

Personal accounts shared by teachers

I thank the Hon Wes Fang for his expression of concern for female teachers subjected to sexual harassment in their schools. It is heartening to see our parliamentarians taking this issue seriously.

Unfortunately, it was difficult to hear the line of questioning from Mr Fang at the Committee hearing due to an audio delay, which made it challenging to respond adequately to specific questions. I thank the Committee for this opportunity to provide a more complete response.

The limited information I shared with the Committee was shared with me in personal communication from teachers in their schools after my sessions with students. Some information was also shared in correspondence with me.

I refer to p. 33 of the transcript where I mentioned more female teachers leaving the profession and the three younger female teachers I'd met last year who said they were exiting teaching. I stated: *"They're propositioned, they're sexually groaned at and moaned at, they've had photos taken down their blouses, under their skirts. They've been turned into AI deepfake image-based sexual abuse, deepfake sexual abuse, and those images are being shared. This is also happening to girls..."* This was a generalised comment relating to multiple teachers – not limited to the three teachers I had referred to.

Mostly when teachers share with me personally at the end of a session, there is not a lot of time to gather full information. Some female teachers - such as those I mentioned - are speaking quietly, conscious of other teachers still around or students still leaving or coming in for the next class and some are tearful. It is not the case that I have been able to sit down with them for a lengthy interview regarding their experience.

I note that, when I receive a disclosure from a student, if it is appropriate to do so, I let the student know that I may have an obligation to report what they tell me. Where relevant, I follow up with the school as to whether the matter has been, or is being, reported to police. I then make a decision about whether I need to make a report myself.

However, with respect to the teachers I have communicated with, I have had to take other considerations into account. Most importantly, they have shared information with me confidentially as adults (this is also why I did not wish to provide any potentially identifying information to the Committee. These communications have been in circumstances where I believed they did not wish me to report to police, or in circumstances where I believed the matter had already been reported. In many cases, I hear nothing further about these matters, including whether or not they were investigated or the outcome of any investigation. I am sorry I have no further information to provide on where any of these cases are up to.

In conclusion I thank you once again for the opportunity to address you and provide further information.

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