

INQUIRY INTO STATE PLAN REPORTING

Organisation: NSW Teachers Federation

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Submission to State Plan Reporting Inquiry of the NSW Public Accounts Committee

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NSW Teachers Federation

The NSW Teachers Federation (“the Federation”) is the union that covers all teachers and related employees in NSW public education, including primary and secondary schools, TAFE, AMES and Corrective Services. The Federation has some 80,000 members who are employed across the state. The Federation’s Senior Officers are available to discuss further the issues raised in this submission with the committee.

Overview

The Federation has lobbied for many years for governments to look beyond short-term electoral advantage and start planning for a positive future for public education. The State plan has merit in that the NSW Government stated its commitment to developing long-term priorities overall for the state. However, the Federation is concerned that public schools and TAFE colleges, which play such an important role in communities across NSW, have not attracted the priorities in the plan that such important services should.

The Federation’s President was invited to a State Plan Delivery Stakeholder Event on Monday, 10 December. Participants from across government, business, unions and the community sector were present. They were presented with glossy leaflets summarising where the State Plan was up to, then were expected to provide feedback at workshops within an hour and a half. This is not adequate consultation nor is it adequate reporting on progress with the State Plan. It was not clear at the end whether the workshop reports would be taken seriously by the government.

Performance Indicators

Issues about performance that the Federation would like to see integrated into the State Plan are:

- A recognition that there must be adequate resourcing of government departments to address the objectives of the State Plan.
- A linking between the priorities of the State Plan and other government policy. One must inform the other.

A recognition that there must be adequate resourcing of government departments to address the objectives of the State Plan

Departments continue to be required to do more with less. The State Plan is to provide the framework for the budget but departments have been told to reprioritise existing resources.

In priority S4 – Increasing levels of attainment for all students, it is stated that in the next 12 months 10,000 Aboriginal students will have Personalised Learning Plans that address their specific learning needs but there is no funding commitment attached to this aim. Will teachers again be required to undertake additional duties without extra resources?

A linking between the priorities of the State Plan and other government policy

This is illustrated by the government’s announcement this year that it will increase fees in TAFE for many courses by 9% and fully commercialise other courses. This policy will negatively impact on State Plan priorities S5 – More students complete Year 12 or recognised vocational training and P4 and P7 – Lifelong training to support economic growth. The targets in these priorities will be severely compromised if fees are increased.