



Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE) Submission for inquiry into Status of the Teaching Profession

The following is a collection of points made by Council members of AATE.

1. Increasing the attractiveness of the profession for teachers and principals, including workplace conditions, and career and leadership structures.

The teaching profession is and should be an attractive profession. Concerns are often shared with AATE around the negative portrayal of teachers in the media. A teacher plays a multifaceted role in a young person's life.

Secondary teachers often teach out of their area of specialisation (particularly in the early stages of their career or in rural and district high school settings). Teachers are required to be flexible and adaptable to new settings and roles quickly. Other professions have more extensive induction and mentoring systems in place.

AATE is very interested in raising the profile of the teaching profession by seeking ways to bring recognition and support to teachers.

2. Provision of appropriate support platforms for teachers, including human and IT resources.

AATE believes strongly in the need for sponsorship and support of Professional Associations who put 100% of time and energy into teachers and teaching. Time and time again, teachers share that it is their personal and professional networking that they find incredibly rewarding. Professional associations provide rich support networks, create print and digital resources for teachers and have targeted discipline-specific professional learning.

There are a number of IT resources and platforms in existence. It would be useful for different state jurisdictions to come together and support some consisted platforms, e.g. CANVAS.

There is a need for greater admin support in schools to help cut back on administivia (attendance follow up, risk assessment and excursion documentation, preparation of support materials for students at risk or with high support needs).

There is a need for greater resourcing of support team workers (social workers, guidance officers, school psychologist and wellbeing officers).

3. Identifying ways in which the burden of out-of-hours, at-home work can be reduced.

Teachers will often choose to work out-of-hours. It is often necessary to prepare quality resources. What teachers would welcome, is the cutting back of 'administrivia.' Human resources for administrative tasks can assist here.

In many ways additional planning and prep time is unavoidable for quality teaching. Acknowledging that teachers do work additional hours and paying in accordance with this is one way to support teachers.

4. Investigating ways to increase retention rates for the teaching profession, and avoid 'burn out' among early-career teachers.

Mentoring and induction programs and supports are essential.

Continuing with reduced loads for first year teachers and offer time release for targeted professional learning is necessary.

AATE believes it would be worthwhile to conduct a study into 'burn out'. Is it burn-out or disillusionment? By raising the profile of the profession in the community, how can we counter the disillusionment? How do we counter a tendency for negative media reporting about teachers and the teaching profession?

AATE would be interested in being a part of such a research project or assisting to conduct such research.

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