

Submission
No 190

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Attracting new teachers and retaining current teachers is difficult when the workload is unsustainable. My staff are arriving at school between 7 and 7:30 every morning, working with no breaks and leaving between 5 and 6 each evening. In addition to this they are taking work home, coming in or working from home on the weekends and spending days of their 'holidays' completing administrative compliance tasks or preparing for the following term. Despite all these hours the job is never actually done. The expectation to cater for all learning needs of all children in your class, while managing the increasingly complex mental health needs of students is a huge demand in itself. On top of this teachers are expected to run extracurricular activities, overnight excursions, dance performances (at night), train sporting teams, run sporting carnivals, extend high potential students, assist and support students with learning difficulties and create positive educational partnerships with all parents. Teachers must also engage students with disabilities, ranging from autism to cerebral palsy. This can include having a child who can not cope with noise and another child who makes noise constantly in the same room, a child whose anxiety means they can not engage in classroom activities, a child whose mental health leads them to self-harm, fears a child will take their own life, having a nonverbal child whose reading fluency you need to assess, a child who is in a wheelchair and needs help to eat, drink and toilet (who does not qualify for a fulltime SLSO), and the undiagnosed children whose parents do not want them labelled or do not feel their child is anything but exceptional. All of these children must be catered for to allow them to access education on the same basis as their peers, whilst not disadvantaging the students who do not have a disability.

Alongside the teaching load is the Health and Safety requirements, data analysis, programming requirements, assessment and reporting requirements, an ever increasing mandatory training schedule, new curriculum/syllabus requiring all previous programming and reporting to be reviewed and updated, behaviour management, transition planning, coordination of EALD, Aboriginal Literacy Tutors, OT and Speech Therapists.... the list is truly endless.

While we put this unsustainable workload on teachers we also expect they will make school a fun and exciting place for students, with special moments such as 100 days of Kindergarten, multicultural days, book week parades, end of term celebrations, Presentation Days, Yr 6 farewells, school discos, concerts, incursions, excursions - all of which require hours of planning, risk management and preparation.

We ask teachers to do this while paying them at a rate that does not keep up with inflation, and is not comparable with other professions. Do we really need to ask the question "Why are we finding it hard to attract and retain teachers?"