

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

To whom it may concern,

I've been working in education for over 13 years and was recently terminated over the mandates. This has had a detrimental effect on my personal life, finances and professional career. At the time I was working as a permanent full time Year 2 classroom teacher in a small school when the mandates came into place. I was more than happy to work all through 2020 and 2021 when there was a lot of free floating anxiety amongst the community.

At the time of the announcement I was having a baby and decided to take a bit of extra parental leave. Unfortunately, there was no consultation with me about any of my concerns that I had regarding the vaccination mandates, and after working for the organisation for over 11 years I was appalled to be terminated via email. I was also told that the school would ring the police if I was to step foot on site to collect my belongings. There was also another staff member who was terminated for the same reasons. I'm still in contact with the school and aware that my job has not been filled after two whole school terms. It seems they are unable to find a suitable replacement.

I've currently been working in a different system using my temporary medical exemption. Whilst working at this school I have witnessed first hand a lot of vaccinated teachers getting sick and having time off school. There has also been a lot of students away for extended periods. A lot of sick staff/parents are saying the flu is far worse than covid yet unvaccinated teachers are still not allowed on site. The year 4/5 class that I'm currently teaching has already had two teachers this year leave. One went on paternity leave and the other was a casual teacher who returned back to the US. It's only the end of term 2 and this amount of disruption is unheard of. Unfortunately with the unscientific mandates in place I'm afraid my exemption will run out very soon and this poor class will be onto their fourth teacher for the year. I can't explain how difficult it must be for these students having to deal with all of this disruption. It's without a doubt having a huge impact on their learning. I'm seeing first hand so many gaps in the students learning which I'm sure is areas that they have missed in the past two years because of remote learning. The parents/students need continuity or at least some assurance they will have a teacher who won't leave due to sacking or any other reason.

At this school there's at least 20% of classes being taught by casual teachers. There's also daily collapsing of subjects (which means that they are unable to find a teacher to teach particular subjects). Usually two teachers a day are unable to be replaced therefore the students are split and go off to other classes, or if it's a specialist teacher (Music, STEM, Library) it is collapsed. Often the time that teachers would have then to work on planning is missed or has to be made up later in their own personal time.

As an experienced teacher, it's been so difficult watching the shortages due to mandates, when even fully vaccinated teachers are taking sick leave and there are no casuals available to replace them. It absolutely breaks my heart. I feel for the quality of education that our future are missing out on. The students should be front and centre of every policy decision that is made. Right now it seems they are on the receiving end of popularity games from politicians who have no clue or regard for our next generation.

It's an absolute disgrace that our children have to endure the disastrous failed policies which have been unscientific and unreasonable measures put in place especially when they are in fact the healthiest and least at risk from Covid in the community. Shame on our politicians and education departments!