



Minister for Commerce  
Minister for Finance  
Minister for Industrial Relations  
Minister for Ageing  
Minister for Disability Services  
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

2 May 2006

Mr John Evans  
Clerk of the Parliaments  
C/- Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

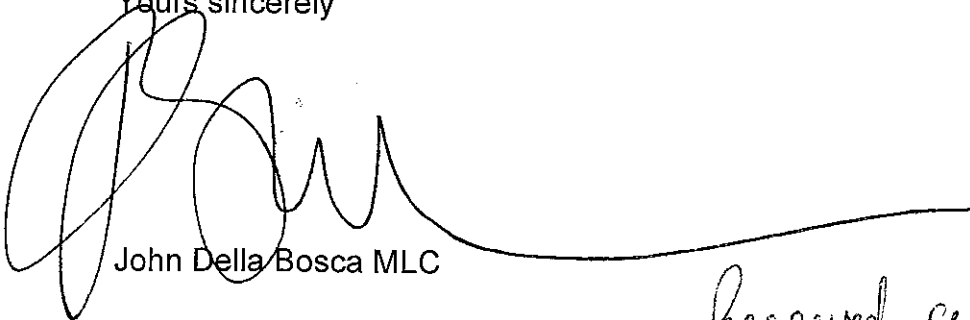
Dear Mr Evans

I refer to the Report on the Inquiry into the Recruitment and Training of Teachers which was undertaken by the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Affairs. The Committee issued its final report in October 2005.

Enclosed is the New South Wales Government's response to the recommendations of the Committee's report.

I trust that the Government response will be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely



John Della Bosca MLC

Received at 10.15am  
Tuesday 2 May 2006  
Lynn Lovelock  
Clerk of the Parliaments.

**NSW GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES REPORT  
– RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS**

***Recommendation 1***

***That the review of the Institute of Teachers Act 2004 specifically consider the independence of the Board of Governance of the Government, as well as the Quality Teaching Council.***

**Response**

The *Institute of Teachers Act 2004*, Sections 9 – 13, specifies the governance arrangements for the Institute.

Governance is divided between the Board and The Quality Teaching Council. The Chair is the same person for both.

The Board consists of the Chairperson, the Chief Executive and three persons appointed by the Minister with an appropriate balance of legal, business, risk management and financial skills.

The Board's functions are to:

- oversee the Institute's functions, finances, strategic direction and operations
- monitor the management and performance of the Institute
- govern the affairs of the Institute in accordance with the directions of the Minister.

The Quality Teaching Council (QTC) consists of the Chairperson, ten elected members and ten members appointed by the Minister.

The ten elected members must be practising teachers or principals and represent the following groups:

- government school teachers (five members)
- government primary school principals (one member)
- government secondary school principals (one member)
- Catholic systemic school teachers (one member)
- Catholic systemic school principals (one member)
- independent school teachers and principals (one member).

This system of electoral colleges was established to ensure that all groups of teachers would be represented on the QTC.

The appointed members are:

- a nominee of the NSW Teachers Federation
- a nominee of the NSW Independent Education Union
- a nominee of the Board of Studies
- a nominee of the Director-General of Education and Training
- a nominee of the Catholic Education Commission, NSW
- a nominee of the Association of Independent Schools of NSW
- a person representing the interests of parents of school-age children
- a nominee of the NSW Teacher Education Council
- two persons representing the interests of teachers, at least one of whom must be a member of the Professional Teachers' Council NSW.

The Quality Teaching Council is the major source of advice to the Institute on educational and professional issues.

The two tier structure allows a large representative group of the education community to engage with professional and educational issues while the detail of financial management is the responsibility of a small group of people with expertise in the field.

The review of the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004* will take place in 2008.

The review's parameters are specified in Section 55 of the Act as determining *whether the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and whether the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing these objectives.*

The major policy objective of the Act is the improvement of student learning outcomes through increasing teaching quality.

There is a significant amount of research that shows the most important variable determining a child's educational outcomes is the quality of their teacher. The Institute will improve teacher quality through a number of mechanisms:

- a. developing and maintaining a Framework of Professional Teaching Standards that provides a career long structure for the accreditation and professional development of teachers
- b. establishing a regulatory framework for pre-service teacher preparation programs for endorsement by the Minister based on advice from the Institute and the Program Endorsement Subcommittee. This will ensure that graduates meet prescribed standards of knowledge and skills in their pre-service training, including the NSW Government's mandatory requirements

- c. establishing a regulatory framework for providers of professional development for endorsement by the Minister on advice from the Institute. This will guide the implementation of professional development programs, in particular ensuring better outcomes from the increased professional development funding for government schools
- d. implementing minimum standards of teacher competence and requiring maintenance of accreditation to ensure all teachers maintain professional commitment throughout their careers
- e. requiring evidence of effective professional commitment, including participation in professional development, as a pre-requisite for maintenance of accreditation
- f. assisting schools and teachers, via reference to the standards, to better determine professional development goals and achieve more effective outcomes from professional development expenditure
- g. allowing differentiation of teacher quality through the recognition of higher levels of teacher performance
- h. establishing a motivation for teachers to invest in their own professional development through accreditation against higher standards
- i. creating opportunities for the emergence of independent professional development providers through formal endorsement of providers
- j. requiring minimum qualifications (specifically a requirement for a Bachelors degree) of current and future teachers including those in small independent schools
- k. enabling clearer reporting to all parents of teacher qualifications and accreditation
- l. providing school principals with the content, framework and substance to deal effectively and efficiently with underperforming teachers.

As the Institute's governance arrangements form part of the Act, the functioning of the Board of Governance and the Quality Teaching Council will necessarily be part of the review. This will include an assessment of the independence of both bodies.

## **Recommendation 2**

***In recognition of the need to provide a forum for effective communication between all stakeholders to better meet the needs of the profession, the Committee recommends that the Department of Education and Training work collaboratively with universities offering pre-service teacher education and develop a mechanism that includes representatives of the NSW and Commonwealth Governments, the NSW Institute of Teachers, employers and universities.***

## **Response**

NSW has consistently called for a formal mechanism for State input to Commonwealth decisions in the allocation of university places, particularly in teacher education courses. This will improve co-ordination between the supply and delivery of teacher education places and the workforce needs of the State.

The NSW Department of Education and Training's submission to the Federal Parliament's Inquiry into Teacher Education recommended that:

"regular and formal consultation between the NSW Government, the Commonwealth Government, State Government and non-government teacher employers, universities and the NSW Institute of Teachers be established to consider the most appropriate allocation of government resources to ensure the adequate supply of quality teachers in NSW."

At the MCEETYA meeting on 17 November 2005, NSW succeeded in gaining agreement to institute a formal bilateral consultative mechanism between the Commonwealth and each State and Territory on workforce planning. The mechanism is to involve:

- (i) formal consultation and agreement with States on methodologies for distributing university funding to meet workforce shortages under the Commonwealth Grants Scheme;
- (ii) ensuring the States have access to accurate and timely higher education data to facilitate the alignment of educational outcomes with workforce projections; and
- (iii) the Commonwealth collaborating with the States in the creation of real pathways between vocational education and training and universities in areas of workforce shortage.

A Memorandum of Understanding between NSW and the Commonwealth is currently being finalised to give effect to the MCEETYA decision. The key objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to improve the alignment between university educational profiles and the NSW workforce needs, primarily, but not restricted to, areas where the State is the major employer – including teacher education.

At the NSW level, the Department has ongoing meetings with the Teacher Education Council and in 2005 conducted a presentation and information sharing day with a number of representatives from universities. Information on the Department's needs and projections regarding teacher supply and demand was discussed. Another session related to strategies for improving the professional experience component of pre-service teacher education. Similar meetings are planned for 2006.

### ***Recommendation 3***

***That the Department of Education and Training establish a stronger presence within the universities, to inform teacher education students regarding appropriate subject choices, mandatory inclusions and the nature of working with the Department, and to provide a strong recruitment focus on campus.***

### **Response**

The Graduate Teaching Standards of the NSW Institute of Teachers include requirements for sound subject discipline knowledge related to NSW syllabuses and other requirements related to existing mandatory inclusions in initial teacher education programs.

The NSW Institute of Teachers and the Department of Education and Training are working co-operatively to ensure the Institute's course approval policy and processes effectively address these issues.

The Department's teach.NSW team visits university campuses on a regular basis to promote the Graduate Recruitment Program and to provide advice to prospective public school teachers.

The focus of teach.NSW has been revised in recent years to take into account feedback from university students and staff. This continual review of the promotional focus will continue.

teach.NSW met with university representatives in November 2005 to discuss the program for 2006.

Additional online resources are also being provided to support teacher education students.

#### **Recommendation 4**

***That the Department of Education and Training provide additional scholarships, including additional Indigenous scholarships and provide an ongoing evaluation to measure the effectiveness of this program in meeting targets and retaining teachers in the long-term.***

#### **Response**

An additional 30 scholarships have been offered to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students for 2006, increasing the total number of scholarships for these students to 60 and the total number of scholarships to 230.

The 2006 Teacher Education Scholarship Program was advertised from 18 July 2005. Promotional strategies included advertisements in the press, information presented on radio and at career fairs and expos and presentations by Aboriginal staff made to Aboriginal student groups at eleven university campuses from July to the end of August. The latter strategy has been very positively received by the Aboriginal students and co-ordinators of the Aboriginal support centres.

Applications closed for the program on 23 September 2005.

For the 2006 scholarship program, 92 applications were received from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, 60 of whom have been offered a scholarship.

As at 2 March 2006, of the 60 scholarships offered to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, all offers have been verbally accepted and 59 students have confirmed their acceptance by forwarding a signed copy of their Deed of Agreement.

Current holders of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander scholarships have been provided with mentor support.

The Department will be evaluating the scholarship program in Semester 1, 2006.

### **Recommendation 5**

***That the State Government seek a commitment from the Commonwealth Government that it review its policy of charging Fringe Benefits Tax on the Higher Education Contribution Scheme payments made by the Department of Education and Training through its scholarship program.***

### **Response**

NSW has consistently called upon the Commonwealth Government to review its policy of charging Fringe Benefits Tax on the Commonwealth Supported Places (previously known as the Higher Education Contribution Scheme) payments made by the Department of Education and Training through its scholarship program.

The NSW Department of Education and Training submission to the Federal Parliament's Inquiry into Teacher Education recommended that:

“Fringe Benefits Tax be abolished on State Teacher scholarships and sponsorships”.

In November 2003, the then NSW Minister for Education and Training, Dr Andrew Refshauge wrote to The Hon Peter Costello MP, Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia requesting the elimination of the fringe benefits tax (FBT) on HECS and tuition fees for scholarships and a review of how FBT relates to the impact on an individual's benefits such as Social Security or Veterans' Affairs income tests.

The response from Senator The Hon Helen Coonan, former Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer, did not agree to the removal of FBT for scholarship holders or participants in ATT programs. However, the Commonwealth changed the requirement that scholarship fees paid on behalf of students would be included as income under the Social Security or Veterans' Affairs income tests.

On 11 May 2004 a joint media statement from The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, then Minister for Education, Science and Training and Senator The Hon Kay Patterson, then Minister for Family and Community Services, advised that tuition fees would no longer be included as income under the social security income tests. Other expenses and allowances, such as the \$1,500 training allowance to meet the cost of incidentals and textbooks, continue to be included as income.

The Department again raised the issues related to FBT on teacher scholarships and sponsorships in its recent submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, *Inquiry into Teacher Education* and in evidence provided to the Committee.



### ***Recommendation 6***

***That the Department of Education and Training make public the findings of its 2006 evaluation of the Accelerated Teacher Training Program.***

#### **Response**

The findings of an evaluation of the Accelerated Teacher Training Program to be conducted in 2006 will be provided to interested parties.

### ***Recommendation 7***

***That the Professional Teaching Standards developed by the NSW Institute of Teachers clearly emphasise the fundamental links between teacher education, induction and continuing professional development.***

#### **Response**

Under the *Institute of Teachers Act 2004* the Standards encompass the Framework of Professional Teaching Standards, how they are applied, the accreditation process and teacher education – both initial and continuing.

The Framework of Professional Teaching Standards was the subject of a psychometric validation conducted by the University of New England. This ensured that the progression of complexity through the four stages of the Framework – Graduate Teacher, Professional Competence, Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership – is consistent, connected and logical.

An underlying principle of the Framework and the functions of the Institute is of a continuum of learning for teachers – from pre-service education, through induction into the profession after graduation, to maintenance and enhancement of expertise once accredited at Professional Competence.

The importance of continual learning is the basis of Element Six of the Framework:

*Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice.*

This element is described across the four stages, through three aspects:

1. capacity to analyse and reflect on practice
2. engagement in personal and collegial professional development
3. capacity to contribute to a professional community.

These aspects are explicated through a total of eight standards for each Stage.

For example, the seventh standard for each stage under this element is:

*Graduate Teacher:*

Explore educational ideas and issues through research.

*Professional Competence:*

Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional learning by exploring educational ideas, issues and research.

*Professional Accomplishment*

Build sustained contributions to developing effective teaching, curriculum and assessment practices by accessing and critiquing relevant research.

*Professional Leadership*

Take a leadership role in professional networks or associations and enhance the professional learning of teachers.

It is expected that this continual learning will be applied to the other six elements of the Framework:

*Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students.*

*Teachers know their students and how they learn.*

*Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning.*

*Teachers communicate effectively with their students.*

*Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills.*

*Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community.*

All of the elements are organised as described for Element 6 above.

The processes of approval of initial teacher education programs and the endorsement of providers of continuing professional development will ensure that initial and continuing teacher education are consistently aligned to the continuum inherent in the standards.

### Approval of Initial Teacher Education Programs

The Institute is finalising its *Policy and Procedures for Approval of Initial Teacher Education Programs*. Once endorsed by the Quality Teaching Council and the Minister, the Institute will begin approving programs. The policy includes these elements:

- Approval is mandatory if graduates are to be accorded provisional accreditation status.
- Approval is for a maximum of 5 years.
- Program documentation must demonstrate the explicit meeting of Graduate Teacher Standards through the curriculum, assessment and professional placement aspects of the program.

- Standards dealing with subject content and other key elements such as literacy and ICT must be explicitly met.
- Approval will be through the Initial Teacher Education Committee (ITEC) of the Institute which is broadly representative of the profession.
- Program documentation will be assessed by panels of teachers, academics and Institute staff, which will report to the ITEC; site visits may occur.

### Endorsement of Providers of Continuing Professional Development

The process for endorsing providers of continuing professional development requires providers to meet quality criteria (including addressing the standards) and provide a representative sample of courses and programs to the Institute.

Once endorsed, providers are able to register their courses on the Institute's public register.

The registration process requires providers to describe the outcomes and the professional teaching standards that are to be addressed by each course and program.

All accredited teachers will submit online evaluations of courses and programs. The evaluation will comprise common evaluation criteria and will seek satisfaction data on whether the course has addressed the professional teaching standards at the level of Professional Competence.

Teachers seeking recognition of professional development participation for maintenance of accreditation must submit their online evaluation for the Institute's database to register that they have completed a course or program. The database will not register that a teacher has completed the course or program without submission of the online evaluation.

The evaluation of the courses and programs will enable the Institute to monitor the quality of the professional development provision and to provide advice to providers about directions for improvement.

Where courses or programs are consistently evaluated as poor, the Institute will negotiate changes with the providers. If the provider is unable to improve the quality of the course or program, the course will be deregistered by the Institute.

### ***Recommendation 8***

***That the NSW Institute of Teachers incorporate practicum supervision into the standards as a key criterion for achieving professional accomplishment and professional leadership levels.***

#### **Response**

The rationale for this recommendation is the difficulty described by teacher educators to the Inquiry of finding placements for their students to fulfil the course practicum requirements.

To make practicum supervision mandatory for the attainment of the two higher levels may be problematic.

This may exclude teachers in schools which are not attached to universities for practicum placements such as geographically isolated schools.

It may also be unjust to experienced teachers in schools with a large number of beginning teachers. These experienced teachers could have a full workload supervising/mentoring the beginning teachers and be unable to take on the role of supervising practicums as well.

Supervision and mentoring of teacher education students can contribute to the achievement of Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership.

Examples of standards where assuming such a role would contribute to their achievement are:

#### ***Professional Accomplishment***

- 1.3.1 Exhibit and share comprehensive knowledge of the content/discipline(s) with other teachers to develop exemplary content-rich teaching activities and programs.
- 2.3.4 Exhibit and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and understanding of the skills, interests and prior achievements of students and the impact of these factors for learning.
- 5.3.5 Develop, apply and share with others a flexible repertoire of strategies for managing student behaviour and promoting student responsibility for learning and for appropriate conduct.

- 6.3.1 Model effective practices for systematically analysing and reflecting on individual teaching practice in relation to student learning outcomes.

*Professional Leadership*

- 3.4.2 Initiate or lead processes to develop exemplary teaching and learning programs to enhance learning outcomes.
- 4.4.5 Mentor teachers through sharing ideas about the creation, selection and use of appropriate teaching strategies and resources including ICT and other technologies to make content meaningful to individuals or groups of students.
- 6.4.4 Critically review research on best practice in teaching and learning to assist colleagues to further develop their teaching expertise.

It is acknowledged that these standards do not specifically identify student teachers. The Institute will make it clear in all support material for the higher levels that supervision and mentoring of student teachers will contribute towards the achievement of the standards.

***Recommendation 9***

***That the Department of Education and Training:***

- ***conduct and make public an evaluation of the Graduate Recruitment Program within 12 months of this report, focusing on how successful the Program has been in recruiting quality teachers***
- ***conduct and make public a long-term evaluation that considers the success of the Graduate Recruitment Program in recruiting quality teachers and retaining these teachers within the public education domain.***

**Response**

An evaluation of the 2005 Graduate Recruitment Program was conducted. The evaluation report will be available in 2006 to interested parties. An evaluation of the 2006 Graduate Recruitment Program has commenced.

### ***Recommendation 10***

***That the Department of Education and Training ensure that overseas-trained teachers have the same access to a comprehensive mentor and induction program that other beginning teachers have, to ensure that these teachers attain the necessary standards set out in the Institute's Framework of Professional Standards.***

#### ***Response***

Overseas trained teachers currently have access to the same mentor and induction programs offered to other beginning teachers. Further communication will be provided to teachers and principals to reinforce this.

### ***Recommendation 11***

***That the Department of Education and Training consider the removal of the fee currently attached to any additional training required by overseas-trained teachers.***

#### ***Response***

The *Pre-employment Program for Overseas Trained Teachers* is being reviewed. This recommendation will be considered as part of the review.

### ***Recommendation 12***

***That the Department of Education and Training ensure that programs targeted towards rural and regional schools in New South Wales meet the specific needs of schools and teachers in these areas.***

#### ***Response***

The Department offers a range of programs to recruit teachers to rural and regional schools.

The programs, under the banner of Explore Your Future, include the Beyond the Line and Rural Professional Experience programs. Beyond the Bridge is also used to promote teaching in western and south western Sydney.

The incentives offered by the Department to encourage teachers to work in rural and regional schools are promoted by teach.NSW. These are also available to all current and prospective teachers through the teach.NSW site.

Teachers appointed to schools which attract incentive benefits have easy online access to the benefits calculator to be able to determine which benefits apply to their appointments.

In 2005 the expenditure for the Department on a range of incentives programs (retention benefits scheme, rental subsidies both for Teacher Housing Authority (THA) accommodation and privately rented accommodation, additional leave for personal and family commitments and locality and isolation allowance) was approximately \$9,295 million. This expenditure comprised of:

- (i) 164 teachers were paid the Retention Benefit at 27 schools, at a cost of \$781, 500.
- (ii) Approximately 772 individual teachers at 6 and 8 point schools received a rental subsidy for THA accommodation for some proportion of the year. The average occupancy by teachers for THA premises each month was approximately 570. The total cost of the subsidy was \$2, 776 million.
- (iii) 207 individual teachers were paid a subsidy for privately rented accommodation for some proportion of the year, at a total cost of \$580,000. The maximum number of teachers at any one time who were in receipt of rental subsidy for privately rented accommodation was 136.
- (iv) \$677,000 for the cost of casual relief for personal leave (incentive schools)
- (v) \$4, 480 million on locality and isolation allowances.

Under the current Staffing Agreement and Teachers' Award, the Department will be undertaking a review of incentives for teachers in public schools.

### ***Recommendation 13***

***That the Department of Education and Training evaluate the effectiveness of the employment waiting list, taking into account the recommendations of the Ramsey Review and that the Department make the results of the evaluation public.***

### **Response**

The Department conducts a review of the employment list every few years to identify those teachers on the list who still actively want to teach in NSW public schools.

As a result of the most recent survey conducted in 2005, the list has been reduced from over 21,000 teacher applicants to under 16,000 teacher applicants. This still ensures adequate numbers to meet the Department's staffing needs.

As part of the Staffing Agreement negotiated between the Department and the Teachers Federation which came into effect in Term 2, 2005, a number of new initiatives were implemented to provide schools with greater flexibility to select teachers who best meet the needs of the schools. One of these related to a new way of using the employment list. Under this initiative, principals have the option to request the names of the top five applicants on the employment list when filling positions from the list, to enable them to interview each of those applicants and select the applicant that best meets the needs of the school.

Regular action will continue to be taken to ensure the currency of the waiting list.

#### ***Recommendation 14***

***That the Department of Education and Training provide a specific funding allocation to schools for teacher induction and review the efficacy of its current induction resources.***

#### **Response**

At the commencement of the 2004 school year the Government began a four year program in which \$36 million annually is provided to schools and regions to develop professional learning strategies and programs responsive to schools' local needs. Under the *Professional Learning Policy* all schools have funding to support the implementation of induction programs. Supporting beginning teachers is a priority for the use of this funding. Supporting early career teachers will remain a priority for expenditure of Teacher Professional Learning funds. The school based induction policy has been implemented since 2004.

During 2006–2007, school based induction programs will be supported by a comprehensive professional learning framework, including programs and courses aligned to the NSW Professional Teaching Standards. School based induction will also be strengthened by school leadership programs to enhance the support of early career teachers to achieve the Professional Teaching Standards. This support will draw on evaluation of current programs and strategies as well as research in the field of teacher professional learning and support for early career teachers.



### **Recommendation 15**

***That the Government expand the Teacher Mentor Program to ensure that all schools have adequate mentoring support for their beginning teachers and commit necessary funds to support the expanded program.***

### **Response**

New teachers in all public schools are supported by school based induction programs. Induction includes orientation to the Department and to the school, as well as a school based induction program involving structured supervision, collegial support, mentoring and professional networking.

The Department's *Professional Learning Policy Induction Guidelines for newly appointed teachers* support schools in planning and implementing induction programs. Under the *Professional Learning Policy*, all schools have funding to support the implementation of induction programs. Supporting beginning teachers is a priority for use of this funding.

Regional teams support schools to develop greater consistency as well as flexibility in school based programs. Regional teams work with schools to build the leadership capacity of principals, head teachers and assistant principals to implement school based programs which are constructive and effective.

The Government has committed \$36 million annually to schools for teacher professional learning. Schools in more remote rural areas of NSW receive an annual per capita allocation of \$1,000 per teacher to support teacher professional learning compared with metropolitan schools which receive an annual per capita allocation of \$600 per teacher.

Newly appointed Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander teachers are supported in the same way as all new teachers and receive additional support through mentoring and a newly appointed ATSI teachers' conference.

While mentoring is one of the strategies used to support all teachers as part of induction programs, the Department has also developed a specific *Teacher Mentor Program*. In response to the evaluation of the 2003–2004 Pilot Teacher Mentor Program, the Government endorsed the refinement and expansion of the program for 2005–2006. This program has a budget of approximately \$5.5 million and now supports 58 teacher mentors working with significant numbers of new teachers in 90 schools across NSW in metropolitan and rural locations.

One of the focus areas of the 2005–2006 Teacher Mentor Program is to investigate ways of providing teacher mentor support to more new teachers.