An essential condition for success of these delivery modes is for collaborating teachers to have sufficient, dedicated time to work together.

Recent research reports have identified time allocation⁷⁵ and compliance around period allowances⁷⁶ as priorities for teacher support in easing the additional work load involved in meeting the complex language learning and welfare needs of refugee and EAL/D students.

What schools need is a specific-purpose allocation that supports professional collaboration among EAL/D, class and executive teachers in planning, improving, delivering and evaluating effective school EAL/D teaching and refugee support programs; implementing school-based EAL/D professional learning projects; and providing specialist mentoring support to beginning teachers. Team planning, evaluation and reporting of school-based EAL/D program improvement projects would be based on the Department’s EAL/D School Evaluation tool specifically developed for this purpose.⁷⁷

This allocation could be fully funded from the flexible, non-staffing component of RAM English Language Proficiency funding for EAL/D students.

Cost implications: \$54.4m over four years.

Implementation: as below

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
School EAL/D program and professional development allocation (scaled according to the school’s EAL/D teacher allocation, average pool of 20 teacher relief days per school @ \$453 pd x 1500 schools)	\$13.6m	\$13.6m	\$13.6m	\$13.6m	\$54.4m

A comprehensive, state wide approach is needed to ensure that teachers entering the profession are adequately prepared with necessary EAL/D teaching skills from their pre-service teaching programs. This need can be addressed through establishing pre-service EAL/D training requirements in teacher education.

Early and later career stage mainstream class teachers in NSW public schools recognise the need for EAL/D professional development support and regularly identify EAL/D teaching as

⁷⁴ NSW Department of Education and Communities (2014) *English as an Additional Language or Dialect: Advice for Schools*, p.18. at: https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/eald_advice.pdf

⁷⁵ McGrath-Champ, S., Wilson, R., Stacey, M., & Fitzgerald, S. (2018) p.81, 92.

⁷⁶ Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018) p.89.

⁷⁷ <https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/b67b91ba-b7bc-486f-a535-5533c7152572/1/EALD-School-Evaluation-Framework.pdf>

their most pressing professional development priority in the area of multicultural education.⁷⁸

The Department has attempted to address this need by providing an introductory EAL/D methodology course for mainstream teachers through its school-based *Teaching English Language Learners (TELL)* course. While the course is registered for Department professional learning, it is not a tertiary-accredited TESOL course.

State wide support is needed to ensure that mainstream teachers and school leaders in NSW Government schools are able to upskill their professional practice through tertiary delivered and accredited EAL/D teaching courses. This need can be met through targeted sponsorship of teachers and leaders in schools with significant numbers of EAL/D students in an EAL/D Graduate Certificate course with specifically designed teacher and leadership strands. Design and delivery of the course would proceed along the lines of a Department request for tender process outlined in 7 above.

To promote effective whole school development, EAL/D professional development support also needs to be provided to school leaders and principals as part of a Department leadership development strategy. Although the Department’s School Leadership Strategy⁷⁹ and Leadership Institute⁸⁰ aim to develop principals’ instructional leadership, understandings of EAL/D, multicultural and antiracism teaching, essential for educational leadership in and for culturally and linguistically diverse schools, are not included as professional development priorities.

These initiatives will support the effective use of the school EAL/D program and professional development allocation by ensuring that NSW public school teachers and leaders are adequately equipped to meet the growing linguistic and cultural diversity of the NSW population.

Cost implications:

3. Pre-service EAL/D training requirements in teacher education: within existing resources
4. Tertiary delivered EAL/D professional development course for teachers and school leaders: \$2.97m over three years.

Implementation:

3. Requirements issued in 2019. 4. as below.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Totals
School EAL/D course tendering, contract and delivery (60 teachers/leaders per annum @ \$12,000)	N/A	\$720,000	\$720,000	\$720,000	\$2.16m
School-based support (per teacher/leader mentoring and teacher relief - 10 days @ \$453)	N/A	\$271,800	\$271,800	\$271,800	\$815,400
Totals	N/A	\$991,800	\$991,800	\$991,800	\$2.97m

⁷⁸ Watkins, M., Lean, G., Noble, G. & Dunn, K. (2013) *Rethinking Multiculturalism, Reassessing Multicultural Education at: http://www.uws.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/542212/RMRME_Report_1.pdf* See also: Watkins, M., Noble, G. & Wong, A. (2018).

⁷⁹ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/media/schools-operation/School-Leadership-Strategy-2017.pdf>

⁸⁰ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/our-priorities/strengthen-teaching-quality-and-school-leadership/school-leadership-institute/about-the-institute>

9. Multicultural/EAL/D, Refugee and Community Engagement consultancy support to schools

Restore and improve frontline specialist professional support to NSW Public schools by establishing state teams of Multicultural/EAL/D consultants and Community Engagement officers and extending the services of the Refugee Support Leaders team

As part of its implementation of *Local Schools Local Decisions*, the Department abolished statewide professional support to schools in the areas of multicultural, ESL, refugee education and school community liaison. At the end of 2013, the Department axed:

- 13 Multicultural ESL consultants providing specialist professional support to schools in 5 regions with high ESL need;
- 1.4 Refugee support officers providing refugee student settlement, welfare and educational support to schools with high refugee enrolments in Western and South Western Sydney; and
- 17.2 Community Information Officers (CIO) facilitating school-parent and community liaison and participation in all regions of NSW.

Loss of the Multicultural/ESL consultants resulted in the disruption of long-established EAL/D professional learning networks and support for both EAL/D and mainstream teachers as well as the loss of system-wide, support for developing effective, targeted, needs-based EAL/D teaching learning programs in schools. The loss of this professional support has necessitated expansion of and greater reliance on self-access, online EAL/D professional learning modules for teachers to complete in their own time.⁸¹

Recent research on NSW public school teachers' workload highlights the loss of consultancy support to schools and teachers' need for more teacher consultancy support for curriculum and other program areas.⁸² This has also resulted in the loss of the statewide specialist professional development network that connected schools and teachers to wider information, expertise and the system.⁸³

Loss of Community Information Officers resulted in the loss of established community-based networks and agencies, particularly around refugee student support, and shifted the workload of CIO teams to schools. EAL/D teachers in some rural and regional schools were forced to take on settlement responsibilities for newly arrived families at the expense of their teaching duties. Recent research draws attention to the extra workload experienced by teachers and schools in negotiating, establishing and maintaining effective school interagency/ community partnerships around refugee support⁸⁴

In response to large numbers of Syrian and Iraqi refugee student enrolments in NSW government schools, the Department, in 2016, established 19 Refugee Support Leaders (15.4 FTE) in high refugee settlement areas to support schools in meeting the needs of refugee students and families. However, the difficulty in striking a balance between

⁸¹ NSW Department of Education, *Multicultural Plan Progress Report, 2015-2016*, p.4,5.

⁸² McGrath-Champ, S., Wilson, R., Stacey, M., & Fitzgerald, S. (2018), p 80, 86.

⁸³ Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018), p.91.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p.34.

pastoral and academic needs of refugee students⁸⁵ has been reflected in tensions between whether wellbeing or EAL/D support should be the prime focus of team's work. The continuity and effectiveness of this support has also been severely limited by temporary, year to-year funding over the last three years⁸⁶, their exclusive focus on schools with high refugee enrolments and their rigid, school-based service boundaries.⁸⁷ The contingent, year-to-year funding of the positions reflects the Strategy's short-term commitment to the long-term resettlement needs of refugee students.⁸⁸

Growing diversity of the NSW school population, the need for improved literacy outcomes and ongoing changes to the teacher workforce, and school staff necessitate ongoing funding and establishment of improved, frontline specialist professional support to NSW Public schools. **Reestablishing statewide school support teams of specialist Multicultural/EAL/D consultants and Community Engagement officers is a priority for urgent implementation.**

Reestablishing a statewide team of 14 Multicultural/EAL/D consultants would restore much needed, dedicated support to schools in the areas of multicultural, antiracism and EAL/D education, while extending the services of the team of 19 Refugee Support Leaders would allow a dedicated focus on wellbeing support for refugee students. Establishment of the statewide team of 18 Community Engagement officers would ensure that the difficult community/interagency partnership building efforts of schools are adequately supported in rural and regional as well as metropolitan areas.

Responsibility for the state-wide management, coordination and development of these specialist professional support teams would need to be located in a strengthened state office unit with additional functions and enhanced capacity for leading EAL/D and Multicultural education in NSW public schools.

Cost implication: \$7.42m⁸⁹ recurrent consultancy salary costs.

Implementation: Advisor positions established and filled in 2019, ongoing.

10. State EAL/D strategic action plan

Develop and implement a strategic, five year EAL/D action plan to strengthen and improve EAL/D services to meet the immediate and long-term English language and literacy learning needs of migrant and refugee students in NSW Public schools.

The continuing diversity impact of Australia's ongoing immigration on the NSW school population requires systemic planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure a coherent, proactive response to the immediate and long-term English language learning needs of the EAL/D student target group.

⁸⁵ Ibid.p.43.

⁸⁶ The positions were recently extended for another year in 2019.

⁸⁷ Watkins, M., Noble, G., & Wong, A. (2018) p 32.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p.44, 59.

⁸⁹ NSW Department 2019 standard SEO1 salary rate of \$145,602 (three year average) including 18.18% on costs.

Under *Local Schools, Local Decisions*, however, key program management and accountability functions for EAL/D have been devolved to local schools, shifting overall state-level responsibility for coordination, management, planning and accountability of EAL/D services away from the center towards individual, overloaded school principals.

At the state level, there is no systematic forward planning, strategic oversight, coordination, or performance monitoring and development of EAL/D services in NSW public education. EAL/D education is not identified in any of the Department's corporate plans and strategy documents such as the two page Department of Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022,⁹⁰ the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2017-2020,⁹¹ or the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2022.⁹²

The Department's Multicultural Plan (2016-2018) expired last year.⁹³ The Plan's reporting framework, introduced in 2016, provide broad areas for retrospective reporting of recurrent and recycled activity rather than strategic improvement goals and specific initiatives to be achieved within a given time frame. Reporting on implementation of the plan has been biennial since 2013/14. The last Multicultural Programs and Services Plan Report was published in 2016.⁹⁴

Systematic planning for improving EAL/D provision and delivery can only be assured by a comprehensive five-year strategic state plan identifying EAL/D program development strategies that addresses current and anticipated English language and literacy learning needs of migrant and refugee students in NSW Public schools. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020, with its key design features such as areas of action, outcomes, consultation, implementation and governance, monitoring and reporting,⁹⁵ offers an effective model for a comprehensive state EAL/D plan.

Responsibility for effective consultation, development, implementation, coordination and monitoring and reporting on the EAL/D plan would best be allocated the Department Secretary's Multicultural Education Advisory Group, with the unit responsible for Multicultural education support to NSW public schools providing executive, secretariat support.

Cost implications: Within existing resources

Implementation: Plan consultation and development 2019, implementation, monitoring and reporting 2020 -2023.

⁹⁰ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/strategies-and-plans/NSW-Department-of-Education-Strategic-Plan-2018-2022.pdf>

⁹¹ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/media/cese/Literacy-and-numeracy-strategy.pdf>

⁹² <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/our-strategic-plan/corporate-plans-and-strategies#Diversity0>

⁹³ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/media/schools-operation/Multicultural-Plan-2016-18.pdf>

⁹⁴ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/media/schools-operation/MPSP-Report-2015-16.pdf>

⁹⁵ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/our-strategic-plan/corporate-plans-and-strategies#Disability1>