

Submission  
No 229

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 31 July 2022

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Partially  
Confidential

## Teacher Shortage Submission

For teachers in the profession, many will say it is not about pay for them, it is about the increase in workload. But it is clear, through the ongoing decline in people joining the profession, pay is also a factor in attracting great teachers.

Since I started my career as a new teacher 23 years ago, much has changed, and the job has become more complex with no reduction in face-to-face teaching time. There has also been a significant increase in administrative duties.

School days and terms are busy and there are limited opportunities within the school day for teachers to work collaboratively to plan. This happens outside of school hours.

Teachers do not have the type of job where they can sit in an office, uninterrupted and complete tasks. Days are physically and emotionally demanding and require teachers to be available for students and parents.

Some of the additional demands on teachers are outlined below. Note, not all of these are negative things, but are examples of the constant change being faced by the profession (both societal and departmental). These additional tasks and additional stressors, with no additional time provided for preparation, planning and communication, have relied on the good will of teachers to complete tasks and serve the students they teach.

- Teacher Accreditation and Maintenance Procedures.
- Performance and Development Cycle implementation.
- Marking and individual student feedback demands have increased significantly.
- Mandatory Training: modules continually being added.
- Compulsory online surveys (Tell Them From Me) and regular online testing (check-in assessments, NAPLAN online). These interrupt teaching and learning activities, school programs, dominate limited technology resources available. At present, we cannot purchase any new devices to renew out of date computers as stock is unavailable. It is a disruption to the whole school.
- An increase in complex and challenging behaviour in schools; at times without the support of the parent/carer. Casual teachers need to step into complex classrooms, not knowing the plan or needs of every student. Behaviour management for casuals is very demanding and at times demoralising.
- An increase in physical violence in schools.
- Increasing Mental Health needs of students, requiring them to have individualised plans and support. Time supporting individual students and families due to anxiety, school refusal, and other issues impacting on their participation in school.
- A decline in available School Counsellor/Psychologist) allocations which are not fulfilled due to shortages, so less support for the increasing mental health demands.
- An increase in students who have a learning difficulty and need individualised learning support. Individual Learning Plans (some large schools have between 100-200 students with plans), require consultation with the family, student, time to develop them, communicate them to relevant teachers. These require ongoing revisions.
- Parent and caregiver expectations and demands are becoming increasingly unrealistic given the limited resources we have.
- Two new syllabus implementations with another major change underway.
- Mobile phones and online activity, including cyber bullying; much of what we follow up on relates to student online activity outside of school hours.

- The writing of detailed Risk Management Plans required for students, for activities, excursions. These plans require collaboration, consultation and communication, which all takes time.
- Online application processes which are convoluted and time consuming to apply for additional funding for students who require support; this takes up limited teacher time. It also requires school counsellor intervention, and their availability is limited.
- Constant communication about changes, new procedures etc being received from the department on regular basis. Receiving more information about changes when we are managing much uncertainty is stressful,
- Climate and weather impacts on school activities continue to add stress, due to not having appropriate shelter for students to use for sport and physical activity.
- Not being able to release teachers for professional learning or provide beginning teacher release time due to no casuals available.
- This year, managing continued minimal supervision to do staff shortages further exacerbates issues schools deal with on a daily basis.

Whilst some of these factors listed do not contribute directly to teacher shortages, they give a sense of the many things that make the job challenging day to day. Many colleagues often talk about how much longer they can do this for. Some see that the stress is not worth it and they are starting to make the choice to step away from the profession.

At present, we have four retired casual teachers who have been working with us this year as casual teachers. They have all provided that notice that they will not be continuing next year. The demands are too much.