

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I have been working as a teacher in New South Wales for the past 9 years. Before that, I studied teaching in university for 4.5 years. Being 31, I can say that I have dedicated a large portion of my life to this profession. I am a very dedicated teacher who sacrifices plenty of my personal time to ensure my students are being provided with quality learning experiences. The students are my biggest priority, and through my role, I work very hard to ensure that their needs are being met, whether this be their educational, social, emotional etc. I am extremely passionate about my role as an educator. These mandates have absolutely crushed me. Last year when they were imposed on us, I was 7 months pregnant. I had to suddenly choose between my career or risking the well-being of my unborn child. I say risking because there is no long term research on the effects these vaccines have on foetuses or newborns. There is no telling if these vaccines will have detrimental effects on children's development down the track. They were conditionally approved and basically an experiment. Yet, I was still forced to choose between risking my child's well-being in order to keep my job. I chose my child's well-being over the vaccine. I had heard of many incidents where miscarriage or stillbirth occurred following the vaccine, my sister in law being one of them, and I did not want to risk this. The stress caused was immense and I had to take sick leave and commence my maternity leave early due to this. The stress was not relieved as I knew I could be contacted by PES at any moment. The news continued of the investigations. One of my colleagues ended up being terminated from her permanent position, and all I could think about was when my time was to come. In a time where I should have been relaxed and focused on bonding with my newborn child, all I could think about was when I would be receiving my possible notice of termination. Thankfully I hadn't received anything while being on maternity leave. I have also heard of many women who had their menstrual cycles affected. As someone who wants to continue to grow their family, this absolutely petrifies me. The anxiety I am going through because of this is immense. I know that I now have to potentially risk my fertility in order to return to work next year. Myself and many other teachers are being coerced into taking a vaccine that has absolutely no effect on preventing transmission or lessening virus symptoms is absolutely nonsensical. Why is a workplace allowed to choose what happens to their employees bodies? Why is our bodily autonomy being revoked. The covid case numbers when everything opened should have been enough to show that the vaccine does not do what it is meant to. Every man and his dog caught covid, both vaccinated and unvaccinated. I am not against the vaccine being available. Those who wish to get it to feel safe should be allowed to have it. But those who do not want it should also have their wishes respected. The misinformation needs to stop. Me as an unvaccinated individual working with students does not pose any more of a threat than a vaccinated teacher. The vaccine has done nothing to help reduce covid cases amongst teachers within schools. Why aren't unvaccinated teachers allowed to work? The students are unvaccinated. The parents and visitors are also unvaccinated. They are all allowed on school grounds. If I was to enter school grounds, I would have the police called on me. Is this how we treat teachers who have been working tirelessly to teach their students? I wasn't deemed a risk for the past two years and was allowed to work with children during covid, yet from last November onwards, I suddenly became a risk. If I am able to return next year, I will need to have a risk assessment in place. The whole thing is illogical. I am extremely disappointed in how not just myself, but all teachers who chose not to get the vaccine have been treated. The Department of Education should be ashamed of themselves. I used to be proud working for them, now I'm just disappointed.