INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I studied by correspondence while my children were young (for 10 years), graduated and entered the profession to make a difference to young lives and give them the best possible education in a regional area. Sadly, within 2 years of being a full time primary teacher, despite my altruistic intentions, I was completely burnt out. As an early career teacher I was given virtually no support as I navigated my way around the classroom and profession. I would sit up until midnight planning, preparing, creating slides, sourcing resources, marking and assessing student work and keeping on top of the never ending parent emails and adjustments for our personal plan students. I was unable to travel with my young sons to sport on weekends because I had a never ending workload to complete- I even took my Chromebook on our annual one week holiday to the coast so I could do some work when the family was having downtime between visits to the beach- again, because I had so much to do and would have been stressed at the thought of not doing some work that week and being further behind when we got home. I entered the profession with the best of intentions, but now I am a casual teacher. I can walk in and walk out, I don't have the never ending prep, planning and marking- and I have my family life back. My family will always be more important to me than my job- how sad that I had to choose between the two. Teachers are leaving the profession in droves and I know why- I was nearly a casualty of the system too. The government needs to do something to address these issues, and they need to do it quickly. The teacher shortage crisis is only set to worsen, and then where will the country and education be?? Heed the warnings and act now. To me, it wasn't about wanting more money, it was about work-life balance. I love this job, but will never go back to full time employment while the working conditions remain as they are.