Draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan released



The Australian Education Union will consult with members across the country on the recommendations of the draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan, released today.

AEU Deputy Federal President Meredith Peace said this is the first time a plan about teachers and their profession has gone to broad consultation for teachers to contribute to, and described it as an important initial step towards addressing the teacher shortage crisis currently impacting Australian public schools.

“However, a draft National Plan alone will not fix the shortages being experienced in public schools across the nation,” Ms Peace said.

“AEU members have been reporting high levels of stress and burnout arising from low levels of professional recognition and respect, poor pay and conditions, unsustainably high workloads and inequitable funding for many, many years.

“The shortages we are seeing across the country are a direct result of 10 years of neglect of public education by the previous federal government and their failure to recognise these concerns.

"Ultimately, this has made it harder for public school teachers, principals and education support staff to deliver the teaching and learning programs our students rely on to reach their full potential.

“We welcome the recognition of these issues by Federal Education Minister Jason Clare and the allocation of Commonwealth funding to address the workforce crisis, including for bursaries to attract new students and mid-career professionals to undertake initial teacher education.

“We also welcome federal government funding to pilot new approaches to reduce teacher workloads.

“We are also pleased to see the draft National Plan propose new measures for early career mentoring, additional Commonwealth supported university places in education and to include a teacher workload impact assessment as part of the next round of school funding agreements.

“Teachers, principals and education support staff are the heart of our public education system. Without them, there is no public education. But when they are supported and funded appropriately, it is students who benefit the most,” Ms Peace said.

“All governments must now make strong investments in measures to attract new teachers to the profession, encourage teachers who are no longer working in schools to return and retain teachers currently in the classroom.

“We must also see a pathway to full funding for public schools from the Commonwealth and state and territory governments.”

Ms Peace also cautioned against short term fixes that would undermine quality in initial teacher education.

“The teaching profession has fought long and hard to create comprehensive and rigorous teaching qualifications and standards and defended this against short-term fixes and short cuts that undermine quality in those qualifications. These measures must not be rolled back.”

The AEU expects our members will now have the opportunity to engage with the draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan and be consulted on the recommendations.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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