



AEU – ACT BRANCH BUDGET SUBMISSION 2012-2013

The Australian Education Union – ACT Branch (AEU) provides this submission to the ACT Government in relation to the 2012-2013 Budget. The AEU is the peak professional and industrial organisation for over 3000 principals, teachers and school support staff in ACT public schools and TAFE. Our members are employees in the Education and Training Directorate (ETD) and the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT). This membership represents the vast majority of principals and teachers and increasing numbers of Preschool Assistants, Learning Support Assistants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers/Officers, Youth Workers and other education workers who support students in public schools.

The AEU-ACT Branch welcomes the recent ACT government investment in improving public education workers' salaries and conditions. Three Enterprise Agreements affecting these employees have been negotiated over the last several months – Education Support Staff, CIT teachers and school teachers have gained or are due to gain from this investment. Ultimately this injection of funds will support the growth of the ACT public education system, and most importantly, improve outcomes for students.

The AEU-ACT Branch membership is in the best position to provide advice to government on what is needed to maintain and continually improve public education, for the benefit of all students. This submission provides recommendations that AEU members believe will address priority issues within the public education system in the ACT.

ACT public education support staff, teachers and leaders in both ETD and CIT are the voice of the profession and this submission presents their views.

SCHOOL SECTOR

1. Recruitment and Retention of High Quality Staff

Recommendation 1:

1(a) Principal Classification – school categories and school complexity are currently under review. Any resultant change to the Principal Salary Structure must be budgeted for implementation during the life of the current Enterprise Agreement.

1(b) Employee salaries – the new ETD Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement concludes 30 September 2014. The ACT government must commence budgeting now for future salary increases to be bargained in 2013-14.

1(c) The Casual Intern rate should be raised to be equivalent to the Casual Teacher Rate 1. The Casual Intern (4th year pre-service teachers permitted to teach in public schools) rate is approximately \$100 per day less than the rate paid in ACT Catholic systemic schools. This pay gap must be addressed to ensure Casual Interns choose to gain valuable casual relief teaching experience in the public school system and to enable ETD to recruit high quality graduates as soon as possible.

Face to Face Teaching Hours

The AEU acknowledges the reduction in face-to-face teaching loads provided to graduate teachers in their first year of service under the new Enterprise Agreement.

1(d) However, funding should be provided to allow face-to-face teaching hours within the secondary sector be restored to 18 hours per week for Level 1 teachers.

1(e) Funding should be provided to allow face-to-face teaching hours within the preschool/primary sectors be reduced to 18 hours per week for Level 1 teachers.

1(f) Face-to-face teaching time for School Leader Cs in all sectors should be reduced by at least two hours a week to compensate for increasing responsibilities for administration and behaviour management.

1(g) Time taken to develop, maintain and implement a student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), including all formal ILP meetings, be counted as part of normal face-to-face teaching hours.

Black Mountain School and The Woden School

1(h) A full time Youth Support Worker should be appointed to both Black Mountain School and The Woden School.

Addressing Workforce Shortages in Public Schools

1(i) Funding should be provided to enable the ETD and local universities to work together, as a matter of priority, to develop and implement a strategy to address existing, and plan for future, workforce shortages in ACT public schools. The particular areas of shortage that currently exist are: school counsellor-psychologists, teacher librarians, teachers of maths, science and ESL/EALD.

Teacher Librarians

1(j) Funding is needed to support the provision and development of Teacher Librarians (TLs) in all public schools, as follows:

- At least a full-time, qualified TL (or equivalent number of part-time TLs) for every school, with specified staffing ratios for each school.
- Staffing funds for TLs to be allocated to schools in addition to the classroom teacher staffing allocation to ensure each school has the funds for at least one full-time qualified TL.
- Provide targeted scholarships that provide study leave and financial support for ETD staff to undertake study to upgrade to a TL qualification.
- Ongoing financial support from ETD to provide relevant regular professional development in teacher librarianship, including the fields of ICT, literacy and leadership.

Additional School Counsellor Positions

1(k) The government needs to provide funding to ensure schools with enrolments of 500 students or more are provided with at least a full-time counsellor-psychologist (as per the NSW Coroner's recommendation - Inquest into the death of Alex Wildman, 2010).

1(l) The government should provide funding to ensure that schools with less than 500 students are provided with at least a 0.5 school counsellor-psychologist.

English as an Additional Language or Dialect (formerly English as a Second Language)

1(m) The government should reinstate the second EALD Executive Officer position in Central Office (cut in 2011 as the result of the Efficiency Dividend) in order to provide whole system professional and pedagogical support to all ETD staff on leading practice to support EALD students, including refugees and students who have experienced trauma.

1(n) The government should provide adequate funding to ACT public school settings to ensure every single EALD learner with a Language Proficiency Rating below 4.0 (equivalent to average speaker of English for age and year level) accesses a targeted EALD program delivered by a specialist EALD teacher. (See **Attachment A** for an explanation of the issues).

Early Childhood Education section, ETD Central Office

1(o) The government should provide funds to create 2 new ECE School Leader C positions to replace the 2 x SLCs who have been sidelined to complete Federal Government priorities including the assessment and rating of preschools under the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care.

Administrative support for the Professional Learning section, ETD Central Office

1(p) At least one FTE additional administrative assistant position should be created to support the development and delivery of the Professional Learning Calendar (hundreds of professional learning sessions per year for all staff across ETD, Catholic and Independent Schools) coordinated by the Professional Learning section.

Class Sizes

1(q) The government should provide funding to cap public school class sizes to the maximums outlined in the AEU Class Sizes Policy. (See **Attachment B** for this policy).

This model is potentially cheaper than the current ACT government policy that averages class sizes across the primary and secondary sectors.

Alternative Programs and Settings

1(r) The government should ensure that there is adequate funding, appropriate staffing, targeted programs and other supportive measures (eg. transport provision) to support disengaging and disengaged students in their own school wherever possible.

1(s) The government should fund the establishment of alternative programs for those students who require a high level of educational, social and/or behavioural support. These programs should include small classes, specialist teachers and support staff (including liaison officer), individualised programs and other supportive measures (eg. transport provision); they may be established in a separate setting to the student's own school and could be provided for the short, medium or long term, depending on the needs of each student.

2. Professional Learning Funds

Recommendation 2:

2(a) The **Teacher** Professional Learning Fund (TPLF) should be increased to \$3M per annum and then adjusted by the annual June Quarter ACT CPI increases. The funding for the TPLF has not increased since its inception, despite increases in the number of teachers employed in the system. Teachers (including School Leader Cs) should be able to access these funds:

- for payment to attend approved courses and conferences, both during term and stand-down, within their school/worksite, the ACT, nationally and internationally; and
- for the payment of HECS or other fees associated with courses approved by ETD from a list of qualifications agreed between the AEU and ETD
- for professional development, including support for implementing system-wide initiatives at the local level.

2 (b) That the **Principal** Professional Learning Fund be calculated on one percent per annum of Principals (SLAs) and Deputy Principals' (SLBs) total salary costs so that Deputy Principals may also benefit from PPLF activities. The Principal Professional Learning Fund (PPLF) is currently allocated funds equivalent to one percent per annum of total *principal* salary costs, so its dollar value increases as salaries rise. This calculation should be extended to include the deputy principal salary costs.

3. New Initiatives and Compliance Measures

Both the Federal and ACT governments have determined a number of new initiatives and compliance measures that have significant implications for the working life of teachers.

Recommendation 3:

Assessment of all New Initiatives Prior to Implementation

3(a) The government should provide funds to ensure a scoping process is undertaken to assess the desirability and resource implications of implementing any and all new proposals, initiatives and/or compliance measures in ETD and schools.

3(b) Funding should be provided to ensure adequate and ongoing resources, training, workload scoping, risk assessments and risk management plans are provided by EDT for the implementation of all new proposals and/or compliance measures, including the National Curriculum and the IT systems and programs.

Teacher Quality Institute registration costs

3(c) Currently, most ACT ETD teachers registered with the Teacher Quality Institute will have their registration fees paid by the government 2011 and 2012. The AEU calls upon the government to extend this to fund TQI registration fees for all ETD teachers until the end of the 2015 TQI registration year.

IT Support Staff and Systems

3(d) The central office should receive adequate funds to ensure that every ETD workplace (all schools, units, central office) has an IT technician/support officer to manage all aspects of ICT establishment and maintenance. As per the in-principal Enterprise Agreement, teachers' engagement with ICT in schools should be educational and not technical. Teachers should not be called upon to establish ICT equipment nor undertake system or school network maintenance tasks.

3(e) Funding should be provided to ensure ETD/Shared Services ICT systems can effectively manage new staffing arrangements agreed as part of Enterprise Agreement negotiations (ie. some positions filled by a school-based panel, other positions filled by a central transfer/placement round).

Increased School Autonomy

ACT Public Schools have for many years been operating under a system of School-Based Management which has provided considerable autonomy to each Principal. The ACT government and Federal government have sought to extend this autonomy.

3(f) The AEU asserts that any proposed changes to school autonomy, including funding arrangements, must:

- be the subject of broad consultation (in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement);
- bring about improvements for students and staff;
- ensure that ACT public schools operate effectively as a system;
- not jeopardise the ability of the ACT public education system to meet the needs of all students and staff; and
- not lead to a decrease in funding and not disadvantage individual schools, students or employees.

4. Support for Small Schools

Recommendation 4:

A review should be undertaken into small public schools and the resources required to ensure equity for students and staff in these schools. Small schools struggle to provide the same breadth of curriculum and the same level of physical resources as larger schools. In small schools, staff are overworked as compared to colleagues in larger schools as they still need to provide the same levels of support to their school communities but there are fewer people to provide this support. If small schools do not have their resources reviewed government needs to reconsider their viability.

5. Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Young People to Continue Their Education

Recommendation 5:

A similar program to the award-winning *CC Cares* program at Canberra College should be established at a north-side public college to support pregnant and parenting young people to complete Year 10 and 12.

6. Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre – Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

Recommendation 6:

Funding should be provided to employ a technical assistant to support practical classes at METC. Other detention centres around Australia provide two adults per class. This ensures appropriate supervision is provided, allows tasks to be completed and provides additional support to the teacher. This position would be in addition to the Youth Workers who currently provide support in the metal and wood work classes only. Other classes such as art and agriculture do not have a second staff member and would greatly benefit from this support.

TAFE SECTOR

The AEU recommends a thorough review of current level of CIT funding and the viability of the commercialisation of CIT to existing levels. The AEU asserts that CIT is inadequately funded to provide the range of profile programs desired and necessary to meet the needs of the ACT community. In light of the retraction of federal government funding through the contestability agenda for VET and TAFE provision in Australia, the ACT government must fund CIT at levels which provide, in real terms, funding equivalent to levels existing prior to the 1997 implementation of 'funding efficiencies' and policy designed to promote contestability in the ACT.

7. Cultural Change Within CIT

In recent years the direction of CIT towards commercialisation and increased contestable funding has seen a marked change in the culture within the organisation. This has led to teachers voicing concern about the de-emphasis of quality teaching in favour of cost cutting and/or money making measures. This includes issues around the level of administrative support and marketing expertise available to teachers, Education Managers and Centre Directors.

Recommendation 7:

7(a) CIT should be funded to 1997 levels in real terms to ensure sustainability of workloads for teaching staff and quality of teaching delivery within CIT.

7(a) CIT should be funded to provide access to all staff to Respect, Equity and Diversity training and to other relevant programs that support respectful, safe work environments for ALL staff at CIT. This funding should be sufficient to allow completion of program delivery by the end of 2012.

7(b) Funding should be provided to address staffing shortages at CIT and ensure that the FTE teaching staff to administrative/general staff ratio is at 3 teachers: 2

administrative/general staff, and allow CIT to provide 1 full-time administrative staff member for each Band 2, 3, 4 and STP. The priority must be to ensure adequate education services are provided by CIT and that administrative staff are not sidelined from this core work

7(c) Funding should be provided to create additional STP, Band 2, 3 and 4 teacher positions to allow teachers to concentrate on educational delivery, to adequately meet the needs of students at CIT, and to reduce the individual administrative compliance burden on teachers.

7(d) Funding should be provided to enable CIT to purchase more fleet cars so that teachers can perform their work more efficiently. Teachers should not be required to use their personal vehicle for work purposes without being provided a Motor Vehicle Allowance.

7(e) Funding should be provided to allow the ongoing delivery of all Language courses in the Vocational College of CIT, to ensure that formally-recognised language programs are still available in the ACT community. The AEU understands that all Certificate III and IV Language courses will cease at the end of 2012 and that Certificate I and II Language courses will be significantly reduced in the near future.

7(f) Funding of the Year 10 and Year 12 programs, delivered by the Vocational College, should be based on the same resource allocation in ETD colleges.

8. Proposed Merger Between CIT and University of Canberra

Recommendation 8:

The AEU has provided a submission to the ACT government stating its strong preference for CIT to remain as a separate public education institution. The AEU welcomes the recent announcement that CIT and UC will not merge but will continue to work closely together to provide high quality tertiary education across within ACT. Adequate funding must be provided to ensure no students, staff or programs are disadvantaged in the future arrangements of CIT and UC.

EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF

9. Recruitment and Retention of Education Support Staff

Education support staff include employees who are Learning Support Assistants, Preschool Assistants, Youth Workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers and Officers and any other DET employee who work directly with students.

The work performed by education support staff is critical to the delivery of high quality public education for all ACT students. This value has not been evident in the amount and quality of professional development made available by ETD.

Recommendation 9:

An Education Support Staff Professional Learning Fund should be created, based on 1.5% of the total Education Support Staff salary and adjusted by the annual June Quarter ACT CPI increases. This will enable all support staff working with students, including LSAs,

Youth Workers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers to attend regular, relevant, high quality professional development. The operation of this fund is to be jointly agreed with the DET and the AEU.

PUBLIC SECTOR-WIDE CONDITIONS

10. Supporting Employees Who Experience Domestic Violence

Recommendation 10:

10(a) Funding should be provided to implement a new common core condition across the ACTPS which enables an employee experiencing domestic violence to have access to 20 days per year (non-accumulative) of paid special leave for medical appointments, legal proceedings and to deal with other impacts of family violence on work and family. Principal/Manager training in relation to privacy obligations and implementation procedures would be required to support this leave entitlement.

11. Superannuation

Recommendation 11:

11(a) The ACT Government should reinstate the 15.4% employer superannuation contribution for all ACTPS employees, or at least move to an interim model of matching employee contributions 1% for 1%.

11(b) The ACT government should pay a superannuation contribution for women on all forms of unpaid maternity/parental leave in order to recruit and retain skilled employees in the ACT Government workforce.

12. Increase ACT Paid Maternity Leave

Recommendation 12:

The ACT Government should increase Paid Maternity Leave to 26 weeks on replacement wages and move the payment of paid maternity leave and other entitlements to a central pool to relieve the financial pressure on smaller agencies.

13. Shared Services Pay Slips

Recommendation 13:

The ACT Government should provide resources to ensure that Shared Service provides payslips that include the employee's:

- Long Service Leave balance and accrual date
- Personal Leave balance and accrual date
- Personal Leave days taken for the current calendar year including an itemised record of the dates and total hours of personal leave taken with and without a medical certificate.

14. Journey Cover Insurance

Recommendation 14:

In the absence of any decision by the Commonwealth Government to reinstate journey cover insurance, the ACT Government should make provision in the Budget for other

forms of insurance coverage for injuries sustained by ACT Government employees while travelling to and from work.

15. No Further Efficiency Dividends Imposed Upon ETD or CIT

Recommendation 15:

There should be no further efficiency dividend imposed upon either ETD or CIT in the next budget.

16. Support for Mature Age Employees

Recommendation 16:

Funding should be provided to develop and implement a whole-of-ACT-government Mature Age Strategy, particularly in the areas of:

- Valuing the experience and expertise of mature age employees
- Recognition of the specific issues affecting mature age employees
- Promotion of, and support for, flexible work arrangements
- Professional development for managers in how to effectively support mature age employees
- Support by the employer in accessing transitions to retirement.



**Penny Gilmour
Secretary
AEU-ACT Branch
December 2011**

Attachment A



Shocking Funding Shortfall of EALD/ESL Programs

EALD/English as an Additional Language or Dialect (also referred to as ESL-English as a Second Language) programs in public schools have undergone significant cuts over the last 10 years. This is despite the proportion of EALD learners in ACT public schools increasing over the same period.

The AEU's concerns include the reduction in the number of centralised EALD specialists delivering professional development and providing expert support to schools; a significant percentage of EALD students missing out on targeted support and a reduction in Australian Government funding to the New Arrivals programs in the Introductory English Centres.

There are few full-time EALD staffing positions in schools and not all teachers of EALD hold qualifications. This has improved in recent times since the AEU successfully lobbied the Education and Training Directorate (ETD) to provide scholarships to teachers to upgrade to an EALD qualification.

Mainstream teachers are increasingly required to take total responsibility for the acquisition of English by their students with minimal specialist support. There is more demand on classroom teachers, together with counsellors, to support the socio-cultural inclusion of families at school whilst being under pressure to meet literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

The AEU is concerned about the impact on EALD learners of the funding arrangements for schools. NAPLAN indicators are broad and therefore ineffective in disaggregating learners of English as a second/additional language. This makes it difficult for the ETD and individual schools to make accurate distinctions between the different cohorts of students who are below the minimum literacy and numeracy benchmarks. Also, the data does not explain why this has occurred. Unless this is addressed, high needs learners will continue to under-achieve.

EALD experts understand that there is a distinction between English acquisition and literacy difficulties. They recognise the distinctive cognitive, social and cultural dimensions of learning another language. Such expertise is under-valued or not recognised in some schools.

EALD learners cannot be categorised easily, nor should they be. It is often the case that EALD students from refugee backgrounds are also from a low socio-economic background. Refugee students come to Australia with a significant range of experiences, possibly including trauma, sometimes with little or no formal education. These students have very complex emotional and social needs which go beyond requiring just EALD support.

On the other hand, students from a language background other than English (eg. diplomatic family, first generation Australian, overseas exchange student) are not necessarily in the same situation. Therefore it is important to acknowledge that EALD students should not simply be categorised into 'low SES' or 'Literacy and Numeracy', two of the COAG National Partnership areas.

What is clear is the need for a significant funding boost to EALD programs, staffing and support services to meet the needs of students and their families.

The EALD funding issue is a complex one, but here are some facts in a nutshell:

Cap on EALD staffing funds

In March 1981, the then ACT Education Minister made the decision not to fund enough ESL teachers to support all students identified as requiring ESL assistance. Instead the Minister set a 4% ceiling on the funding available for staffing EALD programs. This meant that a maximum of 4% of the total Education staffing budget could be used for ESL staff. This ceiling was adopted as Government policy and appears to remain the current policy.

Reduction to the EALD staffing multiplier

The ESL/EALD staffing provision has been exacerbated even further by the fact that the staffing multiplier (used to calculate how many ESL teacher positions can be funded across the system based on the total student enrolments K – 12) has been reduced from 0.0403 in 1989 to 0.0381 in 1990. The multiplier was then reduced further in 1996 to 0.0364 due to a budget decision to reduce the staffing allocation to ESL.

Public education system enrolments linked to the EALD staffing provision

ACT public school enrolments have, on average, declined over the last decade. As a result, the staffing provision for EALD programs declined since staffing is calculated using a multiplier of total student enrolments. In the last 2 years, average enrolments in public schools have increased slightly and are projected to grow further. Funding for EALD staff should therefore increase.

Increased enrolments of EALD students

According to ETD figures, the funding provision for EALD programs has gradually reduced whilst the number of EALD students in public schools has increased significantly. EALD students now represent 12% of all enrolments. In the period 2000-2011, EALD student enrolments in schools have risen by over 35%.

Language Performance Rating (LPR) cut-off has been reduced

EALD staffing in mainstream schools is allocated based on the needs of EALD students with the highest language needs. This allocation is determined following the annual (August census) assessment of EALD students. Each student is given a Language Performance Rating (LPR). The August EALD Census includes moderated assessment tasks on the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. A Language Performance Rating for each student is calculated from these assessments.

The LPR scale is as follows:

- 0 - 1 minimal English
- 1 - 2 well-below average
- 2 - 3 below average
- 3 - 4 approaching average
- 4 average native English speaking competence for age and year level
- 4 – 5 above average

Increasing language needs of EALD students

The number of EALD students in mainstream schools identified with a LPR less than 2.00 (below average English speaking competence) is increasing.

In 2011, the cut off for full funding is a LPR of 1.75 (well-below average English speaking competence) and for partial funding a LPR of 2.00. This trend of funding provision on a declining LPR rate has led to an increasing number of students with low LPRs who do not receive targeted EALD support in schools.

In 2011, only 55% of all EALD students with an LPR below 4 (average English proficiency for age and year level) were funded, since funding is only allocated to support those students who have an LPR of 2.00 or below. This means that 45% of all EALD students do not get any targeted support from an EALD teacher. (ie. students between the LPR funding cut-off of 2.00 and 3.99). Those EALD students who do not 'generate' funding must be supported by mainstream teachers and school counsellors in the main.

EALD teachers in all settings have an important role in providing expert advice to other teachers, including strategies on how to support EALD students in mainstream classes and information about the cultural backgrounds and sensitivities relevant to students and their families.

EALD teachers not only teach English but are often the major support for students and their families who are developing understandings about living in Australia and attending schools in Australia.

The AEU believes that a simpler method of calculating the EALD staffing is needed. This should be based on the total number of EALD students (with LPR 0-4) in public school settings and their individual language and social needs. This means no caps on staffing, no linking EALD staffing to overall public school enrolments and no

continual reduction in the cut-off for targeted support for EALD students. Rather, funding should be provided based on each student's LPR and the level of assistance required to raise their language proficiency to at least average English proficiency for their age and year level.

The importance of EALD support in the early years

In the early 1990s the preschool sector had 1 EALD support teacher in each of five regions throughout the ACT. Sometime between the 1990's and 2010 there were 2 EALD Support Teachers to work with all preschool EALD students and their teachers across the ACT regardless of the total number of EALD children in mainstream preschools or their English language needs.

In 2010 these 2 EALD Support Teachers assisted at least 225 EALD students (who had an LPR of 2 or below) across more than 75 ACT preschools, along with their teachers. Based on the current EALD staffing formula, hypothetically, if these students were all located in one site, many more EALD teachers would be allocated to the sector to provide support for EALD students.

At the end of 2010, the ACT Government imposed budget cuts on Education and Training. This resulted in these two EALD Support Teacher positions being cut. This was short sighted and an abrogation of the ETD responsibility to provide access to a high quality education for all students.

There is agreement among educators that the early years of development are critical so the more support provided early on, the better the opportunities and outcomes for children as they grow up. Therefore adequate investment in the early years is critical. To remove or reduce support to preschoolers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will make it even more difficult for public schools to provide equitable access to a high quality education for an already disadvantaged group of students.

EALD resources must be increased significantly in order to provide adequate levels of support not only in preschools but throughout the whole public education system.

The funds available to provide targeted EALD support are already stretched to the limit and do not fund all EALD students with support needs. The EALD teachers in primary schools (some of whom are part-time) are already stretched beyond their limits as they work hard to support EALD students and their teachers. The cuts to the Early Childhood EALD support teacher positions have resulted in an increased workload for EALD teachers and School Counsellors in primary schools.

The AEU welcomes ETD's assurance that "preschool teachers will be supported through an intensive EALD professional development program." It is unclear who in ETD will be responsible for providing this professional learning (PL) or what it will entail. AEU believes that it must be high quality, ongoing professional development rather than a one-off session. If it is to be the two EALD Executive Officers who will develop and implement this PL, this is yet another reason to maintain both their

positions in the long term. To date, no-one in the Literacy and Numeracy section has been approached to provide this professional learning either.

The AEU believes there is a need for at least four EALD Support Teachers to work in the preschool sector.

EALD Teachers: professional learning and support

The *Language for Understanding Across the Curriculum* (LUAC) program was a successful professional learning program for mainstream teachers delivered in the early 1990's. It was established to indirectly support EALD students not resourced with EALD staffing.

In 1992 changes were made to the EALD program, resulting in the introduction of a 7 year limit for funding EALD students and the redirection of EALD staffing points to create 5 LUAC positions. These positions have progressively decreased, with only 1 LUAC officer appointed in 2007. The LUAC Program, now replaced by *InSinc - Incorporating Strategies for an Inclusive Curriculum* – has been presented to Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators so they have the strategies to share with others. The course is also available as in-school PD and will be provided to the new Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers who start next year. EALD teachers are concerned that the *InSinc* course no longer has a strong focus on supporting EALD students (as the LUAC course did) but is more about strategies to support literacy in all students.

At the beginning of 2009, the LUAC position was reclassified as an EALD Executive Officer and included the delivery of the *InSinc* course as part of their role. The course is identified as part of the targeted programs for the Literacy & Numeracy Section.

The AEU is concerned that the new Literacy and Numeracy coordinators in each school will be seen as a replacement for EALD specialists. EALD teaching requires an understanding of specific English language teaching strategies, socio-cultural issues and training in carrying out the EALD Census.

2010-11 Budget Cuts to the ETD Central Office

During the 2010 Efficiency Dividend Review, the positions of Central Office EALD specialists were at risk of being cut. The AEU is pleased to note that one (1) SLC EALD Executive Officer position will continue, but has expressed great concern (share by the P & C Council and the ACT Principals Association) that the second EALD Executive Officer position will be cut at the end of 2011. The AEU calls for the retention of both of these central office positions for the long-term. There is a significant and ongoing need for schools to have access to expert support, advice, corporate knowledge, professional learning and resources. The SLC Executive Officers support EALD teachers in relation to pedagogy through on-site coaching and provide valuable support to schools in relation to the identification of EALD students and EALD data management and analysis (including the annual EALD census).

Many teachers of EALD students do not have a Teaching English as a Second or Other Language (TESOL) qualification. Some are currently upgrading their

qualifications at the University of Canberra through a ETD targeted scholarship (which came about as the result of lobbying by the AEU) and others are completing the 9 week *Teaching EALD Students in the Mainstream Classroom* course (which is now accredited as a unit within the Graduate Certificate-TESOL by UC) presented by the two EALD Executive Officers. There are many more EALD teachers remaining who could undertake professional learning or study to gain specialist qualifications. All teachers in the public education system must have a sound understanding of the how to meet the needs of EALD students, the development of language, intervention strategies and cultural issues. The two EALD Executive Officers have the capacity to undertake this important work and should therefore be retained in their central office positions for the long term.

The AEU believes that ACT ETD needs to employ centralised expert EALD staff to provide systemic support, professional development and quality teaching strategies to specifically target EALD learners.

At the same time that system-level EALD support is being reduced, more and more schools are reducing their EALD teacher positions to part-time due to the reduced level of EALD funding. Many EALD teachers are untrained in EALD methodology, an understanding of the effects of socio-cultural issues on learning, or the role of an EALD teacher during the EALD Census process. This contravenes ETD's policy to employ EALD teachers with minimum qualifications in EALD.

EALD teachers have expressed concerns about the practice in some schools of combining EALD students with Learning Assistance (LA) students into the one learning group. The needs of these LA students are different because their learning difficulties stem from a completely different cause. EALD students require specific English language instruction in vocabulary, grammatical structures and acknowledgement of prior learning.

The AEU believes that ETD should continue to fund scholarships to enable teachers to obtain ESL qualifications and maintain their skill set through the Teacher Professional Learning Fund. In discussions about the use of the Scholarship Fund, the AEU will continue to advocate for ESL to be one of the targeted scholarship areas.

Federal Government changes to ESL funding

In 2009 the Federal Government has changed funding arrangements for the ESL New Arrivals Program and ESL General Support Funding Grants which went towards supporting programs in Introductory English Centres (IECs). These funds have been rolled into a 'Specific Purpose' base. ACT ETD now decides how these funds will be directed rather than being targeted towards programs for new arrivals.

Introductory English Centre programs, which provide full-time support to newly arrived students with little or no English, need to be assured of adequate funding and staffing levels and the ongoing future of the programs. The AEU understands that

class sizes in IECs have been growing but additional teachers have not been employed to ease the pressure despite assurances from ETD that this would occur.

Attachment B

AEU CLASS SIZES POLICY (as at August 2009) [including Potentially Hazardous Class Sizes and Special Education Class Sizes]

1. Current class size arrangements:

Members of the AEU are not required to teach classes which contain more than the number of pupils specified in the following schedule:

Preschools	25
Kindergarten – 3	21
Years 4 – 6	30
Years 7 - 9	32
Year 10	30
Years 11 – 12	25

2. Target Class Sizes

Council endorses the following policy to form the basis of the Union's claim to decrease existing class sizes to the following levels:

Preschool	21
Kindergarten	21
Years 1-3	21
Years 4-6	25
Years 7-10	25
Years 11-12	25

In achieving the target class sizes referred to in this policy, Council and Executive should determine strategies which continue the high priority given to the reduction of class sizes in all sectors. Any campaigning conducted by the AEU to reduce class sizes should encompass the following features:

- (a) The involvement of the ACT community as appropriate.
- (b) The staffing formulae should provide sufficient staff to ensure that AEU members are not required to teach in excess of the above number of students. There should be no loss of working conditions.
- (c) No reduction in other services to achieve lower class sizes.
- (d) No redistribution of resources between the sectors.
- (e) There will be an incremental strategy which will target areas of need in order of priority, beginning with the reduction of class sizes in high schools.
- (f) The AEU will make Budget submissions and undertake EBA negotiations and election campaigning which reflect this policy.
- (g) An analysis of the impact of the Class Sizes Campaign on the provision of non teaching time and curriculum offerings in schools.

3. Special Education Class Sizes

The AEU recommends the following student to teacher and Special Teaching Assistant (STA) ratios for special education classes. These numbers are not to be considered absolute: there may be a need for flexibility in certain situations, eg where combined or composite classes are formed, or in classes where the profile of student needs (eg where students have multiple diagnoses or where challenging behaviours are extreme) is such that additional staffing is required.

Where the terms "high needs" and "moderate needs" are used in this policy, it is critical that there be a transparent understanding of what these terms mean, ie what level of points generated by the appraisal process places a student in one or the other of these categories.

- Autism units:
High needs students: 1 teachers and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 4 students.
Moderate needs students: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 6 students.
- General Learning Support Units: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students
- Learning Support Centres (Primary): 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students.
- Learning Support Centres (Secondary): 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 10 students.
- Communication Disorder Classes: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students,
- Special Schools: High need students as identified by a modified appraisal (SCAN) process: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 4 students. Moderate need students as identified by a modified appraisal (SCAN) process: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 6 students.
- Early Childhood classes within Special Schools: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 6 students.
- Early Childhood Centres (ECCs; Special Schools' outreach settings): 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 8 students.
- Early Intervention Units: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 12 students.
- Autism Intervention Units: 1 teacher and 1 special teacher's assistant to every 4 students.
- Mainstream Classes: Where students with special needs are placed in mainstream classes, the AEU believes that, in accordance with our "Integration of Students with Special Needs", adequate resources must be identified and given prior to placement.

4. Potentially Hazardous Classes (PH Classes)

The AEU will continue to negotiate implementation of the following with the Department and in schools:

1. That a class be defined as a potentially hazardous class if a significant amount of the teaching time places students/staff in a potentially hazardous environment which may affect the health and safety of those individuals.
2. PH classes are to contain no more than 24 students or the number of pupils that the teaching space and equipment will safely cater for, whichever is the less. Alternatively a risk assessment may be done to ascertain the appropriate number of students.
3. PH classes are to be identified by the school prior to the commencement of each school year. If there is disagreement about what a PH class is, then the school should seek an independent and objective analysis of the class by a panel consisting of the Department's OH&S Officers, a specialist in the field (eg consultant) and a representative of the AEU.
4. PH classes receive extra staffing points as part of the secondary schools staffing formula for practical classes. These staffing points are to be used only for PH classes and are not to be used to reduce class sizes in other classes or to give flexibility elsewhere in the school.
5. The Branch will negotiate with the Department a separate component within the staffing formula for PH classes. This component will vary with the number of PH classes in a school.