

ATESOL NSW POSITON STATEMENT

USE OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE/DIALECT (EAL/D) TEACHERS FOR CASUAL RELIEF IN NSW GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Each year, NSW Government schools receive an EAL/D staffing allocation based on each school's EAL/D needs as reported in the EAL/D annual survey. This specific-purpose provision is allocated from a state pool of 1,000 EAL/D teaching positions supported by Commonwealth and state English Language Proficiency loading funding.

Department policy on the appropriate school use of specialist EAL/D teachers is clear. [Multicultural Education Policy \(1.3.1\)](#) states that the 'English Language Proficiency equity loading must be used to support the English language development of EAL/D students'. The Department's [Multicultural Education Procedures](#) (section 2) states that, in making decisions about school staffing, 'principals must ensure English Language Proficiency equity loading teaching allocations are filled permanently with qualified EAL/D specialist teachers as far as possible.'

The Memorandum to principals in the [Department's EAL/D Advice to Schools](#) (p.25) further states that, 'EAL/D teachers are to be used to support the delivery of EAL/D curriculum programs and cannot be used in place of casual relief teachers or for creating smaller class sizes'.

Feedback from EAL/D teachers and school leaders indicate that these policies are not being followed. School-based staffing decisions that use specialist EAL/D teachers as casual relief to cover staff absences or ongoing teacher shortages squander EAL/D teaching allocation, disrupt EAL/D programs, devalue EAL/D teaching expertise, and deprive EAL/D learners of the support they need to achieve equitable educational outcomes.

Principals have a professional duty to ensure that targeted EAL/D resources allocated to their school are used for their intended purpose of supporting the English language development of EAL/D students. Discharging this obligation strengthens public education's capacity to respond effectively to the English language and literacy learning needs of the growing K-12 EAL/D learner cohort resulting from Australia's ongoing immigration program.

ATESOL invites EAL/D teachers to anonymously share their experience of this issue at atesolnswinc@gmail.com Please indicated whether you are in a primary or secondary