

**Submission
No 43**

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Parliament of New South Wales Inquiry into Teacher shortages in New South Wales.

It is my opinion that this is a very important inquiry.

I have two suggestions that I would like to put to the committee for their consideration . It is my view that if these suggestions are followed up and developed into government policy they could help overcome the present crisis in teacher shortages.As well I have a third suggestion for a short term solution to the crisis faced. For the purposes of this submission I have been brief in the outline of my proposals.I believe the brief outline of suggestions is sufficient for the Inquiry Committee to decide if they have merit.I would be honoured to support the committee with further information and to support the development of the suggestions into policy if required.

1. Reintroduce a Teachers Scholarship program.

The features of the Scholarship program which operated in the 1960s could be replicated and moderated to provide a long term solution to the teacher shortage crisis.

Features of the Scholarship program included:

-Education authorities decide future needs eg. Secondary Maths teachers, Music teachers,Primary School teachers, and so on.

-Scholarships of varying length of training are offered annually to HSC students in NSW.

-A living allowance is paid to Scholarship recipients during their training.

- HECS fees are paid for Scholarship recipients.

-Scholarship recipients are required to serve for up to five years in NSW schools where required. If they fail to do this they are responsible for their HECS debt.

2. Reduce the number of schools in NSW

If you reduce the number of schools in NSW you reduce the number of teachers required. The Australian and NSW governments basically fund anyone who wants to set up a school. This has created a situation of wasteful duplication. This is particularly the case in rural areas but occurs in our cities . In 2007 I was involved in a demographic study of schools in the New England / NorthWest for the NSW Catholic Education Commission. The study is out of date but the duplication will have increased. The study is available to the Inquiry if required.

A couple of examples illustrate this duplication. Why would a small country town like Mungindi have two primary schools ? Have a look at the number of government funded primary schools in Armidale.

3. Possible short term solution.

For the last couple of years I have suggested to the NSW Minister for Education's Office that a program be developed to encourage retired teachers to go to NSW country schools for a term. My main motivation here was to alleviate the staffing crisis at Walgett Community College. As with my other suggestions this one needs strong community backing but I believe it would be successful if properly administered.