



Andrew Barr MLA

DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

TREASURER

MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

MINISTER FOR TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

Ms Marina Houston
President
Association of Teachers of English to
Speakers of Other Languages ACT (ATESOL ACT)
c/- Building 5
Education Faculty
University of Canberra
BRUCE ACT 2617

Dear Ms Houston

Thank you for your letter of 24 October 2011 about your concerns relating to the reduction of one ESL Executive Officer position at the end of the 2011 in the Education and Training Directorate and the level of funding provided to students requiring ESL support.

While one ESL office position was identified in the Efficiency Dividend Review, the allocation has been moved to the mainstream ESL allocation so that, consequently, no resources have been lost. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of school-based facilitators of the ESL-endorsed courses, which has enabled the expertise and capacity in ESL to reside with schools.

The 2010-11 and 2011-12 budgets allocated funding to schools, increasing the level of support provided to ESL students. Approximately \$5.8 million is currently provided to schools, through the ESL Program, to meet the needs of ESL students in mainstream classes. This additional support enabled the recent August ESL Census cut-off point for full funding to increase the language proficiency rating to 2.25, compared with the February ESL Census rate of 1.75. More students are therefore now supported.

I appreciate ATESOL's support of the Directorate's ESL programs and initiatives and the work done by the ESL Executive Officers. In 2012, when there will be one ESL Executive Officer, the duties will focus on policy, finance and associated processes, to support the delivery of programs in schools. This Officer will also coordinate the school-based facilitators of ESL-endorsed courses, to deliver professional learning and support at the school and network level.

ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601 GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601

I understand the Directorate has a number of programs planned for 2012 to further support teachers working with students with refugee backgrounds. I am therefore confident that mainstream, Introductory English Centres and ESL teachers in our schools will continue to be well supported.

Thank you for your commitment to the Directorate's ESL teachers and your interest in this important area.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Barr MLA
Minister for Education and Training

- 9 NOV 2011