

Submission
No 135

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Attention Parliamentarians,

I am a teacher in my late 20s who has been teaching for 6 years in NSW public high schools. In this time, my job has been both a source of joy and heartache. The challenge and low rate of gaining permanency in the public school sector has been exceptionally demoralising. Knowing that no matter how hard I work, it often remains unrecognised and underappreciated. Fortunately, despite many years of written applications that were unsuccessful, I successfully gained permanency at the beginning of 2020 via merit selection. This was not an easy thing to do, this was one of the most difficult times of my life. I am one of the rare ones.

It is not easy to be in a profession, that is often treated quite harshly by members of the public however, as teachers, we love what we do and often grin and bear it. It is not easy to comply with both NESA and Department mandates, the expectation that we must complete new mandatory training but not be provided with the time and resources to do so. It is not easy to plan lessons everyday, mark assessments or student work, write and develop new, engaging programs and comply with all administrative aspects deemed 'mandatory' (often by people that have education background) but we do it.

My contractual hours are 8:55-3:00pm. During that time I usually teach 4 out of 5 one hour periods. My single free period is usually spent organising the next days lessons, trying to keep at least one day ahead. I have 2 X half hour breaks that are usually spent either managing behavioural or welfare issues or on playground supervision. When do I mark? When do I write assessments? When do I develop resources to engage and inspire my students? When do I complete mandatory training? When do I complete administrative tasks? In my own time of course.

I arrive most days at 7:30 (almost an hour and a half before my first lesson) and leave (if I'm lucky around 3:30. This is 2 hours of unpaid time I am working everyday, so I can avoid taking my work home with me. That's 10 hours a week. 100 hours over a 10 week term. 400 hours a year. Which other professions expect this much unpaid time? Just to accomplish day to day tasks.

My school is at the point where it has sent out emails on a Sunday, discouraging people to avoid taking the following day off as they could not employ casual and relief teachers. Is this okay? Certainly not. But this is our reality. Classes of children remain unsupervised and not taught due to me taking a single sick day. Other teachers are having their loads added to, to make up for the fact that I am sick. Is it fair? Certainly not, to students or staff.

We are at a crisis point in education were the situation could be fixed or continue to decline. If it continues to decline, there will be less university graduates and more staff leaving the profession in search of better workplace conditions.

The teachers Federation and IEU have presented simple ways to manage this ever complicated problem. Increase our wage to match inflation (at least). This not only retains staff through showing that we are valued, but also attracts more teachers into the profession. Decrease face hours by 2 hours! This is not a lot but it is the difference between completing a lot of work at home versus a little. Lastly, but most importantly, I would encourage a review of NESA mandatory training, compliance policies and administration tasks that they deem essential. Every year this is getting added to without any time for teachers to complete.

Without these changes, I cannot say with any certainty that I will remain a teacher.