

**Submission
No 81**

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Mrs Kathleen Schlenker

Date Received: 23 June 2022

I graduated from University of Sydney in 1997 with a Bachelor of Education- Secondary: Science and have worked as a Science teacher for the Department of Education since then.

For 25 years I have strived to make a difference to each student I taught and was dedicated to my profession.

Over the years I have undertaken professional development to improve my skills and knowledge. I have been committed to public education with all four of my children either having gone through or currently in public schools.

Having left a permanent position in Sydney in order to provide a better lifestyle for my family it took 10 years working in a temporary or casual basis in the school I am currently at before I was awarded permanency there just prior to the vaccine mandate.

As a science teacher I had researched both the technology and the data and did not feel that the vaccination had sufficient safety data or efficacy and was not willing to take it. It deeply disturbed me that my bodily autonomy was no longer valid for my employment.

The threatened loss of my career/profession led to a mental breakdown which I have had to access professional help for. I am still currently still on leave with the Department of Education.

I have strived to recover and have been deemed fit to transition back to work and I have also been provided a post-Covid exemption having completed a blood test that confirmed I have antibodies.

However the Department is refusing to allow me to return to work as I am not vaccinated, stating it is still a condition of my employment.