AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TESOL ASSOCIATIONS (ACTA)

SUBMISSION TO

REVIEW OF THE

2008 MELBOURNE DECLARATION

14 JUNE 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Australian Council of TESOL Associations (ACTA) is the peak professional body for TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) educators in school and adult settings. It comprises representatives from state and territory TESOL associations, whose members include teachers, consultants and curriculum developers and researchers in the field of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). A key mission of the Association is advocating for the interests of students who are learning English as their second or additional language, and their teachers.

ACTA welcomes this timely review of the 2008 Melbourne Declaration. Major changes have occurred over the last decade, particularly in the area of EAL/D education[1], which need to be reflected in the revised Declaration. ACTA believes the 2008 Melbourne Declaration needs updating specifically in the areas of **language-in-education, English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) education** and **community languages education** to both reflect and respond effectively to the contemporary linguistic landscape of Australia's multicultural schools. Given their notable absence from the 2008 Melbourne Declaration, these areas need to be given explicit recognition in the revised Declaration. ACTA's submission focuses on two of these areas - EAL/D education and language-in-education. There are strong arguments for adopting a community/culture-based approach to languages education, including Indigenous languages, in contrast to the narrow economic rationale that has accompanied the decline in languages education over the last decade. This submission does not address the area of languages education but refers the Review Secretariat to advice provided by languages educators in their submissions.

ACTA believes the aspirations expressed in a revised national declaration articulate key values, perspectives and priorities that will crucially guide the work of Australia's schools, education systems, administrators and policy makers for the next decade. For this reason, ACTA's submission focuses on updating Declaration concepts of equity, excellence and the attributes for young Australians with regard to the two priorities identified above and progressing these through a national action plan. ACTA considers the two Educational Goals for Young Australians and the eight areas for action still have relevance and currency. Within this framework, a new focus on the EAL/D learner cohort and language-in-learning throughout the curriculum should be identified as priorities to ensure that Australian schools and education systems are inclusive of and responsive to its cultural and linguistic diversity.

Young Australians learning English as their additional language or dialect

Currently there are an estimated 300,000 students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) learning English as their additional language or dialect in schools throughout Australia.[2] These students are enrolled in all years/levels of schooling and function at different levels of English language proficiency. They include Indigenous students with varying degrees of exposure to Standard Australian English, newly arrived and Australian-born migrant-background students, refugee students with little or no previous formal schooling, and international students with age-equivalent education.

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[1] English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) has replaced English as a second language (ESL) as a description of the student cohort learning English language at school as well as the educational provision and pedagogy directed to meeting English learning needs of these students.
[2] These figures are based on estimates advised by ACTA affiliates in the absence of national reporting of EAL/D students.

While EAL/D learners come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, English language proficiency is a prime factor determining their access to education and educational opportunities in Australian schools. The potential educational disadvantage of this group arises from having insufficient English to access, participate and succeed in the English-medium school curriculum. EAL/D learners are in the process of becoming bilingual or multilingual users of English. They enter the school system with language skills and cultural and cognitive abilities, bringing to the task of learning a range of linguistic and cultural resources that contribute to their English language and curriculum learning.

Australia's ongoing immigration program and its growing culturally and linguistically diverse population means that EAL/D learners will continue to make up a significant proportion of the school student population[3]. Specialist English language provision in schools remains a vital educational access and equity strategy to give these learners opportunities to achieve their educational potential.

1. CHANGES RELATING TO EAL/D LEARNERS SINCE THE 2008 MELBOURNE DECLARATION WAS AGREED

Major changes to the demographic and policy landscape impacting EAL/D education have occurred in Australian schools since the Melbourne Declaration was agreed in 2008. These changes represent a mixed bag of challenges, policy omissions and lacunae, promising solutions, and unfinished reforms. Taken together, these changes provide the case for inclusion of EAL/D learners as a priority equity cohort and language-in-learning as a vital curriculum perspective in a revised Declaration that recognises and addresses the educational implications of the language and culture diversity of Australian schools.

This section describes these changes in their rough chronological order.

1.1 Growth of EAL/D learners in schools requiring specialist English support as a result of Australia's ongoing migration and humanitarian programs

Over the last decade, the number of students needing EAL/D assistance in Australian schools has increased substantially. ABS Census data indicate the number of school-aged respondents (0 - 19 years of age) who reported speaking 'not well' or 'not at all' increased from 117,158 in 2006 to 190,462 in 2016, an increase of 62 per cent.[4]

This growth has been underpinned by Australia's high and sustained immigration levels over this period. Net overseas migration rose from 232,800 in 2006/7 to 262,490 in 2016/17, an increase of 12.7 per cent[5], while Australia's overseas born population grew from 4,063,954 in 2001 to 6,150, 051 in 2016, an increase of 151 per cent.[6]

More specifically, growth in the number of students needing additional, targeted EAL/D tuition in schools over the last decade is confirmed by available government education reports of the two largest immigration and EAL/D program states, NSW and Victoria. In NSW, between 2007 and 2017, there

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[3] Cully, M. & L. Pejoski, L. (2012) Australia unbound? Migration, openness and population futures. In A Greater Australia: Population, policies and governance. Committee for Economic Development. p. 70.
[4] ABS Census 2006, 2016 Counting of Persons Place of Enumeration AGEP Age (10 Year Groups) by proficiency in spoken English
[5] https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/library/prspub/6377182/upload_binary/6377182.pdf
[6] https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/library/prspub/6377182/upload_binary/6377182.pdf

has been a 31 per cent increase (39,600 students) in the number of students needing targeted EAL/D support in NSW Government schools, outstripping the 7 per cent growth rate of the overall student population.[7] Similarly, over this period in Victoria, there has been a 57 per cent increase (25,459 students) in the number of students needing targeted EAL/D support in Victorian Government schools.[8]

Although both systems have well-established specialist EAL/D provision for newly arrived and mainstream English language learners, both are struggling to meet chronic unmet student need for EAL/D services. In NSW Government schools, some 50,000 students, identified as needing EAL/D support, are unable to receive it. This constitutes 30 percent of the total EAL/D learner cohort.[9] In Victorian Government schools, this figure was 21,298 students, or 52 percent of the total EAL/D learner cohort.[10]

The scale of such unmet EAL/D need contributes to Australia's long tail of low literacy performance and underachievement.[11] Its persistence undermines jurisdictions' capacity to achieve Declaration goals and needs to be considered as part of a review of the adequacy of English proficiency loading funding by the National Schools Resourcing Board.

1.2 Devolution of Commonwealth responsibility for (former) ESL provision to States and Territories and further shift of responsibility to schools

Since 2008, State/Territory Governments have effectively assumed full, devolved responsibility for the English language education of immigrant and refugee students enrolled in their public schools. With the election of the Rudd Labor Government in 2008, specific purpose English as a Second Language (ESL) New Arrivals funding was mainstreamed while ESL New Arrivals per capita funding was legislated and retained for non-government schools. After the election of the Abbott Coalition Government in 2013, all ESL New Arrivals funding was incorporated into the new School Resourcing Standard.

In this policy context, State/Territory education systems over the last few years have restructured, downsized or abolished state level administrative units and personnel directly responsible for supporting and monitoring EAL/D students' English learning.[12] These changes have had direct, adverse impacts on EAL/D programs and provision in schools as a result of:

[7] 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
[8] Victorian Department of Education 2017 EAL Annual Report, p 6, 10 at: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/eal/2017-eal-report.pdf and Victorian Department of Education 2007 EAL Annual Report, p. 14,26 at: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/eal/eslreport07.pdf
[9] ATESOL NSW, Ethnic Communities Council of NSW, NSW Migrant and refugee Education Party, (Feb 2019) Rebuilding Capacity: English as an additional Language and Refugee Education in NSW Public schools. p.4,5 at: http://www.eccnsw.org.au/getattachment/What-we-do/Advocacy-(1)/Rebuilding-Capacity-NSW-EAL---Refugee-Education-2019-2023.pdf.aspx. See also, p.16, Rorris, A., Weldon, P. R., Beavis, A., McKenzie, P., Bramich, M., & Deery, A. (2011). Assessment of current process for targeting of schools funding to disadvantaged students: A report prepared for the Review of Funding for Schooling Panel.
[10] Victorian Department of Education 2009 EAL Annual Report, p. 25,29,31 at: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/eal/eslreport09.pdf
[11] 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 .
[12] ACTA submission to the 2017 Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes at: http://www.tesol.org.au/Advocacy/Media-Room, p. 57-73

- disappearance of EAL/D learners as an identifiable target group needing priority support in schools;
- shifting of responsibility for EAL/D provision away from central offices to schools;
- weakened system-level EAL/D program policy, planning and oversight;
- cuts in/disbanding of State/Territory and regional office EAL/D consultancy teams;
- dismantling of transparent, specific-purpose EAL/D resource allocation mechanisms;
- effective untying of EAL/D funding through 'single line' budget allocations to schools and school based flexible resource management.[13]

These changes, reported in nearly all State and Territory jurisdictions, including those that signed up to the 'Gonski' funding process,[14] have effectively shifted responsibility for EAL/D services away from state education offices towards schools. In doing so, these changes have greatly weakened systems' ability to provide EAL/D professional support to schools and exercise EAL/D program oversight, coordination, management, performance monitoring and improvement functions. Such system incapacitation in the wake of successive devolution greatly impairs jurisdictions' ability to work towards meeting the national goals relating to the EAL/D learner cohort.

1.3 Loss of national reporting, transparency and accountability in relation to the EAL/D learner cohort

Public reporting on ESL students, identified by participation in the then ESL General Support Program, ceased after the program was subsumed in 1997 as part of broad-banded Literacy Program. There has been no regular public reporting on ESL New Arrivals students in Government, Catholic and independent sectors since the establishment of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in 2000.

In 1997 a nationally consistent definition of Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) students was developed and endorsed.[15] This broad category encompasses a wide diversity of students from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. It includes but cannot identify those *learning* English (the EAL/D learner subgroup) using *an agreed means of identification related to levels of English language proficiency*. Although Education Ministers agreed that there needed to be a measure which "better identifies students whose language background has measurable effect on their outcomes",[16] work to develop a nationally agreed definition of English language learners within the larger LBOTE category did not proceed.

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[13] See ACTA submission Table 5, pp. 58-60 for individual State/Territory reports.
See Table 7, p. 120, for State/Territory Intensive English Language (IEC) Centre provision for New Arrivals.
Note: (1) the lack of IEC provision at Primary level in NSW, Queensland and Tasmania (2) in WA, Centres are now located in schools and managed at the Principal's discretion: see ACTA submission Table 5.
[14] ACTA's submission to Inquiry on Migration Settlement Outcomes, p 58-60
[15] The Measurement of Language Background, Culture and Ethnicity for the Reporting of Nationally Comparable Outcomes of Schooling at: http://wwweducationcouncileduau/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/Reportsper cent20andper cent20publications/Archiveper cent20Publications/Measuringper cent20andper cent20Reportingper cent20Studentper cent20Performance/Measureper cent20Languageper cent20BGroundper cent20Cultureper cent20Natper cent20Comparableper cent20Outcomespdf
See also: ACARA (2012). Data Standards Manual: Student Background Characteristics, Sixth Edition. http://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/data-standards-manual-student-background-characteristics
[16] ACARA ibid., p.9

In the absence of a means of identifying the EAL/D subgroup, the 1997 LBOTE definition has become the *de facto* and misleading proxy for *those learning English*.[17] Consequently, only the performance of the broad LBOTE student cohort can be reported on national literacy and numeracy tests, while the performance of the EAL/D learner sub-group cannot be disaggregated and remains hidden.[18] As a result, nationally, nothing is known about the English and/or literacy performance of these students and neither the ACARA *National Report on Schooling* nor the Productivity Commission *Report of Governments Services* (education) are able to report on the English learning outcomes of the EAL/D student cohort in schools.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) programs are included as a priority area in the *National Settlement Framework* (NSF), the national blueprint for collaboration and planning across the three tiers of government for settlement services for migrants and new arrivals in their first 5 years in Australia,[19]. Although its *National Outcomes Standards* specify systemic outcomes and indicators for its priority areas, the NSF does not entail any reporting requirements to COAG.[20] This lack of transparency in reporting, planning and evaluation against the standards prevents any program improvement or system learning occurring in this area.

Over the last two decades there has been no ANAO or any other review, audit, or analysis conducted with a specific focus on English as an additional language learners or programs.[21]

There is therefore a major systemic gap in Australia's national education evidence base concerning the EAL/D learner cohort. EAL/D learners have long since been erased from national policy, planning and reporting.[22] EAL/D learners need to be identified as a priority equity cohort in a revised Declaration to support development of the policy framework, data capability and line-of-sight required for monitoring and advancing this group's English learning progress and identifying schools' and systems' progress towards achieving the national goals.

1.4 Erosion of EAL/D provision in schools under States and Territory school autonomy and flexible resource management policies

Since assuming full devolved responsibility for EAL/D education, State/Territory Governments have implemented school autonomy and school-based management policies that have effectively transferred responsibility for provision of EAL/D services from education systems to schools. These processes have simultaneously been accompanied by a loss of transparency in system-to-school allocative

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[17] Lingard, B, S Creagh, & G Vass (2012) Education policy as numbers: Data categories and two Australian cases of misrecognition *Journal of Education Policy*, 27, 3, pp 315-333.Creagh, S (2014) A critical analysis of problems with the LBOTE category on the NAPLaN test *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 41, 1, pp 1-23.
Creagh, S. (2016). 'Language Background Other Than English': a problem NAPLaN test category for Australian students of refugee background *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 19, 2, pp 252-273.
Sladek, R M & SM King (2016). Hidden from view? Bringing refugees to the forefront of equity targets in Australian higher education *International Studies in Widening Participation* 13, 1. http://novanewcastleeduau/ceehe/indexphp/iswp/article/view/37
[18] See ACTA submission to Productivity Commission Inquiry into the National Education Evidence Base (DR 120) p.7-9 at: http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/208903/subdr120-education-evidence.pdf
[19] https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/11_2016/the_national_settlement_framework.pdf
[20] The answer to 2018 Senate Estimate Questions on Notice on this issue (SQ18-471) stated, 'no reports relating to English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) services and outcomes have been produced for the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) through the National Settlement Framework (NSF).
[21] Answers to 2018 Senate Estimate questions on Notice SQ 18 - 654, 655, 658, 664, 665, 669
[22] See ACTA submission to Productivity Commission Inquiry into the National Education Evidence Base (DR 120) p.7-9 at: http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/208903/subdr120-education-evidence.pdf

funding mechanisms for EAL/D learners and a commensurate lack of public accountability reporting for how these funds are used.[23]

Under school-based, flexible resource management instituted by these policies, school principals and executives have greatly increased discretion over the management and use of the school's 'single line' budget allocation. The scope of executive decision-making encompasses use of previously dedicated EAL/D funding for other purposes and includes: flexible funding and staffing of EAL/D; employing casual teachers without EAL/D qualifications; discretion over making EAL/D teaching support a 'priority'; and discontinuing the school's EAL/D teacher positions and programs altogether.[24] Far from empowering schools, these policies are impairing schools' ability to systematically address the language and literacy learning needs of their EAL/D student cohorts.

A national survey of EAL/D teachers conducted by ACTA in 2016 highlighted the wide- spread deterioration in EAL/D programs and expertise in schools as a result of these school based management policies allowing flexible use of needs-based funding for English language learners for other areas.[25] This development is permanently undermining Australia's capacity to address the immediate and long-term English learning needs of migrant and refugee students in response to its ongoing immigration program. The flow-on effects are a substantive reduction in university TESOL teacher education programs for the Australian context with negligible demand from local teachers and employers, in contrast to the financial incentives driving supply of full-fee international English language teachers.

In this context, school leadership plays an even greater responsibility for building inclusive whole school systems of support to meet the English learning needs of EAL/D students,[26] particularly in those metropolitan schools where EAL/D learners can comprise the *majority* of the enrolments. There is a need for school-based planning and evaluation tools to assist EAL/D teachers and executive staff in decision-making about specialist EAL/D provision alongside the development of effective whole school EAL/D programs that reflect best practice standards.[27]

At the national level, there is an urgent need for review of the equity impacts of school autonomy policies along with a renewed national commitment to effective EAL/D provision through a revised Declaration. Such a commitment would support development of an accountability framework that ensured dedicated funding is directed to those for whom it is intended. It would also reverse the erosion of EAL/D programs by supporting a national strategy to rebuild the EAL/D capability of language and culture diverse schools.

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[23] See ACTA Migration Settlement Outcomes submission p.65
[24] These impacts of school-based decision making are elaborated in ACTA's submission to the 2017 Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes at: http://www.tesol.org.au/Advocacy/Media-Room p.57-73
[25] Ibid p.57-73
[26] *Successful Language Learners (SLL)* project in DEC NSW (2011). *Literacy and Numeracy Pilots: Final Report.* DEEWR: Canberra. Accessed at: https://www.cese.nsw.gov.au//images/stories/PDF/Eval_Rep/Schools/Teach_Learn_Share_22_Successful_Language_Learners.pdf; Calderón, M., R. Slavin, & M. Sánchez, M. (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. *The Future of Children*, 21, 1, pp. 103-127; Scanlan, M., & López, F. (2012). ¡ Vamos! How school leaders promote equity and excellence for bilingual students. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48, 4, pp. 583-625; Stufft, D. L., & Brogadir, R. (2011). Urban principals' facilitation of English language learning in public schools. *Education and Urban Society*, 43, 5 pp. 560-575; Elfers, A, & Stritikus, T. (2013) .How school and district leaders support classroom teachers' work with English language learners, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 20, 10, pp. 1-40
[27] ACTA has identified best practice standards for effective English language provision in schools. See ACTA submission to the 2017 Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes at: http://www.tesol.org.au/Advocacy/Media-Room p.109-124

1.5 Inadequate formula, level and accountability of Gonski low English proficiency needs-based funding for the EAL/D learner cohort

From the beginning, Gonski needs-based loadings for English language proficiency have been based on a 'disadvantaged LBOTE' measure as a proxy for English language learning needs. As outlined in 1.3, the 'LBOTE' indicator is too broad to reflect these needs, while 'disadvantage' is a socioeconomic indicator that may or may not include English language learners. The Gonski needs-based loading therefore does not ensure effective targeting of resources. Analysis has shown that application of this inaccurate measure effects gross misalignments between the students captured by this measure and students with actual English language learning needs.[28]

In addition, the per student equivalent funding amount generated by the low English language proficiency loading formula ($1,094 for a primary student and $1,376 for a secondary student in 2018) bears *no* relation to former ESL New Arrivals per capita funding ($5,039 in 2005).[29] This appears to be a significant diminution of funding (80%) to this area. No modelling or validation of the English language proficiency funding loading has ever been conducted.[30] Review of the low English language proficiency loading formula is therefore long overdue. The National School Resourcing Board, tasked to provide independent oversight over Commonwealth school funding through reviews of different parts of the Gonski funding model, should undertake a review of the adequacy of the low English proficiency funding formula and quantum as a matter of priority.

The fundamental changes to school funding from specific-purpose program funding and accountability to flexible use of disadvantage loading funding have not been accompanied by commensurate accountability mechanisms. ACTA's 2016 national EAL/D survey highlighted that available Commonwealth English language proficiency needs-based funding for schools is frequently not reaching the student target group it is intended to assist. It further found that, under school autonomy and flexible resource management policies promoted by all Australian Governments, there has been a loss of transparency in system-to-school funding allocation mechanisms and outcomes for the EAL/D learner target group[31] and a commensurate lack of public accountability reporting for how these funds are used.[32] Thus, while Gonski-needs based funding may be allocated for English language learners, there is no way of knowing how it is spent. There is an urgent need to establish specific accountability mechanisms for use of Gonski needs-based English language proficiency funding along with transparent reporting of how these funds are used by schools and States/Territory systems.

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[28] Statistics Unit, Centre for Educational Statistics and Evaluation, NSW DEC (2013) Improvements and Alternatives to the Disadvantaged LBOTE Measure Report at: http://wwwcesenswgovau/images/stories/PDF/Improvements_and_alternatives_to_the_Disadvantaged_LBOTE_measurepdf
The analysis concluded that the "disadvantaged LBOTE" measure not only significantly *underestimates* the size of the cohort needing EAL/D support but it also *does not capture the right students*, and therefore should not be used to identify the ELP loading for EAL/D students. It estimated that using "disadvantaged LBOTE" as a proxy for English language proficiency suggests that 74.7 per cent of the $100 million earmarked by Gonski-funding for limited English language proficiency would be misdirected to students who do *not* require EAL/D support.

[29] MCEETYA Schools Resourcing Taskforce Discussion Paper: Funding for English as a Second Language New Arrivals Students at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED534658.pdf   The report used 2005 financial data to model the additional per student costs to systems of providing intensive English instruction to newly arrived ESL students. It identified *Estimated Current Additional Costs* to be $6,160 (for non refugee students) and $10,349 (for refugee and humanitarian students) and *Estimated Required Service Provision* costs to be $7,745 (non- refugee students) and $18,730 (refugee and humanitarian students).

[30] Answers to 2018 Senate Estimate Questions on Notice SQ 18-640, 641, 668

[31] There is no public reporting of schools' EAL/D funding or staffing allocation by jurisdictions. ACTA members report that EAL/D teachers, who have responsibility for the school's annual EAL/D survey that informs the school's EAL/D allocation and program organisation, are often nor informed about the schools actual allocation.

[32] ACTA submission to submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes, May 2107 at: file:///D:/Users/z3281608/Downloads/Sub108.pdf ; Answer to 2018 Senate Estimate question on Notice SQ 18-650 indicates that current accountability requirements are met through internal financial acquittal statements issued by a qualified accountant certifying compliant use of bulk funds.

1.6 Displacement of EAL/D teaching and assessment under the national literacy agenda

Over the past decade, the national emphasis on literacy supported by NAPLAN literacy testing and the invisibility of EAL/D learners within it have fostered a general view among educators and policy makers that EAL/D learning needs can be adequately met through mainstream literacy support. This view is only valid to the extent that EAL/D students' developing English language proficiency approximates the English language competence of their age grade peers. The confusion of EAL/D teaching with literacy intervention promotes a remedial approach to reading in which students are taught to decode rather than to comprehend text. At the same time, this basic literacy emphasis diverts attention and effort away from a language teaching focus that assists development of students' higher order academic language and literacy.

Mainstream literacy interventions have limited value in diagnosing and addressing the language learning needs of those who are learning English as their additional language or dialect. They assume English native speaker norms of oral fluency and ignore oral fluency and literacy in one or more other languages.[33] Inappropriate interventions are given further impetus when EAL/D learners have acquired English conversational fluency but still struggle with academic English. In this context, these students are easily misdiagnosed as having special learning needs or a literacy problem.[34] EAL/D instruction aims to *prevent* limited English proficiency from barring access to the mainstream curriculum and becoming an entrenched disadvantage[35] and thus is *proactive, not remedial*.

Early learning screening instruments, literacy continua and progressions that have been developed and used nationally and in jurisdictions, assume monolingual mother tongue English development of students beginning school. While such instruments are intended to cater for the full diversity of learners, their design is necessarily based on the oral language development of English speaking children growing up in Australia. They do not index the different starting points and progressions of children learning English as their additional language as they enter school at different year levels. Consequently, their use results in inaccurate and invalid assessments of EAL/D learners.

The national literacy agenda has effectively entrenched a narrow monolingual view of *beginning* reading and writing and displaced broader understandings of the fundamental, mediating role language plays in school learning. A major casualty of this approach has been the loss of cross-curriculum, language-in-and-for-learning perspectives and practices which have value for all students, including EAL/D learners. The limited effectiveness of literacy intervention programs over the last decades[36] invites a reconsideration of this approach. Effective literacy teaching in Australia's language and

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[33] Cf section 3.3.4 which details the same issue in regard to adult migrants; see also Adoniou Submission 03 to the Inquiry, Appendix 1 for a full explanation.

[34] Lo Bianco, J (1998) ESL Is it migrant literacy? Is it history? *Australian Language Matters*, 6, pp. 2, pp. 1 & 6-7

Cummins, J (1984) Wanted: a theoretical framework for relating language proficiency to academic achievement among bilingual students. In C Rivera (ed.) Language proficiency and academic achievement Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Marshall, S (2009). Re-becoming ESL: multilingual university students and a deficit identity *Language and Education*, 24, 1, pp 41-56.

[35] Thomas, W. P. & V Collier (2001). A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement Centre for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. at http://cmmruscedu//CollierThomasCompletepdf

Tucker, J. T. (2006). The ESL logjam: waiting times for adult ESL classes and the impact on English learners. New York: NALEO Educational Fund http://filesericedgov/fulltext/ED527905pdf http://scholarworksgvsuedu/cgi/viewcontentcgi?article=1606&context=theses

[36] Meiers, Marion; Reid, Kate; McKenzie, Phillip; and Mellor, Suzanne, (2013).*Literacy and numeracy interventions in the early years of schooling : a literature review: Report to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Literacy and Numeracy* at: https://research.acer.edu.au/policy_analysis_misc/20

culture diverse schools requires a research-informed, national professional development strategy for teachers and school leaders focused on language-based teaching and learning.

1.7 Omission of specialist EAL/D teaching in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

EAL/D teaching is a specialist area that draws on diverse fields of second language acquisition and learning, educational linguistics, social contexts of language use, including bi/multilingual language and literacy, spoken and written discourse, including grammar and phonology, and language teaching and assessment.

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* do not identify the specific knowledge and skills required for teaching EAL/D students, for specialist teaching of these students, or for working with specialist EAL/D teachers. AITSL's view appears to be that specialist EAL/D teaching is a teaching strategy issue rather than a teacher standards issue.[37] Currently, recognition of TESOL qualifications and standards is the responsibility of state/territory teacher accreditation bodies. This recognition, however, is variable, lacking or unclear. It appears that NSW is the only state that has specific subject content knowledge requirements for EAL/D as a specialist teaching role. [38]

To fill this gap in specialist EAL/D teaching standards, two additional frameworks were developed:

1. the ACTA *EAL/D Standards Elaborations* designed to identify the implications of the AITSL teacher standards when working with EAL/D learners.[39] The *EAL/D Standards Elaborations* have direct relevance for all teachers, including those in EAL/D teaching positions.
2. *The Capability Framework for Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EAL/D Learners*[40] was developed in 2012 under the auspices of the Senior Officers National Network of Indigenous Education for teachers working with Indigenous students in remote, regional and urban contexts across Australia. It elaborates standards of EAL/D teaching for Indigenous students from traditional language, Kriol or dialect backgrounds aligned to the Australian Professional Standards.

Although they may be used and promulgated in state systems, these specialist teacher standards frameworks are not recognised by AITSL and have no status in the national system of teacher standards.

Professional Standards for Principals also make no reference to EAL/D learning, which has crucial implications for their effective leadership of EAL/D teaching, specialist EAL/D teachers and leadership development training in Australia's language and culture diverse schools. As indicated, school principals are now central to ensuring effective EALD program provision and delivery.

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[37] AITSL website at: e.g.https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/eal-d-reading-strategies-illustration-of-practice
[38] https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/1bea4323-19a6-4af6-b657-95ae4cea954b/subject-content-knowledge-requirements-policy.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=
[39] http://tesol.org.au/files/files/479_473_Full_Elaborations_november2014.pdf
[40] https://indigenousportal.eq.edu.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/eald-capability-framework.pdf

ACTA's 2016 national EAL/D survey revealed the catastrophic impact on EALD programs when their decision-making lacks understanding of EAL/D students' learning needs.[41]

The lack of specific reference to EAL/D teaching in both AITSL teacher and principal standards is also having a dramatic effect on tertiary pre-service and post graduate TESOL courses leading to specialist EAL/D qualifications suitable for the Australian context. ACTA has received consistent anecdotal evidence of a steady decline in such course offerings in universities across Australia to the point where none can be found in some jurisdictions. Similarly, ACTA members report that in-service EAL/D professional learning offered by systems is declining and increasingly dependent on local ACTA affiliates run by volunteers and occasionally other institutions.

Inclusion of specialist EAL/D teaching in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* is needed to promulgate standards in this teaching area and to halt the continuing disinvestment in teacher education and training in this area and encourages course provision that ensures future supply of suitably qualified teachers for Australia's linguistically diverse schools.

1.8 ACARA *English as an Additional Language or Dialect Learning Progression*

In 2011, ACARA developed the *EAL/D Learning Progression* [42] as part of the Australian Curriculum to support non-specialist teachers in understanding the broad phases of English language learning, monitoring EAL/D students' English development, and in informing their teaching. The progression drew from earlier proficiency scales, notably the CURASS *ESL Scales* and the NLLIA *ESL Bandscales* developed in 1993-94.

The *EAL/D Progression* provides broad descriptions of four phases of English language learning (Beginning, Emerging, Developing and Consolidating) for each of the four language modes (listening, speaking, reading and writing) across three stages of schooling (Kindergarten-Year 2, Years 3-6, Years 7-10). The *Progression* provides the basis for an appropriate national measure of English language proficiency, and, with it, national identification of the EAL/D learner cohort and their English language proficiency need.[43] To be used for these purposes, the *Progression* needs to be established as a nationally consistent and agreed measure.

1.9 Initial recognition of the Standard Australian English learning needs of Indigenous students in regional, rural and remote communities

Developing proficiency in Standard Australian English through EAL/D pedagogy promotes Indigenous student participation and engagement in the school curriculum as it embraces, rather than supresses, home language use as a means to learning an additional language or dialect. This approach promotes inclusive teaching and learning and increased school attendance and retention. Developing academic English language proficiency that underpin literacy and numeracy learning fosters Indigenous students' higher order academic skills across the curriculum.

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[41] ACTA submission to submission to the Joint standing Committee on Migration Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes May 2107 at: file:///D:/Users/z3281608/Downloads/Sub108.pdf
[42]https://acaraweb.blob.core.windows.net/resources/EAL/D_D_Learning_Progression_Foundation_to_Year_10_09052014_file_2.pdf
[43] ACARA (2014) English as an Additional Language or Dialect: Teacher Resource EAL/D Learning progression ACARA: Canberra at: http://wwwacaraeduau/_resources/EAL/D_Learning_Progression_revised_February_2014pdf

Available ABS data indicated that in 2011, 6,777 or 11.6 % of ATSI people aged between 0-25 years living in remote or very remote areas spoke an Australian Indigenous language at home and did not speak English well or at all.[44] If ATSI students who speak an Australian Indigenous language or dialect in remote areas where there is limited contact with Standard Australian English are considered, then the cohort of ATSI students with significant English language and literacy learning needs in schools increases to an estimated 26,646. In remote areas, Indigenous languages are spoken by 14.8% of 0-14 age group and 18.3% of the 15-24 age group, while in very remote areas, Indigenous languages are spoken by 59.2% of 0-14 age group and 63.4% of the 15-24 age group.[45] More broadly, around one-third (33.7%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4–14 years and 38.3% of those aged 15 years and over speak an Australian Indigenous language. 11% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people speak an Australian Indigenous language as their main language at home.[46]

The English learning needs of Indigenous students are specifically recognised in the ACARA *EAL/D Learning Progression.* With its recognition of students' non-standard English spoken dialects, the progression describes the Standard Australian English to be acquired in the Australian Curriculum by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students whose first language is an Indigenous language, including traditional languages, creoles and related varieties, or Aboriginal English.[47]

A comprehensive 2012 House of Representatives inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities[48] recommended incorporating Indigenous languages in the *Closing the Gap* framework, resourcing bilingual programs for Indigenous communities, instituting compulsory EAL/D training for all teachers working in Indigenous community schools and more appropriate EAL/D assessment of Indigenous students' language and literacy proficiency needs.[49] However, these recommendations[50] have not been taken up in subsequent Indigenous plans, strategies and reviews.[51] Similarly, best practice identified from effective remote schools that achieve good outcomes for Indigenous students have been documented but not systematically applied.[52]

The Prime Minister's 2018 *Close the Gap* Report highlighted the failure, after ten years of implementation, to meet two key educational targets - school attendance, and literacy and numeracy. The gap for both areas is greatest in remote areas with limited exposure to Standard Australian English and is actually widening in the Northern Territory, where the largest number and proportion of ATSI

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[44] https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage/2016/report-documents/oid-2016-overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage-key-indicators-2016-report.pdf
[45] https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage/2016/report-documents/oid-2016-overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage-key-indicators-2016-report.pdf
[46] http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4714.0
[47] https://acaraweb.blob.core.windows.net/resources/EAL_D_D_Learning_Progression_Foundation_to_Year_10_09052014_file_2.pdf
[48] *Our Land Our Languages* at:
file:///D:/Users/z3281608/Downloads/http___www.aphref.aph.gov.au_house_committee__atsia_languages2_report_full%20report%20(1).pdf
[49] See also ACTA submission to the Inquiry at: http://www.tesol.org.au/files/files/169_govt_inquiry_ATSI_langs.pdf
[50] *Our Land Our Languages* at:
file:///D:/Users/z3281608/Downloads/http___www.aphref.aph.gov.au_house_committee__atsia_languages2_report_full%20report%20(1).pdf
[51] Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014 at:
http://scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/ATSI%20documents/ATSIEAP_web_version_final.pdf; National Aboriginal and ACTA/ALAA/ALS joint submission to the consultation on the Plan at: http://www.tesol.org.au/files/files/141_IEAP_Submission_final.pdf and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015 at:
http://www.scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/ATSI%20documents/DECD__NATSI_EducationStrategy.pdf; Evaluation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014 Final Evaluation Report at:
http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/ATSI%20documents/ATSI%202010-2014%20Final%20Evaluation%20Report/1Final_Evaluation_ATSIEAP_ACILAllenConsulting.pdf
[52] National Curriculum Services (2012) *Success in remote schools* at:
http://www.whatworks.edu.au/upload/1341805220784_file_SuccessinRemoteSchools2012.pdf

population live in rural and remote areas.[53] While remoteness is acknowledged as a significant educational disadvantage,[54] the linguistic dimension of remote disadvantage is yet to be recognised in educational policy and planning for ATSI students. Closing the gap for young Indigenous Australians requires concerted action to develop and trial effective models of EAL/D and Indigenous languages learning across the curriculum in regional, rural and remote schools.

1.10 Unfinished *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* to identify the EAL/D equity cohort and measure their English language progress

Currently Australia has no nationally agreed mechanism for identifying the English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) learner target group or nationally consistent approach to reporting on their English learning needs, progress or outcomes. This affects NAPLAN and other national reporting as well as Commonwealth schools needs-based funding allocations. As a result, little is known about the literacy performance of the EAL/D student cohort nationally, while the target group itself has effectively disappeared from national policy discourse, planning and provision. Australia's continued inability to identify the EAL/D student target group in terms of their English language proficiency constitutes a major, systemic gap in the nation's education evidence base.[55]

Collaborative work was undertaken throughout 2014 and 2015 under the auspices of the Education Council which involved individual jurisdictions mapping the ACARA *EAL/D Learning Progression* against their current EAL/D assessment tools. This work resulted in the *National Framework for Assessing English Language Proficiency* which was endorsed by the Education Council on 11 December 2015. Since then, little progress has been made. Currently, ACARA is investigating ways to ensure the rigour, consistency and accuracy of the framework with view to it being used as a nationally consistent measure to report the student cohort on the *National Report on Schooling*.[56]

The slow progress in the development of this long overdue framework can be attributed to the low priority given to this project arising from the lack of recognition of EAL/D learners as priority equity cohort in the Melbourne Declaration. Completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* as a nationally consistent measure of students with limited English language proficiency is critical to establishing a mechanism by which all Australian governments can measure their progress towards achieving the Declaration Goals for the EAL/D learners cohort.

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[53] https://closingthegap.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/ctg-report-2018.pdf?a=1
[54] Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education at:
https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/01218_independent_review_accessible.pdf
[55] ACTA submission to Productivity Commission at: https://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/208903/subdr120-education-evidence.pdf ;
ACTA submission to Gonski Review at: http://www.tesol.org.au/files/files/580_ACTA_full_submission_to_Gonski_Review_.pdf
[56] NSW validity and reliability trial of the *EAL/D Learning Progression* in 2014 provides a model for this process
Statistics Unit, Centre for Educational Statistics and Evaluation, NSW DEC. (2013) *NSW Trial of the reliability and validity of the EAL/D Learning Progression*, DEC: Sydney. at: http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/documents/15060385/15385042/Report26Februaryfinal.pdf The trial found that the instrument enabled teachers to make consistent judgements of English language proficiency across all four modes, provided a balanced and accurate reflection of student language development, and can be the basis for development of a single measure of English language proficiency for resource allocation purposes.

1.11 Need for supported transitions to further education and training for at risk migrant and refugee youth

In 2016/17, 5,041 or 89% of all humanitarian youth aged 12-24 years arrived in Australia with 'nil' or 'poor' English language proficiency.[57] In urban centres, school-aged youth may access on arrival secondary Intensive English Centre (IEC) support but remain at high risk of drop-out in the transition to high school.[58] Older youth may be able to access targeted, needs-based programs delivered by AMEP, adult and community education (ACE) and the community sector.

Key features of effective programs for these youth are known but uncommon: English-focussed courses, with wrap-around settlement, wellbeing and vocational counselling support, geared towards literacy, numeracy, worked-related and personal development skills providing accredited pathways to employment and/or further education and training.[59] These programs, however, are highly unstable, being part of an insecure training sector totally dependent on short-term contract funding.

A promising Youth Transition Support pilot was conducted as a DSS funded delivery network in six sites during 2016/2017.[60] The pilot applied the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network's (MYAN) four pillars quality framework of: partnership for employment; strong connections with education; increased vocational opportunities; and sports engagement for youth. Within the pilot, an early intervention program, Ucan2, provided an effective partnership model involving an IEC, mainstream school, AMES and Centre for Multicultural Youth in Jobactive and community settings supporting young people into education and employment pathways.

Implementation and up-scaling of school/community partnerships that offering such post school learning pathways[61] for this target group are hindered by conflicting eligibility restrictions and other institutional barriers between schools and AMEP, difficulties establishing viable youth-specific SSP classes, and inadequate English language provision in TAFE.[62] Overcoming the educational disadvantage of these young Australians requires commitment by schools and systems to establishing and sustaining effective partnerships that implement and upscale effective models of transition support for this target group.

1.12 Erasure of equity in the Gonski *Review to achieve educational excellence in Australian schools*

Central to the '*Through Growth to Achievement'* Report is the proposition that schools need to make a fundamental shift away from a group/year based 'industrial model' of schooling towards an individualised, personalised model of learning focused on 'learning progressions independent of year

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[57] http://www.myan.org.au/file/file/MYAN%20Youth%20Settlement%20Trends_2016-2017%20Final(2).pdf
[58] High schools are typically ill-equipped to cater for the high support needs of this group. This situation exacerbated by deteriorating IEC and school EAL programs Cf. ACTA submission into Migrant Settlement Outcomes. p.97, 57-73.
[59] ACTA identified best practice standards for effective English language provision for refugee youth. See ACTA submission to the 2017 Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes at: http://www.tesol.org.au/Advocacy/Media-Room p. 135-146. See also MYAN National Youth Settlement Framework at: http://www.myan.org.au/file/file/Youth%20Settlement%20Framework%2031%20March%202016(1).pdf Examples of best practice are the St Joseph's Maree Program at: https://www.sjflcmaree.com/ , the Melbourne-based AMES refugee youth program, Bright Futures (defunded in 2017), and the TAFE Young Adult Migrant English course (YAMEC).
[60] https://drive.google.com/file/d/116WX2-gxBR7uszZkDF9KfFbYJupRLS07/view
[61] SSP AMEP and TAFE The Settlement Services Programme (SSP) provides core settlement support for humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants in their first five years of life in Australia.
[62] ACTA submission to the 2017 Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes at: http://www.tesol.org.au/Advocacy/Media-Room p.94-105.

or age', 'regardless of a student's circumstances' and 'regardless of starting point or capabilities.'[63] In dismissing these contexts, the report assumes that that persistent, common equity barriers associated with different disadvantaged student groups can be overcome by an *individualised, customised* 'growth mindset' approach to teaching and learning. Missing in this individualistic vision of education are the crucial mediating roles of context, language and social interaction in teaching and learning.

Similarly, the report assumes that the mainstream learning progressions recommended to track all students' learning is necessarily inclusive of EAL/D learners. For the EAL/D student cohort, however, English language learning starting points and pathways matter. In this regard, the report fails to recognise the existence and value of well-used progressions and tools specifically designed for assessing and teaching EAL/D learners[64].

In dismissing the particular barriers faced by equity groups, the report ignores the fundamental nature and resilience of the language learning barriers experienced by EAL/D learners in school. As confirmed by successive research, while acquiring basic fluency in spoken English typically takes language minority students about two years, developing the English language and literacy needed to close the gap in academic performance with English speaking peers typically takes a minimum of five to seven years.[65] For refugee background students with disrupted education and little or no literacy in their first language, closing this gap may take between seven to twelve years.[66] Effective implementation of the Gonski report to achieve educational excellence for the EAL/D learner cohort will therefore require a shift towards language-based assessment and teaching that supports their English language and literacy progress throughout their schooling.

2. EDUCATIONAL GOALS FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE OR DIALECT

The Melbourne Declaration's goals of equity, excellence and the attributes for young Australians were relevant for EAL/D learners in 2008 and are even more so today. To ensure relevance over the next decade, the updated Declaration needs to communicate these concepts with respect to the key role language plays in all students' learning and the specific role that EAL/D learners' progress in developing English language proficiency plays in their success at school. These perspectives are essential to informing schools' and systems' efforts towards achieving the Educational Goals of schooling in Australia's linguistically diverse society.

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[63] Gonski, D. et al. (2018) '*Through Growth to Achievement'* Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools , p. x.

[64] Namely, the ACARA *EAL/D Learning Progression,* state and territory EAL/D assessment tools and the Victorian e-based toolkit, *Tools to Enhance Assessment Literacy (TEAL) for teachers of English as an additional language* at:http://teal.global2.vic.edu.au/ See also ACTA submission to Gonski Review at :http://www.tesol.org.au/files/files/580_ACTA_full_submission_to_Gonski_Review_.pdf

[65] Collier, V. (1989). How Long? A synthesis of research on academic achievement in a second language, *TESOL Quarterly, 23(3),* 509-531; Cummins, J. (1991). Interdependence of first and second language proficiency in bilingual children, in E. Bialystok, *Language processing in 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.

[66] Ibid.

Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence

This Goal expresses national commitment by Australian governments, schools and systems to *creating the necessary conditions for all students' educational thriving.* Progress towards achieving Goal 1 is the *precondition* to progress towards achieving Goal 2.

A language equity perspective

EAL/D learners' low English proficiency is an equity issue when they cannot access and learn in the English-medium curriculum and they fail to develop higher levels of English proficiency needed to master the language and literacy of schooling. This failure, in turn, affects their school retention, attainment; further learning opportunities, employment prospects, civic participation and personal wellbeing.

A language equity perspective recognises that inadequate levels of English language proficiency for school learning is not just an *individual* disadvantage or attribute but is also a systemic *collective* one. Educational disadvantage is created for EAL/D learners by systemic barriers that hinder their ability to access and make progress in the English-medium curriculum, Mis-assessment and misrecognition of student need, misdirection of targeted resources and misdirected instruction are key systemic barriers. EAL/D learners are not synonymous with socially disadvantaged students or students with learning difficulties but become educationally disadvantaged when inappropriate assessment and teaching hinders their access to curriculum language learning.

Educational equity for EAL/D learners fundamentally involves *minimising* systemic linguistic barriers that prevent students' educational thriving in the English-medium curriculum.

A language excellence perspective

A language perspective on educational excellence recognises that language, as both the medium and mediator of school learning, is a key resource in all students' learning. Successful literacy and learning in schools requires all students to master the specialised academic language and disciplinary registers of the curriculum.[67] High-order thinking and learning is underpinned by high levels of language use. All students require high level language and literacy skills to reach their learning potential.

Educational excellence for EAL/D learners requires development of far more than basic functional English - it demands mastery of the academic English language and literacy that all students require. Here, all EAL/D learners face a systemic language learning barrier to reaching their learning potential at school. Research has consistently found that language minority students must develop *two types of language proficiencies* in order to succeed in the English medium school curriculum - conversational English (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills - BICS) and academic English (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency - CALP).[68] An all-too-frequent outcome for these students in the

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[67] Schleppegrell, M. J. & O'Hallaron, C. L. (2011). Teaching academic language in L2 secondary settings. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31, pp. 3-18.

[68] Cummins, J. (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction. In *Encyclopedia of language and education* (pp. 487-499). Springer US.

course of their schooling is their failure to progress from BICs to CALP as evidenced by English language plateauing, literacy ceilings and academic underachievement.

Educational excellence for EAL/D learners therefore involves overcoming this language learning barrier through inclusive and effective forms of language-based teaching. EAL/D teaching is distinguished by its provision of 'high challenge high support'[69] that pushes EAL/D learners to achieve their best and promotes EAL/D learners' educational thriving. Its flourishing is an essential part of all schools' and systems' commitment to high quality schooling and is critical to achieving the goals of schooling for this group.

Educational equity for EAL/D learners fundamentally involves *maximising* effective language learning resources and teaching practices that overcome such barriers and foster their educational thriving in the English-medium curriculum.

As implied above, education equity and excellence are interconnected and interdependent. Practices and processes creating educational inequities increase the proportion of low achieving students and the tail of low literacy performance and underachievement which, in turn, reduces the proportion of high achieving students and the performance of the system as a whole.[70] Practices and processes creating educational excellence reverse these trends and imbalances. National collaborative effort across both spheres is essential to developing the high quality/high equity education systems[71] that are necessary to achieve the Educational Goals of schooling.

Goal 2: All young Australian become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens

This Goal expresses national commitment to *achieving transformational lifelong outcomes* for all students as a result of schools' and systems' progress towards achieving Goal 1. The general capabilities and 21st Century 'soft' skills of high-order thinking, problem solving, creativity, collaboration and enterprise referenced in the 2008 Declaration all require application of high level communication skills, including English communication skills.

Any Declaration promoting these capabilities needs to explicitly acknowledge the value for all students of effective spoken and written communication skills, including critical literacy, underpinning these skills. Thus, s*uccessful learners* must develop effective oral and written communication skills needed for high order learning and further education, training and employment. The positive learning dispositions of *confident and creative individuals* are formed from experiences of successful language learning underpinning their academic achievements. *Active and informed citizens* must develop critical literacy skills in order to become active Australian and global citizens.

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[69]Hammond, J. (2006). High challenge, high support: Integrating language and content instruction for diverse learners in an English literature classroom. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *5*(4), 269-283; Gibbons, P. (2009). *English learners, academic literacy, and thinking: Learning in the challenge zone* (pp. 118-130). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann; Athanases, S. (2012). Maintaining High Challenge and High Support for Diverse Learners. *Leadership*, *42*(1),18; Wilson, K., & Devereux, L. (2014). Scaffolding theory: High challenge, high support in Academic Language and Learning (ALL) contexts. *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, *8*(3), A91-A100.

[70] https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-06/australian-school-performance-in-absolute-decline-globally/8098028

[71] OECD (2012). Equity and quality in education: Supporting disadvantaged students and schools, at: https://www.oecd.org/education/school/50293148.pdf

3. AREAS FOR ACTION RELATING TO EAL/D EDUCATION

EAL/D education describes the systematic support required by EAL/D learners as a priority equity cohort that enables schools and systems to achieve the national goals of schooling. Although EAL/D education intersects each of the eight areas for action in the Melbourne Declaration, it has not been included in any national reform plans over the last decade. ACTA believes that national reform in this area is now needed to make up for the missed opportunities of the last decade and improve Australia's systemic capacity for the next one.

These reforms comprise a set of improvement initiatives addressing the outstanding issues raised in Section 1 of the submission, and identified in ACTA's national policy platform, the *National Strategy for Language in Education and Training*.[72] **Table 1** attached shows key EAL/D improvement initiatives in relation to the issues raised in the submission and referenced to the ACTA *National Strategy*. **Table 2** attached shows these EAL/D policy issues and related improvement initiatives against the eight action areas of the *Melbourne Declaration.* **Table 3** shows them against the three reform directions of the *National School Reform Agreement.* Both frameworks provide a useful basis for developing a national EAL/D education reform plan that enables schools and systems to implement the goals of a revised Declaration and the directions of the Gonski review for the EAL/D learner cohort. Such a plan is vital to realising the intents of a revised Declaration.

4. MECHANISMS TO ACHIEVE THE EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Progress by schools and systems towards achieving the national educational goals in relation to the EAL/D learner cohort requires that three essential mechanisms be established:
1. a nationally consistent measure of students with limited English language proficiency
2. a national EAL/D education reform plan, and
3. biennial national stakeholder forums to review and share progress towards achieving national goals. Together, these mechanisms will ensure the focus and direction which governments, schools and systems need in order to work together to achieve Declaration goals in relation to the EAL/D learner cohort.

4.1 Development and implementation of a nationally consistent measure of the EAL/D learner cohort

A nationally consistent measure of students with limited English language proficiency is a crucial missing mechanism which schools and jurisdictions need in order to measure progress towards achieving the Declaration Goals in relation to the EAL/D learner cohort. It will build on national collaborative work already undertaken on the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* and enable reporting of EAL/D learner cohort in the *National Report on Schooling.* Development and implementation of this mechanism gives practical effect to the national recognition of EAL/D learners as a priority equity cohort.

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

4.2 Development and implementation of a national EAL/D education reform plan

The scale and systemic nature of the barriers to educational equity and excellence for EAL/D learners requires that education systems play their part in shouldering responsibility and exercising leadership in implementing agreed national commitments and not leave all the 'heavy lifting' to schools. The initiatives identified in Tables 1, 2 and 3 below form the basis of a national action plan implementing a set of reforms that address the outstanding systemic issues raised in Section 1. This plan translates recognition of EAL/D learners as a priority equity cohort into national collaborative action, reflecting shared commitment to EAL/D education reform. The plan would have a five-year time frame aligned with current Quality Schools Reform agreements and be developed and monitored by a national working group comprised of relevant education system managers. Annual public reporting on progress on implementing the plan would occur under the auspices of the Education Council.

4.3 Reinstituted biennial national forums to review progress of reforms towards achieving national goals

A biennial national forum needs to be reconvened under the auspices of the Education Council to provide education stakeholders with opportunities to participate in reviewing progress towards achieving the national goals and to share and provide feedback on reform outcomes, achievements and best practices. These forums would invite broader participation of national education, community and professional association stakeholders in addition to education system representatives and policy-makers. National collaborative effort relating to EAL/D learners through the EAL/D reform plan would be included in this process.

5. SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE REVISED MELBOURNE DECLARATION

5.1 To ensure recognition of the contemporary cultural and linguistic context of Australian schools, ACTA recommends the addition of the underlined text below as part of the revised Melbourne Declaration:

Preamble:

The Melbourne Declaration acknowledges major changes in the world that are placing new demands on education.

(insert before Global integration paragraph p.4)

- Australia's everyday cultural diversity, its relations with its First Nations peoples, its evolving cultural and economic ties and regional and international role, its ongoing immigration and humanitarian intakes all place greater demands on Australian schools to develop the cultural and linguistic resources and competencies of its young people.

5.2 To ensure recognition of the fundamental mediating role of language in all school learning, curriculum and assessment, ACTA recommends the addition of the five underlined texts below as part of the revised Melbourne Declaration:

Preamble: (insert within second last paragraph p.5)

Literacy and numeracy and knowledge of key disciplines, <u>with their language underpinnings,</u> remain the cornerstone of schooling for young people.

Commitment to Action: Promoting world-class curriculum and assessment

(insert in the last paragraph of the first column under Curriculum, p.23)

The curriculum will include a strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills, <u>with the</u> <u>language skills that underpin them.</u>

(insert in the second paragraph of the second column under Curriculum, p.23)

It will also support the development of deep knowledge <u>and substantive communication</u> within a discipline which provides the foundation for interdisciplinary approaches to innovation and complex problem-solving.

(insert in last paragraph of the second column under Learning areas, p.24)

Each learning area has a specific discipline <u>and language</u> base ~~and each~~ which ~~has~~ have application across the curriculum.

(insert in first paragraph of the first column under Assessment, p.24)

Assessment of student progress will be rigorous and comprehensive. It needs to reflect the curriculum, <u>take account of students' developing English language and literacy skills,</u> and draw on a combination of professional judgement of teachers and testing, including national testing.

5.3 To ensure recognition of EAL/D learners as a priority equity cohort requiring national commitment to collaborative targeted support, ACTA recommends the addition of the two underlined texts below as part of the revised Melbourne Declaration:

Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence

Australian Governments, in collaboration with all school sectors, commit to promoting equity and excellence in Australian schooling. This means that all Australian Governments and school sectors must:

(insert after the 'reduce the effect of other sources of disadvantage' paragraph, p.7)

- <u>ensure that students learning English as their additional language or dialect are assisted to develop the English language proficiency necessary for achieving their educational potential in the English medium curriculum.</u>

Commitment to Action: Improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians, especially those from low socioeconomic backgrounds

(insert within the second paragraph in the second column, p.15)

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, those from remote areas, <u>those learning English as their additional language or dialect,</u> refugees, homeless young people, and students with disabilities often experience educational disadvantage. Targeted support can help <u>these</u> young Australians to achieve better outcomes.

5.4 To ensure all students, including EAL/D learners, have the opportunity to achieve their educational and civic potential, ACTA recommends the addition of the two underlined texts below as part of the revised Melbourne Declaration:

Goal 2: All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens

(insert as second paragraph in the first column, p.8)

Successful learners…

- <u>develop effective oral and written communication skills needed for high order learning and further education, training and employment</u>

(insert before the 'work for the common good' paragraph, p.9)

Active and informed citizens…

- <u>develop critical literacy skills needed for active Australian and global citizenship</u>

5.5 To ensure national commitment to improving pedagogic practices necessary for inclusive, quality teaching in language and culture diverse schools, ACTA recommends the addition of the underlined text below as part of the revised Melbourne Declaration:

Commitment to Action: Supporting quality teaching and school leadership

 (insert in first paragraph in the first column, p.11)

Excellent teachers have the capacity to transform the lives of students and to inspire and nurture their development as learners, individuals and citizens. <u>They develop effective teaching practices responsive to the learning needs of their students.</u> They provide an additional source of encouragement, advice and support for students outside the home, shaping teaching around the way different students learn and nurturing the unique talents of every student.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that the revised Melbourne Declaration reflects the contemporary language and culture diversity of Australian schools and supports national collaborative effort in assisting schools to meet the EAL/D learning needs of Indigenous, migrant and refugee young people, it is recommended that:

1. the suggested additional text in section 5 be incorporated as part of the revised Melbourne Declaration document.

2. EAL/D learners be recognised as a priority equity cohort within the revised Declaration warranting national collaborative support as a new action priority to be implemented within the eight Areas for Action of the revised *Melbourne Declaration* and the three reform directions of the *National School Reform Agreement.*

3. to progress recommendation 2 above, a national EAL/D education reform plan be developed by a national working group to address the twelve issues identified in the submission through the nine improvement initiatives identified in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

4. progress towards achieving the national goals for EAL/D learners and implementing the national EAL/D education reform plan be reported annually and be reviewed and shared through biennial national forums with expanded participation of national education, community and professional association stakeholders.

Table 1: EAL/D reform initiatives arising from the ACTA submission

EAL/D policy issue raised by the ACTA submission	Proposed EAL/D improvement initiatives	ACTA *National Strategy* action
8.ACARA *English as an additional Language or Dialect Learning Progression* 10. Unfinished National framework for assessing English language proficiency to identify the EAL/D equity cohort and measure their English language progress	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • establishment of regular transparent national accountability reporting mechanisms for EAL/D	actions 1, 3, 15
2. Devolution of Commonwealth responsibility for (former) ESL provision to States and Territories and further shift of responsibility to schools 3. Loss of national reporting, transparency and accountability in relation to the EAL/D learner cohort 4. Erosion of EAL/D provision in schools under States and Territory school autonomy and flexible resource management policies	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • establishment of regular transparent national accountability reporting mechanisms for EAL/D • national review of allocation, targeting and use of funding for EAL/D learners in schools • development of a national whole school EAL/D capability framework	actions 1, 3, 4, 5, 7
1. Growth of EAL/D learners in schools requiring specialist English support as a result of Australia's ongoing migration and humanitarian programs. 5. Inadequate formula, level and accountability of Gonski low English proficiency needs-based funding for the EAL/D learner cohort	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • National Schools Resourcing Board review of low English proficiency loading funding • establishment of regular transparent national accountability reporting mechanisms for EAL/D • national review of allocation, targeting and use of funding for EAL/D learners in schools	actions 1,3, 4, 6, 7
7. Omission of specialist EAL/D teaching in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • AITSL development and recognition of national professional standards for EAL/D teaching	actions 3,13, 14
6. Displacement of EAL/D teaching and assessment under the national literacy agenda 12. Erasure of equity in the Gonski *Review to achieve educational excellence in Australian schools*	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • Development of a research-supported, national professional development strategy on language in teaching and learning for teachers and school leaders	actions 3, 13, 14
9. Initial recognition of the Standard Australian English learning needs of Indigenous students in regional, rural and remote communities	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • implementation of national whole school EAL/D and languages education pilot projects for Indigenous students in regional, rural and remote schools	actions 3, 8, 9
11. Need for supported transitions to further education and training for at risk migrant and refugee youth	• implementation of national school/community partnership transition support programs for young people at risk of not accessing further education, training or employment	actions 10, 11

Table 2: EAL/D reform initiatives related to Melbourne Declaration action areas

Melbourne Declaration action area	Proposed EAL/D initiative	ACTA *National Strategy* action
Developing stronger partnerships	• implementation of national school/community partnership transition support programs for at risk migrant and refugee youth	actions 10, 11
Supporting quality teaching and school leadership	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • AITSL development and recognition of national professional standards for EAL/D teaching • development of a national whole school EAL/D capability framework • development of a research-supported, national professional development strategy on language in teaching and learning for teachers and school leaders.	actions 3, 5, 13, 14
Strengthening early childhood education	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency*	actions 2, 3
Enhancing middle years development	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • AITSL development and recognition of national professional standards for EAL/D teaching • development of a research-supported, national professional development strategy on language in teaching and learning for teachers and school leaders.	actions 3, 5, 13, 14
Supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • implementation of national school/community partnership transition support programs for at risk migrant and refugee youth • development of a research-supported, national professional development strategy on language in teaching and learning for teachers and school leaders.	actions 3, 10, 11, 13, 14
Promoting world-class curriculum and assessment	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • development of a research-supported, national professional development strategy on language in teaching and learning for teachers and school leaders.	actions 3, 9 , 13, 14
Improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians, especially those from low socioeconomic backgrounds	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • National Schools Resourcing Board review of low English proficiency loading funding • implementation of national whole school EAL/D and languages education pilot projects for Indigenous students in regional, rural and remote schools • implementation of national school/community partnership transition support programs for at risk migrant and refugee youth	actions 3, 4,5, 6, 8, 10, 11
Strengthening accountability and transparency	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • establishment of regular transparent national accountability reporting mechanisms for EAL/D • national review of allocation, targeting and use of funding for EAL/D learners in schools.	actions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7

Table 3: EAL/D reform initiatives related to Reform Direction Areas of the
National School Reform Agreement

Reform direction areas of the *National School Reform Agreement*	Proposed EAL/D initiative	ACTA *National Strategy* action
Supporting students, student learning and student achievements	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • National Schools Resourcing Board review of low English proficiency loading funding • development of a national whole school EAL/D capability framework • implementation of national whole school EAL/D and languages education pilot projects for Indigenous students in regional, rural and remote schools • implementation of national school/community partnership transition support programs for at risk migrant and refugee youth	actions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Supporting teaching, school leadership and school improvement	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • development of a national whole school EAL/D capability framework • AITSL development and recognition of national professional standards for EAL/D teaching • development of a research-supported, national professional development strategy on language in teaching and learning for teachers and school leaders.	actions 3, 5, 13, 14
Enhancing the national evidence base	• completion, endorsement and implementation of the *National framework for assessing English language proficiency* • establishment of regular transparent national accountability reporting mechanisms for EAL/D • national review of allocation, targeting and use of funding for EAL/D learners in schools	actions 1, 3, 6, 7, 15