

Submission
No 137

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 3 July 2022

Partially
Confidential

I had been working at our local Public School since 2006. I had regular casual work and temporary contracts.

In July last year, I felt happy and confident. Although the workload was increasing, I felt I was doing my job well. Parents were happy and the students in my class loved coming to school. I was frequently told that parents wanted their children to be in my class. During Learning From Home, I was in regular contact with my class and the parents. I was making up additional work packs for children who wither were struggling or who needed more work.

The Principal asked us to put in an Expression of Interest for work in 2022 that was to be submitted by 20 September 2022 - I had this in well before time.

In November, I had responded to a notice asking if we needed new furniture or anything else for our classrooms - the response I received shocked me. I was informed via email that I did not have a position in the school "due to a change in the number of temporary positions available".

I was aware of at least one staff member who did not submit an Expression of Interest", yet she was offered a position. I am also aware of two others who had to get an exemption because they hadn't completed their degree.

When I went to the Teacher's Federation, I was told that a Principal can appoint who they wish to and it isn't necessary to have an Expression of Interest.

I tried to organise a meeting and was offered two dates. I chose the first but then was told she had another meeting at that time and offered me another date - the last day of school (- when I was cleaning out my classroom and having my last day with my students.

Apparently, the position I was acting in was being advertised. After the interview process, the successful applicant decided not to take it so the then vacant position (one term on a Kindergarten class) was offered to a RETIRED casual who was at school for the day. I might add at this point that I am trained in InitialLit (the Literacy program at the school) and she was not.

The position was then filled by a temporary teacher at the school who had been offered to teach a Year 2 class. So the position had to be filled by another teacher - who is also not trained in InitialLit.

I spent the last few weeks of Term 4 2021 with the Executive staff and Principal basically ignoring or avoiding me.

I wrote an email again (as NOBODY had come to speak to me face to face) asking what I had done wrong. The reply I received was that "as previously stated to you on the 4th of November, there was a change in the number of temporary positions available due to positions becoming vacant and subsequently advertised to be filled permanently. This was the case for the position you are currently in this year and the reason you were not offered a position in 2022. I now consider this matter to be finalised"

I was completely devastated. I had never been under review. I barely had a sick day - in fact I have accumulated over 40 sick days - which I have now lost. I did my job and all that was required of me.

I got to a point where I was struggling to go to work and was in a 'dark' place. I struggled to get through the last few weeks, write reports etc yet did what I had to for the sake of my students.

I never wanted to teach again yet had to find a job.

Do you know how hard it is for a 55 year old to apply for work when I had no idea what I wanted to do. My confidence was non existent.

I applied for a job in Day Care - where my pay is less than half of what it was.

Fortunately, I had good friends who work at the local Catholic School. They boosted my self esteem and I have been doing some casual work there.

When I lodged a formal complaint with the school, I was informed once again that there was a lack of temporary positions and that there were "other applicants better suited to the positions" - they would be the ones who had just finished University - one has since resigned because she found trying to work and study was too difficult.

When I went to the area director, he just kept telling me that the Principal has the right to choose.

I do not believe I was treated fairly and have no idea what to do.

I have also lost access to my DET emails, Google Classroom (that I had a lot of my work in) and SAP Portal with my leave balances.

I have contacted HR and they told me I need to be connected with a school. When I requested this, I was told (by the Principal) to contact HR again.

I feel defeated and like I have nowhere else to turn.

There are teachers at that school who do not do their job properly. One staff member in particular, is an AP - how on earth she still has a job defies belief.

The way she speaks to the children and staff is disgusting. She was banned from a local pub for fighting with a former parent in the main street. It seems as though she can do what she likes - she has permanency. As a casual/temporary teacher - I have no rights at all..