

**INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH
WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 20 June 2022

Partially
Confidential

Good Afternoon,

My name is _____ and I have been a Primary School Teacher working for NSW Catholic Schools continuously from September 1991 until the end of 2021. For twenty of the thirty years that I have spent in education, I was a leader holding the honourable position of Assistant Principal for a period during this time as well as other curriculum leadership positions across several Sydney Catholic schools.

The teaching profession has given me everything that I have. I was fortunate to meet my wife through my job and we now have 4 beautiful children. Becoming a teacher was especially significant to me as I was the first member of my family to seek and achieve a University Degree. It was also significant because when I was 18 I had a serious lung operation and I was told that I would never be able to pursue a career as a teacher. The Australian Catholic University would not admit me to their course. Fortunately, I was able to prove them wrong and as such, teaching in a primary school classroom has become my lifelong passion and commitment.

At the end of 2021, I was forced to go on LWOP for 2022 or face being sacked from my employment for refusing to be vaccinated against COVID 19. I made the decision not to be vaccinated after having two friends have severe reactions to the vaccine. Another friend had a child that had a very serious adverse reaction and he commented to me that he wished that he had asked my questions like I was. The majority of the reactions involved clotting and as I had some clotting issues after my lung operation, I was very scared and worried to become vaccinated myself. I sought medical advice from my doctors but as I had moved out of Sydney two years earlier, I didn't feel that I had a great rapport with my new doctor and as such our communication broke down. Since this time, I have read report after report from doctors both in Australia and abroad, about the COVID vaccine adverse reactions and their call for the vaccine mandates to end. In some cases, I have read medical reports calling for the entire vaccine rollout to end.

I did not make the decision raised above lightly. As I mentioned, I am a father of four dependent children and making such a decision would ultimately affect those that I care about. Also, as someone that had always been vaccinated since childhood, I want to make it clear that I had nothing personal against vaccination up until this whole situation.

I now find myself, through what I believe to be no fault of my own, unable to contribute to education in a way that I have always given myself. There has been no recognition of rights for making an informed choice about a medical procedure that I am genuinely scared of. In fact, for the past year all I have heard is the punitive measures that should be handed down to the unvaccinated. Some world leaders, including those in Australia as well as many colleagues, friends and family have expressed a desire to do some awful things to the unvaccinated. In an era where our governments are striving to protect all of the different minority groups in our society, there are no other groups that are currently treated like the unvaccinated who are a minority that for one reason or another have chosen not to modify their immune system with a pharmaceutical product that you can't sue if you have an adverse reaction. There is no understanding or compassion for anyone who holds this opinion. People are permitted to talk about us in the worst terms that you can talk about people, in politics, the media and in society in general. All of this leads to the lack of recognition for the basic rights of all individuals which is something that I thought all governments in western society were striving to achieve.

Unfortunately as demonstrated by this submission, the Catholic Church and its leadership have demonstrated that they are in lockstep with the governments position of handing out punitive

measures to those Catholics who have made this choice. All of this even though the vaccinated in our society can also transmit the disease.

I will never walk away from my employment as I still believe that I have a great deal to offer the profession. I'm not in the job for money but I am in the job to make a difference in the lives of the children and families that I work with. So if my employment is to be terminated then I will appreciate the fact that for 30 years, I taught my students about Jesus Christ and the fact that he accepted all people and that he preferred to be with the outcast and marginalised in our society. I will also hold my head high knowing that throughout those 30 years, I taught children to stand up and say NO to things that made them uncomfortable. NO to bullies, NO to drugs, NO to cigarettes, NO to alcohol and most importantly a promotion of Catholic Values when it came to love, sex and our human body.

Finally, I have loved every minute of my journey as a Catholic Educator and as a Catholic. I am a good person despite what society is telling me. As I mentioned, the profession has given me so much as a human being and being a Catholic for 52 years has given me all that I have today. Whatever the outcome of the decision made about mandates, I am comfortable with my journey and if the decision is that I am to be terminated, then you need to know that the profession stands to lose someone that stands ready and willing to work and to contribute to building a great education system in NSW.

I do hope and pray that sanity prevails and that the NSW Parliament and all employers drop these terrible mandates. They have ripped apart the fabric of our beautiful country and it is just time to move forward from this horrible chapter.

Your Sincerely