



Greens' national plan for English language learners welcomed

The Australian Council of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Associations welcomed the Greens' announcement today of their national plan to ensure that migrants and refugees throughout Australia have access to effective English language support in the school, post-school and adult education sectors.

"The Greens' four-point plan addresses key areas of need in this long-neglected area of education and training." ACTA President, Dr Michael Michell, said today.

"The Adult Migrant English Program, which provides English language tuition each year for tens of thousands of recently arrived adult migrants with low levels of English, is currently in a state of turmoil", he said. "The Greens' commitment to reverse the disastrous outsourcing of this vital settlement service comes in time to halt the damage being done to this once world-leading program by the Government's introduction of its so-called business model".

"Despite having English language support programs in its schools for some fifty years, Australia still has no common national approach to identifying, assessing and reporting on migrant and refugee students' English language learning. The Greens' commitment to develop and implement a national English language assessment framework will ensure that this 'unfinished business' in the Gonski reform agenda towards needs-based education provision is finally achieved."

"Too many young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds with incomplete schooling are falling through the cracks of school and post school provision and failing to access further education and training. The Greens' commitment to expanding Youth Transition Support pilot programs will help ensure the development and ongoing provision of effective post-school education and training pathways for these youth."

"These initiatives are backed up by the Greens' commitment to establish a dedicated national office to oversee and coordinate language in education and training across government. This shows real national leadership in this vital policy area," Dr Michell said.

"We are delighted that the Greens' plan has picked up a number of initiatives proposed in our *National Strategy for Language in Education and Training* which ACTA forwarded to Government, Labor and the Greens prior to the announcement of the federal election".

"Australia's migration and humanitarian programs and its language diverse population demand ongoing national effort to ensure that recently arrived migrants and refugees receive the English language and literacy learning support they need to successfully participate in education and training and contribute to a cohesive and prosperous multicultural society."

ACTA's *National Strategy for Language in Education and Training* can be viewed at:

http://www.tesol.org.au/files/files/596_ACTA_language_in_education_and_training_strategy_November_2018.pdf

For further information contact: Michael Michell, President, ACTA.

Email: m.michell@unsw.edu.au w 93851956, h 96104870, m 0412167054