

Submission
No 46

INQUIRY INTO THE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS

Organisation:

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Theme:

Summary

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Submission into the Recruitment and Training of Teachers

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for this opportunity to indicate how successfully the recruitment process works for NSW Public Schools

My Background

I have been employed by DET NSW for over 38 years as teacher, Assistant Primary Principal, Primary Principal 5.

My choice for both my children has been to send them exclusively to NSW Public Schools, I similarly have chosen to stay as a staff member in the NSW Public School system.

Therefore it is important to consider **my dissatisfaction** with the DET recruitment program and the way they are staffed from a Principal's point of view and as a father of someone who is being treated at this point poorly by DET, as are a number of her fellow newly graduated students.

My Daughter's Experience

During the past 4 years my wife and I encouraged our daughter to attend the University of Newcastle to complete an Early Childhood double teaching degree. She is passionate about teaching younger students in the public school system but has no problems with teaching older primary students.

Armed with Teach NSW information she set about on this journey.

Teach NSW told her and I quote;

"If you are a graduate of one of the *approved early childhood teacher education programs* that cover *all of the primary key learning areas* and *provide in-school experience with students up to Year 6*, you will be eligible for employment in NSW public pre-schools and primary schools from Kindergarten to Year 6."

Reference : MAKE THE BEST DECISION OF YOUR LIFE. BECOME AN EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER IN A NSW PUBLIC SCHOOL. Visit our website www.teach.nsw.edu.au Contact us now on 1300 300 498"

She was told that her accreditation would be for K-6 but specifically K-2 and that if she worked hard the graduate recruitment program would likely reward her, especially if she ticked teach anywhere in NSW (we are constantly told there is a shortage out west). Her box was ticked – she would be glad of a job in the Riverina, in Broken Hill, up the road wherever.

However her studies have now ended she is ready to teach. She **has not been offered a placement** despite receiving honours at Newcastle University in this double degree.

The reasons???

- The NSW DET have only given her K-2 status and have refused her application to be coded as K-6. Why?
- The criteria above suggest all early childhood double degree students have been treated in an unfair way.

- Recruitment seem to believe that early childhood degrees equate to only preschool teaching or K-2 if no 3-6 teachers want them. They don't seem to understand these students including my daughter have worked their practicums and full 10 week internships in PRIMARY SCHOOLS. They may have taught K-2 but have been working playground duty with all students, working with K-6 staff, can teach casually 3-6 at will.
- Primary principals when giving staffing codes tend to always use K-6 in their descriptors, even though they want someone specifically with K-2 background. So of course they use K-6, K-2 then **Early childhood trained students tend to be overlooked.**
- For some strange reason only known to staffing Primary students seem to qualify for K-6, K-2 and 3-6, whereas recruitment seem to treat early childhood students as K-2 but not K-6.

My daughter has been told 3 different interpretations from 3 different recruitment – staffing personnel. They all have different interpretations and are not on the “same page”.

1. You should be K-6 and K-2 – just apply (which she did and was rejected)
2. You need to go back to university and study for 5 years
3. You need to do 400 days teaching in primary as a casual and you may receive accreditation

If you get the statistics from DET I would imagine there are very few Double Degree Early Childhood teachers who are recruited in their first years of teaching – the majority are primary because of the “wonky” interpretation of recruitment – staffing codes that still believe

1. early childhood means preschool and before
2. primary means 3-6 (when in fact it really is K-6)

Yet as quoted above the Teach NSW brochures and information clearly indicates all these students going through the University of Newcastle double degree course ARE entitled to K-6 and K-2 codes..

Last time I checked we have primary schools (K-6) not like 30 years ago – infant (K-2) and primary (3-6) schools. Young teachers were trained with the K-6 Board documents, they have worked in our Primary schools during full internship. They should not be discriminated against because they have a zest to teach our young students – they should be rewarded.

Let me pose one final suggestion for your research. Bob Carr promotes “twenty is plenty”. If Primary students are allowed K-6, K-2, 3-6 but Early Childhood are EXPERTS at K-2 how many have actually been employed on these kinder classes.

I suggest that if you looked at University qualified teachers in NSW the majority of K-2 staff WERE NOT early childhood trained.

My daughter has an appeal regarding her not being allowed to quote K-6 codes but only specifically K-2. One staffing officer asked me “has she appealed”. When asked if you had to appeal to have the code granted, the response was “yes”. In fact out of speaking to a large number of people this was the only staffing officer who indicated there was an appeal process. How many “keen, bright eyed and enthusiastic” teachers are feeling disillusioned and let down by a system that promised them so much for 4 years.

I hope you take on board the seriousness of this situation. My daughter has been dismayed with the way DET have treated her, she has not applied to any other system as she believed the “hype” she was

fed by an organisation that seems to fill heads with dreams, visions and promises but has problems delivering their own promises.

Bruce Carter