

**Submission
No 145**

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Date Received: 3 July 2022

The on-paper offer of \$110k a year, 35-hour work weeks and 12 weeks of 'holidays' isn't keeping teachers in the classroom or attracting students to the profession. This is the point where we have to ask why that is.

The teaching job listed above doesn't exist in reality. New teachers are dropping out in droves after finding the reality of what awaits them in the classroom, before school, after school, at home, on the weekend, and during the holidays. Fewer and fewer school leavers and career changers are opting for teaching. Those that are leave teaching before finishing their degree or within the first few years.

Improving conditions will help stop the burnout and keep teachers in the classroom, but we can't provide them without qualified teachers to fill positions. Increasing pay is a huge draw card to get people into the profession. That is why we are fighting for both. Canobolas High was granted two full-time casuals to help reduce the 2000 hours of merged and minimal supervision that has happened this year. They haven't been able to fill either position. Next term my school is collapsing a class, not from a lack of students, we just didn't get a single qualified applicant after an extensive search.

The fewer teachers we have, the less likely it is your children will have a qualified teacher in their classroom. Canobolas High School has had over 2000 hours of classes merged or with minimal supervision this year. That doesn't take into account the time when teachers are covering subjects they aren't qualified for. I've heard the same story for Dubbo and Mudgee high schools. The profession is in crisis.

Further reductions in qualifications or money wasted on poaching teachers from other systems won't solve the core issues. They've already wasted \$16 million to get one teacher, who quit after a month. Performance pay has been tried and failed across systems around the world. It isn't the answer, and if it is, they asked the wrong question.

The teacher shortage is going to have a profound effect on generations of children, one that is going to harm the most vulnerable students and families who will not receive the same standard of education as those in easier to staff schools.

The message from teachers is clear, raise the pay, and improve the conditions.