



PRESS RELEASE

Quality and Training required in Victorian tutor recruitment campaign

15 Oct 2020

The announcement by the Victorian government of tutors to support students is very welcome. Both the Australian Tutoring Association and the Grattan Institute called for tutors in schools in July this year. The extended lockdown in Victoria has meant that students have suffered learning loss and require support through small group and one-to-one tutoring.

The Victorian Government is spending \$250 million to recruit and deploy more than 4,100 tutors to Victorian schools next year to help students who have struggled during the state's coronavirus lockdown.

The Australian Tutoring Association would like to see each of the tutors undertake its new training focusing on tutoring students in small groups. The training draws on the latest research about learning loss and remediation for children who need additional support.

ATA CEO Mohan Dhall, an experienced former teacher and who currently lectures in teacher education at the University of Technology Sydney, said *"In anticipation of a need to support tutors who will need to help students remediate learning loss the ATA has designed new training. Modules will be available by the end of November and throughout December and January. The modules will equip tutors who are pre-service teachers, casuals or retired teachers to access up-to-date training in line with contemporary pedagogy."*

Other modules relate to child protection, reporting, and accountability to schools.

Dhall said he hoped that the Victorian government would work with the ATA, as it had done previously. He said, *"We think the Andrews government has shown commendable vision and we would like qualified tutors to assist with the roll out. Tutoring has been shown to be effective and is currently being deployed across the UK with the assistance of the peak tutoring body, The Tutors Association (TTA) in England. That body was formed after consultation with the ATA in 2012. The UK with a similar scheme is currently spending £300M (about AUD\$550 million) on the NTP (National Tutoring Program)."*

Colin Turner, a former school Principal and current ATA Board member said, *"This is a direct injection of support to cover a recognised gap in learning progress. In particular this measure will help "at risk" students who will benefit from professional, trained tutoring. Principals will be able to direct the funds as needed in their schools and rely on the support of the Australian Tutoring Association to assist wherever needed."*

Jenny Pownall, a former teacher and current ATA Board member specialising in Special Needs said, *“Students with Learning Difficulties have been particularly impacted by the school shutdown in Victoria and are the most likely group to have fallen furthest behind academically. Tutors employed in schools in 2021 must have a competent understanding of learning difficulties, what to look for in students who are struggling and most importantly, must be aware of strategies used to best support these students so that their needs can be addressed*

Dhall added that *“the focus on a target of 80% female tutors was appropriate and welcome given the disproportionate and unfair impact of the recession on women in what has been dubbed a ‘Pink Collar’ Recession.”*

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