



Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN Australia)

Joint Standing Committee on
Migration
Inquiry into Migrant Settlement
Outcomes

*Recommendations for EAL/ESL
Education Support*

October 2017

This information has been prepared by MYAN Australia to provide additional information to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration for consideration in the Inquiry into Migrant Settlement Outcomes. It provides recommendations for improvements in ESL/EAL (English as an additional language) teaching and learning within the mainstream secondary school setting. This includes within schools and supports outside of school that compliment in-school learning. MYAN has also identified case examples, provided in a separate submission.

Adequate and targeted support in ESL/EAL learning in the mainstream school setting is critical to young people settling well in Australia. While there are many examples of good practice across Australia, there is a need to ensure that all schools with an ESL/EAL cohort allocate adequate funding to meet the learning needs of young from refugee and migrant backgrounds. This includes adequate funding for support outside the classroom - welfare support, as well as engaging parents/family and working with community programs/organisations.

MYAN recommends the following to improve ESL/EAL teaching/learning within the mainstream secondary school setting:

- A whole school approach to EAL programming and provision, including EAL policy development to inform and guide the development of the most appropriate specialist program for the EAL learners and the school context
- That schools provide adequate funding for discrete transition programs to support students transitioning from Intensive English Language schools/settings into mainstream secondary schools.
- All teaching staff build their understanding of EAL, through:
- That schools provide adequate staffing support for young people with ESL/EAL needs, including:
 - Targeted, specialised, intensive learning support – in addition to ‘mainstream’ classes
 - EAL teachers assisting classroom and subject teachers to develop appropriate programs for their EAL learners
 - Specialist EAL teachers who are employed to work only with students with high ESL/EAL learning needs, e.g.
 - Multicultural Education Aides employed by schools to support EAL learners by explaining concepts or directions in the learners’ first language, or simplified English

- Replicating models/approaches commonly used in the primary school setting, e.g.:
 - Investment in learning support with students who have higher ESL/EAL needs – employing/allocating specialist teachers to work specifically with students to develop their English language skills
- Increased or more targeted allocation of funding for student welfare support (e.g. wellbeing or welfare coordinators and staff) in order to provide:
 - Regular ‘check-ins’ with students who are showing signs/have been identified as being at risk of disengaging from learning within mainstream classes
- Multicultural Education Aides employed by schools to develop programs and strategies used to support parents or guardians engagement in their children’s learning and assessment
- Increased funding allocation to allow all teachers (not just those with ESL/EAL specialisation) to access professional development on cultural competency and understanding the circumstances and needs of students from refugee or migrant backgrounds. This includes allocating resources (including time and support to release staff) within the school budget.
- Continue to invest in ‘out of school hours’ support programs that complement learning and teaching in the school setting.