

Submission
No 199

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 28 July 2022

Partially
Confidential

Portfolio Committee No. 3 - Education

28.7.2022

To whom it may concern,

Inquiry into NSW teacher shortages

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Committee's inquiry relating to teacher shortages in New South Wales.

I have been teaching for 26 years with Sydney Catholic Schools (1996 - 2008) and the NSW Department of Education (1996, 2009-2021). I was a primary school teacher and I loved my job.

In January 2022 I was sacked from my permanent full-time position as classroom teacher for the alleged three separate counts of misconduct in relation to not attesting my Covid-19 vaccination status. I am aware that there were many others in a similar situation to me. That is, they also did not attest their vaccination status and were found to be guilty of three counts of misconduct.

However, many teachers did not lose their jobs despite being in a virtually identical position to myself. I know of many teachers who were also under investigation by the Department of Education for not attesting their Covid-19 vaccination status and had their investigations paused. These teachers were not dismissed and can return to their permanent positions on the 1st of August when the Department of Education will no longer require teachers to be vaccinated for Covid-19.

This is extremely unfair. I offered to take leave without pay until Covid-19 vaccination was no longer required, but my request was ignored. **I would therefore like the Inquiry to determine why I was sacked and others were not.** How can the Department justify dismissing some and not others for the same alleged 'misconduct'? The Public Health Order did not include directions to dismiss staff. I would also like to know why my offer to go on leave without pay was ignored.

From the 1st of August 2022 I am able to teach again. The principal from my previous school has asked me to come back into a full-time temporary teaching role. I believe my permanent position has not been filled yet. This does not make any sense! I should have been able to take leave without pay and then gone back into my permanent position like many other teachers are now able to do.

I have very mixed emotions about teaching again. I was a very passionate teacher and I loved teaching my students, but I was treated so terribly by the Department of Education. One of their emails in 2021 threatened that the police would be called if I was to enter my school. My colleagues were shocked by this treatment. The Department does not respect its staff at all.

I would again like to thank the Senate Education Committee for the opportunity to comment on such a critical issue as teacher shortages. We owe our children the best education possible and this will only happen when teachers feel respected and valued by the Department of Education and the wider community.