

**Submission
No 176**

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Miss Kylie O'Brien

Date Received: 18 July 2022

My name is Kylie O'Brien and I am a proud Yuin woman living on Darug country. Following a career change, I was the first in family to attend University. I proudly graduated with a Bachelor of Arts/Master of Teaching. I incorrectly assumed that this would ensure I would be accepted into my chosen profession of education, and I would be able to make a difference in the lives of children.

Since graduating I have worked continuously however have not been able to secure permanent employment. I have taken on considerable numerous activities to ensure that I am a preferred candidate for vacancies that may arise. This includes choir, debating, public speaking, sport, Learning & Support and lunch clubs. I have maintained all legal requirements for my role as a teacher including Professional Learning and Working with Children clearance.

Whilst the fact that I am employed may be enough for some, it is not for me. I am qualified to work in a profession that is crying out for staff. At the school I am at we do not have enough teachers and cannot secure casuals to cover absences. Yet, I cannot obtain a permanent teaching position that will provide me with job security.

Each year, I have to await the decision of the Principal to find out if I will have employment for the following year. This is unsettling and unfair. I want to be a permanent teacher in a school and I want to make a difference however I am currently questioning my chosen profession.

The ability for a teacher to work in a school and learn the culture and school community is paramount - Not all schools are the same and often staff are appointed to a school where they have never worked only to realise that they do not fit – they then seek a transfer, and another vacancy is created.

I have been at my current school for 2 years and am currently awaiting that tumultuous time when my Principal decides if there is enough funding and a position for me to fill for 2023. This can take until the final week of school – the week before Christmas, making plans impossible and stress high.

In a profession where there are alleged vacancies, yet there are many teachers who cannot secure a permanent appointment, it seems that as qualified teachers we have no alternative but to leave the profession.