

Teaching and Learning - maximising our investment in Australian schools

Response to questions on notice from Lorraine Wilson Received 20 March 2013

Re Senator McKenzie's questions:

- 1. When you entered the teaching profession, entry standards were higher. Do you think that subsequent drop in entry standards for many courses is a problem?**

I completed a three year teacher training course at a teachers' College in the 1950's. As I said at the hearing, there was no free time through the week. We had method lessons in every aspect of the curriculum. There was close contact between the Teachers' College and the training schools. Staff could move easily from teaching in a classrooms to being a staff member at the Teacher's College. We, the graduate students left feeling very confident about running our own classrooms.

I do not believe the entry standards were higher, in my day. I had matriculated, but one only had to have a leaving (Form 5) certificate to be accepted into Teachers' College.

- 2. Do you believe that teachers are 'job ready' when they start their first teaching job?**

I do not believe that the majority of today's graduates are job ready. This is not related in any way to the quality of university staff or their intentions for their students. The reduction

Wilson, L. 2002, Reading to Live: How to Teach Reading for Today's World, Heinemann, N.H.

Wilson, L. 2006, Writing to Live: How to Teach Writing for Today's World, Heinemann, N.H.

Hornsby, D & Wilson, L. 2011, Teaching Phonics in Context, Pearson Australia, Melbourne.

in funding to universities has brought some dire consequences. A friend of mine with a long history in teacher education recalls that when she was at one of the Victorian Teachers' Colleges, literacy was taught for 17 weeks in 3 hour blocks. She is now at a Melbourne University, where literacy is taught for 9 or 10 weeks with a one hour lecture and two hour tutorial. Tutorial class sizes have doubled since the 1990's.

She recalls also that when at the Teachers' College, all the staff did was teach. Now at the university, they teach, are required to bring in large grants, to supervise masters and PHD students to conduct research, to publish, to do all their own administration, and to have a full online presence.

3. **Would you support Australia requiring all teaching graduates to pass a test to demonstrate that they meet the minimum standards of knowledge and skill before they are registered as teachers?** (*Australian Council for Educational Research, Submission 26, p. 4*).

Definitely not. What a waste of money. Surely their Year 12 results together with an interview, would be sufficient. Testing them after they have trained is to waste the cost of their four year university course, if they fail.

Feel free to contact me at any future time, if I can be of further assistance.

Yours Sincerely

Lorraine Wilson