“IF YOU THINK EDUCATION IS EXPENSIVE...”

Education Workforce Initiatives: Report
IF YOU THINK EDUCATION IS EXPENSIVE, TRY IGNORANCE!

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Executive Summary

The Ministerial Taskforce, Education Workforce Initiatives, was developed in response to the progressive decline in the number of teachers available to work in certain areas of the Western Australian education workforce over recent years. This trend is compounded by a corresponding reduction in the numbers of people entering education degree courses and subsequently entering the teaching workforce. These are part of an Australia-wide trend and, while most acute in Western Australia, where employment has reached record highs, they are progressively becoming more evident across Australia. To-date major shortages have been experienced in:

- secondary rather than primary schools
- regional more than metropolitan locations – with the exception of a few difficult-to-staff metropolitan schools
- particular subject areas, most notably the physical sciences, languages (particularly English), mathematics, design and technology, and home economics.

Similarly, vocational education and training is under extreme pressure as the demand for skilled, experienced individuals caused by massive resources growth has made it difficult to retain current staff and attract new lecturers.

The Taskforce engaged in a broad and inclusive consultative process which included:

- careful consideration of appropriate Australian and international literature in the education workforce domain
- meeting with expert individuals
- commissioning independent market research
- calling widely for written submissions from the Western Australian public
- conducting 15 interactive forums across the State.

Careful consideration of the data and information produced recommendations in 15 main areas aimed at improving the number and quality of those entering school teaching and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) lecturing, and determining the requirements necessary to keep them in the system and more content with their employment. It is evident that changes made to salaries, allowances and conditions of teachers within the Western Australian public school sector tend to flow on to the Catholic and independent school sectors.

Prior to the presentation of this report, the Minister, the Director General and the Department of Education and Training (DET) initiated numerous reforms, both as a result of a report by Gerard Daniels Australia (February 2007), and from their own observations and decisions.

Almost all submissions made to the Taskforce commented adversely about relative salaries in respect of those of other professions and occupations. This has been addressed in the report, along with the need to provide allowances in line with those paid to other Government employees. There is a real need for a system of differentiated salaries to attract high-quality teachers into particular subject areas and to work in difficult-to-staff schools.

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Similar observations are made in relation to TAFE lecturers and school support staff. A more extensive, merit-based career structure needs to be instituted to encourage the best teachers to remain in the classroom and ensure that salaries and conditions for principals are competitive with the non-Government education sector. The supply, conditions and safety of housing for those of the workforce in regional and remote Western Australia is also a major issue demanding rapid action.

Leadership within the public education sector, the mentoring of pre-service teachers, and of teachers and lecturers themselves, is of major importance. The identification, development and selection of principals and other leaders must be more systematic and under constant review. Planned succession is important. Excellence in leadership is a prerequisite for an excellent education system. In this regard, appropriate support for principals, deputy principals, school leaders and teachers is essential if the Director General’s “Classroom First” strategy is to be adequately supported. Teachers and lecturers have to be provided with the right support and allowed to get on with their main task. They need to be generally representative of the wider Australian population, with the Indigenous teacher workforce requiring particular support.

At every forum and in most submissions there was comment on the perceived decline in the status of teaching and teachers in recent years. The Taskforce commissioned TNS Social Research to consider teacher status as part of their brief and the research showed high levels of appreciation from parents and the community in general. It was teachers who were most critical about their status and saw it manifest in terms of ‘low’ salaries, ‘poor’ working conditions, student behaviour, a ‘hostile’ press and what they saw as the absence of a strong voice in their support.

The most consistently successful education systems (Finland, Singapore, Boston and South Korea) clearly show that the most important factors in student success lie in getting the right people to become teachers and developing them into effective instructors (McKinsey, 2007). What is proposed in this report as approaches worthy of support are:

- attractive salaries and allowances
- merit scholarships
- better practicum arrangements (including regional placement support)
- career pathways for education assistants
- a strong and focussed marketing campaign
- the development of a Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER) subject – the ‘Study of Education’.

Within TAFE, important factors include:

- attractive salaries and allowances
- greater flexibility of appointments, working conditions and workloads
- increased autonomy
- more industry partnerships
- joint appointments with industry
- focussed marketing campaigns.

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The vocational and school education sectors would substantially benefit from greater access to the best, multi-modal, flexible learning resources. This applies as much for metropolitan colleges and schools as it does to country locations. Globally there have been massive investments into flexible learning and the delivery of knowledge. The DET would benefit greatly by combining its presently distributed resources, investing more substantially in the product and the skills base of its workforce.

This report encourages delegation and delineation authority, funding and responsibility to where operational decisions need to be made, i.e. to individual schools or clusters of schools. An education and training workforce advisory committee with an independent chairperson and wide-ranging membership is appropriate in order to support current and future workforce planning.

Public sector requirements, the provisions of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 and the relationship of the State with the Federal Government are critical factors in the growth, evolution and continual improvement of the Western Australian education system. This report considers ways in which these may be further facilitated and augmented.

The United Kingdom’s Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), in its successful consideration of workforce requirements, states that it was no particular recommendation on its own that made a difference, but rather the implementation of the pattern of recommendations as a whole that brought about positive change. The view of the Taskforce is similar. Improvement will follow the implementation of the spectrum of recommendations with regard to the education workforce in Western Australia.
The pursuit of knowledge is far more important than even knowledge itself. It involves discipline and training, which, in turn are moulders of character.

PROF. D. BLACK 1995 QUOTING JOHN CURTIN 1932

The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.

ARISTOTLE
Introduction

Workforce trends

Early in 2007, as a result of the large number of known teaching vacancies in Western Australia and with continuing education staffing shortages forecast for the years ahead, the State Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Mark McGowan MLA, established the Taskforce, Education Workforce Initiatives. The prime objective was to consider the supply of, and demand for, the education workforce within Western Australia and to recommend initiatives for the education system as a whole in light of current trends. These trends are not simply limited to Western Australia but are more widely recognised, nationally and internationally.

While all Australian States and Territories express concern about filling teaching vacancies in certain areas such as the physical sciences, languages, mathematics and design and technology, it is currently only in Western Australia that the general pool of available teachers has been shown to be steadily declining. However both internationally and in other Australian States and Territories it is evident that there is increasing difficulty in attracting entrants to particular subject areas and an often expressed view that there has been a decline in entry standards (generally) to teacher education programs.

These trends are accentuated in Western Australia due to the extraordinary demand for mineral resources and energy, resulting in a “resources boom” which is putting pressure on the employment sector as a whole. Many TAFE lecturers are skilled in trades that are highly-sought by industry, and teachers have excellent generic skills and knowledge in many high-demand areas. This, together with the large salaries on offer, has attracted experienced lecturers and teachers out of the education workforce as well as provided attractive options for younger people who might otherwise have entered the education sector. Projections for the Western Australian economy indicate excellent job prospects in Western Australia for at least the next decade1.

Education workforce shortages are further exacerbated by Western Australia’s geographical size, which covers a huge area of some 2.5 million square kilometres. Seventy-five percent of the State’s population lives in Perth and it has become increasingly difficult in recent years to induce the education workforce to work in many rural and remote locations because (a) the lifestyle is not as attractive and (b) conditions for other employees in the same locations are superior.

The current teacher workforce has a mean age of 43+, so factors such as retirement, or the need for some teachers to work on a part-time basis while transitioning into retirement, are also critical to better understanding the education workforce of the future. Retirement intentions of Western Australian teachers suggest that many will leave the public education sector over the next five years and this is likely to be the largest single factor impacting on the education workforce supply and demand over the period. While the average age of the full-time TAFE workforce is approximately 48 years, this increases significantly to 55 years when the part-time workforce is included2. The expectation of retirement of lecturers is, however, lower than for teachers and this trend is likely to continue.

In the non-Government sector most Catholic and independent schools in metropolitan areas have been better able to fill their teaching and support places, although they also note with concern the decreasing size of the available teaching pool, especially in relation to particular subject areas.

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1 State Training Board WA, 2007, Beyond the Resources Boom.
2 DET (Unpublished).
Thus, while the overall trend is one of a general decline in the number of (a) available teachers and (b) those entering the profession, the situation is most acute in:

- regional and remote Western Australia
- the secondary and TAFE public education sector
- particular subject areas:
  - the physical sciences (physics, chemistry)
  - languages
  - mathematics
  - design and technology
  - home economics
- some difficult-to-staff metropolitan schools.

**Workforce planning**

It is surprising that workforce planning has not been given greater priority within the education sector considering that the declining trends in teacher supply have been evident for some years. For example, in 2000 the Science Teachers’ Association of WA had data that “…predicted that the supply of physical science teachers is not sufficient to replace the number of unqualified teachers of Physics and Chemistry”3. The 2001 Robson Report stated “While there is no shortage of teachers as such, there are specific problem areas.”4 Nationally, the issue arose at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Workplace Relations on 14 November 2000, when committee member Mr Rod Sawford MP, commented that “There is going to be a huge teacher shortage at all levels very quickly in this country.”5 A 2001 survey by the Australian Education Union also made the point that “…it is clear that there is a current teacher shortage being felt mainly in the country areas but also starting to have an effect in the metropolitan area. The country problem needs to be addressed urgently.”6

Data supplied by the DET’s Workforce Planning Unit indicates that in the five years between 2002 and 2007, classroom teacher vacancies at the start of the school year increased from 55 to 206. This trend is rising and indicates that, without substantial intervention, it will become increasingly difficult to fill vacancies in regional Western Australia, in secondary education generally and in specific subject areas. It is pleasing to note that the State Government now has in place many important changes necessary to reverse this trend.

However, the situation will become more difficult as the number of school students in Western Australia increases significantly over the next decade due to (a) the rise in birth rates, (b) the effects of the revised school starting age and (c) the retention of students in Years 11 and 12. The situation is further complicated by a growing trend of increasing enrolments in the non-Government education sector, although this does not impact on the total number of teachers required.

The situation faced by the TAFE colleges is also challenging. In October 2007, there were approximately 5,000 TAFE lecturers employed across Western Australia delivering vocational education and training (VET).7 TAFE enrolments in the VET sector have increased by 2.3 percent in recent years and are likely to continue to increase in the years ahead. The lecturer population is mainly recruited from industry, where experience

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3 Science Teachers’ Association of WA, 2000, Review of the Quality and Supply of Science Teachers.
6 AEU Survey, 2001, Teacher Supply and Demand in the States and Territories.
7 Refer Appendix 1: Teacher Labour Market.
in specific vocations is required in order to ensure up-to-date training. Thus, much of the workforce is based around casual contracts to provide the flexibility the system requires (there were 2,600 casual contracts in TAFE in October 2007).

All of the above reinforces the need for instituting a coordinated reform package directed at increasing the number of good educators in the workforce and keeping them there.

Prioritising issues

The Taskforce Chair has met regularly with the Minister for Education and Training and members of his staff to ensure they were kept abreast of the observations and deliberations of the Taskforce, especially in view of the Minister’s advice that he would address some of the more obvious deficiencies in the system as early as possible, notably those clearly contributing to the present shortages. Recent action taken by the Minister indicates the high priority he has assigned to the situation and obviates the need for the Taskforce to make specific recommendations for action in those areas. These include incentives to attract graduates to rural and remote locations; incentives to attract retirees back into the teaching workforce; scholarships to attract high-achieving students into the public education system; the announcement of the possibilities for outstanding teachers to achieve high level salaries; and publicity campaigns to raise awareness of and the status of a career in teaching.

These initiatives are entirely warranted, but the Taskforce believes they need to go further and that there are other areas which equally call for immediate attention and action:

- Increased remuneration for the existing teaching, lecturing and support workforce, across the board.
- A better system of career progression for all staff within schools and colleges.
- A comprehensive, merit-based scholarship system aimed at attracting intelligent, high-achieving individuals into teaching and lecturing.
- The need for a considerably greater number of student practicums in regional areas.
- A much greater number of para-professionals in classrooms to support teachers.
- Attention to housing and workplace conditions for teachers and lecturers in regional and remote areas.

In addition to the Minister’s initiatives, the Director General of the DET has introduced a scheme to retain good teachers in the classroom through the Classroom First strategy\(^8\). The Taskforce supports this and anticipates that many of the recommendations contained in this report will enable the DG to achieve her objective.

There are other factors which will require action over a longer timeframe, and these include the following:

- raising the status of teaching and lecturing
- developing a comprehensive system emphasising leadership, development, training and mentoring
- developing a comprehensive, flexible learning system, available State-wide
- improving Federal-State coordination to better support teachers and lecturers
- reforming legislation governing the Western Australian education and training systems
- greater delineation and delegation of authority within the public education system to individual schools, clusters of schools and TAFE colleges.

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Flexibility in learning

Another area to be investigated is that of developing a comprehensive, flexible learning system, available State-wide. Advances in technology and communications are providing increased opportunities for greater access and customisation of first-class education to every Western Australian student. From additional tutorials to accessing international lectures and the simultaneous delivery of classes to students in a number of different schools across various locations, technology in education and flexible delivery make light of geographic boundaries, put the best teachers within reach of all students, and recognise that today’s students readily learn via multiple media. The Taskforce recognises that flexible delivery will be an increasingly integral part of educational delivery in primary, secondary and tertiary education across Western Australia (metropolitan and regional, public and non-Government). The State Government must invest in the coordination and development of a world class flexible learning system. While this is not a cheap option for delivery and development of knowledge, it does provide specific assistance when this is otherwise unavailable, it adds to the repertoire of methods available to the good classroom teacher (wherever they may be employed) and it sustains the generations of “digital natives” who will be coming through Western Australia’s educational establishments.

The Taskforce

The Taskforce consisted of an independent Chairperson together with an additional 11 people broadly selected from across the Western Australian education workforce on the basis of their expertise and experience. It is important to note that all these individuals were chosen as experts in education and not as representatives of the areas from which they were drawn.

Professor Lance Twomey AO Independent Chair
Mr Neil Fernandes Managing Director, Central TAFE
Ms Carol Garlett Chair, Aboriginal Education Training Council
Ms Anne Gisborne Senior Vice President, State School Teachers’ Union of WA
Mrs Audrey Jackson Executive Director, Association of Independent Schools of WA
Mr Rob Lindsay A/Executive Director, Department of Education and Training
Mr Mike Morgan Principal, Newman Senior High School
Ms Sharyn O’Neill Director General, Department of Education and Training
Dr Suzanne Parry Director, Western Australia College of Teaching
Professor Greg Robson Head of Education, Edith Cowan University (ECU)
Mr Richard Strickland Chief Executive Officer, Department of Education Services
Mr Mark Tannock Deputy Headmaster, Christian Brothers College, Fremantle

The work of the Taskforce was enabled by a small professional support team within the Department of Education and Training:

Ms Susan Arrowsmith Ms Julie Coleman
Ms Kate Griffiths Ms Jill Proctor

and progressively supplemented by others as the DET drew together a Workforce Planning team:

Mr Ashley Lowth Ms Naomi McKay
Mr Laurie Money Mr Neil Purdy (Project Manager)
Ms Lynda Suchodolski
The Taskforce met for the first time on 9 March 2007 and thereafter on a regular basis. The initial task was to consider and review the substantial literature available, covering the general areas of teacher and lecturer availability and workforce planning. The literature reviewed previous Australian and Western Australian reports in addition to a substantial international reference list. This consideration, together with observations drawn from the knowledge and experience of members of the Taskforce team, led to:

- a call for submissions from the Western Australian community with regard to the problems being experienced and seeking their views on the situation (257 submissions were received)
- interviews and consultation with appropriate individuals
- a series of consultation forums being conducted across the State (15 were held).

The Taskforce report has been presented in 15 individual chapters. However, the issues raised and recommendations made are interdependent. Thus, each set of recommendations forms a part of an interrelated, interdependent and multifaceted approach which needs to be jointly considered if the sustainable supply of a high-quality education workforce is to be adequately addressed.

Terms of reference

The Taskforce will:

- provide advice to the Minister regarding current and future workforce supply and demand;
- review the State’s capacity to meet its educational needs with a focus on:
  - current and future workforce needs;
  - alternative delivery strategies; and
  - the capacity to respond rapidly to teacher shortages.
- provide advice to the Minister about student teacher practicum placement for all educational sectors and in all locations;
- consider the standing of the teaching profession with a view to providing strategies for raising the status of teaching; and
- generate a framework to inform future workforce planning for all educational sectors.

Information sources

While much attention has been given to the workforce planning aspects affecting the current situation, there are many other issues impacting on the will of the education workforce to stay in their positions. Submissions and the forum processes elicited much intelligence in relation to these issues and have been used to inform this report. A report on the submissions and the forums has been attached at Appendix 3.

In addition to gaining feedback from the above sources, TNS Social Research was engaged to undertake market research into the status of teachers, looking at the views of the teaching profession held by students and the community, and the regard in which school and TAFE education is held in the Western Australian community⁹. Analysis was also undertaken by a workforce planning support team established by the DET to quantify the supply and demand forces affecting the potential workforce into the future.

⁹ Refer Appendix 2 TNS Executive Summary
Chapter 1:
Remuneration

“Investment in teacher education can increase the academic performance of students, reduce the need for remedial programs and mitigate the negative social and economic consequences of under-achievement.”

TOP OF THE CLASS, FOREWORD, FEBRUARY 2007
Chapter 1: Remuneration

Referenced in The Economist, October 2007, a global management consultancy firm, McKinsey & Co, has produced a report on international comparisons of the quality of educational outcomes across schooling systems (based on data produced by the OECD’s Programme for Student Assessment), and found that the world’s best performing schooling systems require three attributes:

1. They have the best teachers.
2. They get the best out of their teachers.
3. They step in when students lag behind by providing dedicated teachers at appropriate times.

The McKinsey report shows that the quality of a school cannot exceed the quality of its teachers, so it is important to begin by attracting and employing the best. In countries such as Finland and Singapore, teaching is a high-status profession and generous funds have been made available for pre-service teacher training to provide an incentive to attract the best.

The question to be asked of any community is, “What price is paid to education professionals for their significant contribution to children and community?” Salaries and conditions of employment are significant factors in deciding career choice because…

“...we expect that our children will receive sound teaching in all areas of the curriculum. We expect that our teachers will not only take care of our children’s academic welfare, but also the physical, emotional, spiritual and moral aspects. We expect that our teachers will be good role models to our children in and outside the school. And whilst such expectations are valid and acceptable, they are generally above and beyond many other higher paying careers.”

It is the perception of the education sector and the broader community that remuneration for all professionals in education, but particularly teachers, is low. It is this perception which consequently impacts on the status of teaching as a profession and the supply (in numbers and quality) of the workforce.

Submissions received by the Taskforce raised the following concerns relating to salaries and allowances:

- relative salary is not on par with other professions
- allowances do not cover the cost of living, particularly in regional areas
- relatively poor salary and allowances lower the status of the profession
- there is a lack of equity in allowances and conditions for staff across the education sector
- there is a lack of equity in allowances, incentives and conditions, particularly in regional areas, when compared to other Government sector employees.

“Low professional status attached to teaching and associated lack of appreciation, by the community, of and value for, the work carried out by teachers by the community.

The demands of continuous curriculum change over the last decade and, particularly, the significant increase in the teacher workload caused by outcomes based education (OBE). This goes hand in hand with a lack of resources for the new OBE courses.

Poor financial incentives in the way of salary and promotional opportunities exacerbated by the financial attraction of alternative careers particularly in the current economic boom.

The changing role of the teacher and increased community expectations that teachers should be responsible for all aspects of students’ education and growth. This includes the need to deal with a variety of significant social issues and ‘ills’. Such increased expectations have not been supported by the provision of the necessary resources required to meet them.

All these factors are inexorably linked…to raise the current status of the teaching profession and improve the public’s perception…high quality candidates must be retained and attracted into the profession. In today’s society this will not occur without adequate and competitive financial incentives.”

Within a competitive open market, it is the level of remuneration (both financial and non-financial components) paid to a workforce which largely represents the value in which the community holds it and the product that emanates from it. Education professionals tend to be people who are attracted to the sector for altruistic reasons, such as wanting to make a difference and helping students (DEST, 2006). While they seek to add value, they expect in turn to be valued by the community and the remuneration paid to them must reflect the value which the community places on both education and on the workforce that delivers it.

“without any doubt the number one issue for respondents [teachers] was pay… suggesting that higher pay would improve the status of teachers, their retention, their attrition, or their attraction… the perception about being poorly paid is now so widespread that it is likely to be damaging…”

It is clear that in Western Australia, it is the public education sector which drives the price paid to teachers across the whole sector, i.e, non-Government school salary structure is closely aligned to the public sector. Due to the size and complexity of any government, price adjustments tend to lag, thereby resulting in elements of workforce moving away from government employment. It is necessary for the public education sector to become more responsive in its price adjustment to ensure that teacher salaries remain competitive.

13 DEST, Australian Government, Canberra, 2006, Attitudes to Teaching as a career, A Synthesis of Attitudinal Research.
Graduate salaries

According to the Australian Graduate Survey\(^{14}\), the national median starting salary of a bachelor of education graduate in 2006 was $43,400 and, for those who completed a graduate diploma of education (initial), was $46,000. Table 1.1 below provides an overview of graduate starting salaries for other bachelor degree graduates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>$43,400</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geology</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>$46,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>$42,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>$37,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1: 2006 Graduate Salaries, Selected Professions

In the same year, graduates entering Western Australia’s public education system were paid a base salary of $42,885 and an $800 per annum graduate allowance. A graduate with the same qualifications entering the New South Wales public education system was paid an income of $47,627, representing 11 percent more than their Western Australian counterparts.

On 4 October 2007, the Western Australian Minister for Education and Training announced that new graduates entering the public education sector would receive a pay rise, enabling Western Australian graduates to be on par with their New South Wales counterparts. This adjustment was well-received by graduates and serves to indicate what is required for all Western Australian teachers. The salary scale for Western Australian graduate teachers is now similar to the national average (refer Table 1.2); however, teacher salaries generally still remain behind that of their New South Wales and Victorian counterparts.

The Western Australian Government has proposed the introduction, from 2008, of a new classification of Executive Teacher which will have a top salary of $85,209.

At the top of the public education sector principal range, Western Australia falls behind both New South Wales and Victoria by over 10 percent. Data is not readily available in relation to the non-Government education sector in Western Australia; however, salary packages for principals in some independent schools reach beyond $170,000. TAFE lecturer salaries at both the low and high end are slightly behind the national average.

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Table 1.2: Teacher/Lecturer Salaries, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008 Salary</th>
<th>Teacher – graduate</th>
<th>Teacher – top of automatic increment scale</th>
<th>Teacher – advanced skills/ exemplary</th>
<th>Principal Range (low)</th>
<th>Principal Range (high)</th>
<th>TAFE Lecturer Range (low)</th>
<th>TAFE Lecturer Range (high)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>$50,522</td>
<td>$75,352</td>
<td>$86,366</td>
<td>$129,506</td>
<td>$61,685</td>
<td>$79,637</td>
<td>$79,637</td>
<td>$79,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC#</td>
<td>$46,127</td>
<td>$78,675</td>
<td>$74,666</td>
<td>$128,197</td>
<td>$42,326</td>
<td>$65,021</td>
<td>$65,021</td>
<td>$65,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>$46,950</td>
<td>$66,191</td>
<td>$69,225</td>
<td>$70,872</td>
<td>$51,346</td>
<td>$70,916</td>
<td>$48,518</td>
<td>$72,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>$49,605</td>
<td>$68,422</td>
<td>$73,791</td>
<td>$78,576</td>
<td>$49,605</td>
<td>$77,849</td>
<td>$44,085</td>
<td>$70,313</td>
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<tr>
<td>WA@</td>
<td>$48,425</td>
<td>$69,132</td>
<td>$72,844</td>
<td>$77,444</td>
<td>$48,518</td>
<td>$72,992</td>
<td>$46,064</td>
<td>$75,817</td>
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<td>TAS</td>
<td>$46,736</td>
<td>$68,351</td>
<td>$74,033</td>
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<td>$70,313</td>
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<td>NT</td>
<td>$49,944</td>
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<td>$76,128</td>
<td>$76,128</td>
<td>$105,949</td>
<td>$46,064</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>$52,128</td>
<td>$74,279</td>
<td>$86,463</td>
<td>$120,676</td>
<td>$53,576</td>
<td>$74,917</td>
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<td>$74,917</td>
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<tr>
<td>National average</td>
<td>$48,805</td>
<td>$71,306</td>
<td>$72,705</td>
<td>$78,106</td>
<td>$116,385</td>
<td>$49,651</td>
<td>$73,433</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Victoria's Principal Total Remuneration rate has been discounted by 9% for superannuation contributions in order to demonstrate salary relativity.

@ WA currently has exemplary teacher status (L3CT) up to $77,744 and is proposing the introduction of an Executive Teacher with top salary of $85,209

Although the salary provided for teachers in Queensland appears to be relatively low, the Queensland Government offers teachers additional superannuation contributions up to 12.75 percent of their annual salary.

**Cost of living**

Traditionally, New South Wales and Victoria have had higher salaries than Western Australia as a direct consequence of their higher cost of living. Western Australia is now experiencing a booming economy and has a current growth rate of 10.6 percent\(^{15}\), resulting in the cost of living, measured through the consumer price index (CPI), climbing steeply in the past few years. From September 2004 to September 2007 CPI has increased by 11.3 percent in Perth while the national average of all capital cities was 9.1 percent for the same period.

A recently released report from the Residential Development Council of Western Australia (July 2007)\(^{16}\) states that purchasing a home is now very difficult in Western Australia for individuals with an average annual income of about $60,000 (similar to a teacher’s current salary).

Western Australian teachers’ salaries increased over the period 1997 to 2006 by an average of 44 percent. Over this time the base salary of police and nurses increased by 50 percent and 48 percent respectively. During the past five years Western Australia has experienced rapid growth in the economy, resulting in the average wage of Western Australians increasing by 63 percent. In real terms, however, teachers’ wages grew by 11.5 percent compared with average weekly ordinary time earnings, which grew by 31 percent\(^{17}\).

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15 State Training Board WA, 2007, Beyond the Resources Boom.
17 Various State Registered Agreements
Table 1.3 Percentage increase since 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Increase since 1997</th>
<th>% Increase in real terms since 1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (WA)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Price Index</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Servants</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Registered Agreements; ABS

Defined within the respective Awards for both police officers and nurses are the full-time hours to be worked per week and, once these hours are exceeded, overtime is applicable. Police and nurses also receive allowances for shift work and being on-call. While the base salary for teachers seems to be competitive with other core Government services, total remuneration comparisons paint a different picture.

The following table (1.4) compares the total average salary (including allowances, overtime and salary sacrifice arrangements) for various professions in 2004 and 2006. The total average salary in 2004 of teachers (primary and secondary) and TAFE lecturers exceeded the average of all non-management employees in Western Australia. However, by 2006, it is apparent that there has been a rapid decline in relative salaries, particularly for secondary school teachers.

Table 1.4: 2004 and 2006 relative salaries for Western Australian primary teachers, secondary teachers, TAFE lecturers, police and nurses

Source: ABS, Average Weekly Total Earnings for Full time Adult Persons. Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours, 2004 & 2006 (Note: 2004 figures for police not available.)
It is anticipated that, with the ongoing labour supply shortage across Western Australia, average wages will continue to climb, resulting in relative wages across the education sector continuing to decline.

Leigh and Ryan (2006)\(^{19}\) found the relative fall in average teacher pay (real terms) to be the main driver for the decline in both the quality of new teachers entering the system and the status of the teaching profession as a whole. Their research shows that a boost to average teacher pay will encourage more able people into teaching, which should result in a rise in the status of teachers and encourage a better gender balance in the workforce.

**Teaching hours and school holidays**

There is a perception that educators at various levels have shorter working days and a full 12 weeks school holiday per year.

In relation to the holidays, this equates to seven weeks more than the annual vacation leave of most professions and could be considered as effectively providing educators with an additional $8,268-$19,590 increase on their base salaries, as indicated in Table 1.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary for 41 weeks/year</th>
<th>Graduate Teacher</th>
<th>Senior Teacher</th>
<th>Exemplary Teacher</th>
<th>Principal (low)</th>
<th>Principal (high)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary for 48 weeks/year</td>
<td>$56,693</td>
<td>$80,935</td>
<td>$85,281</td>
<td>$91,017</td>
<td>$134,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of holidays</td>
<td>$8,268</td>
<td>$11,803</td>
<td>$12,437</td>
<td>$13,273</td>
<td>$19,590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, in reality many educators work well in excess of school contact hours, utilising weekends and a significant proportion of the school holidays to undertake planning, curriculum development and personal development.

In relation to working days, on top of face-to-face teaching, teachers spend at least the equivalent of another 25 percent of their time on preparation, marking and providing student feedback (a section later in this report more closely examines workload issues). Data concerning the average hours worked by teachers and provided by different research bodies is inconsistent, as indicated by Table 1.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Average Full Time Weekly Hours</th>
<th>Average Full Time Annual Hours (40 weeks/year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEWR, Industry Employment Outlook Education (2007)</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>1,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS Employee Earnings and Hours Cat. 6306.0 (2000)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1,440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In comparison, the average number of hours worked by a general government employee is approximately 1,800 per year. If education professionals are to routinely work beyond school contact hours, then this needs to be taken into account when considering remuneration levels and, indeed, repositioning the present view that the education workforce has shorter hours for just 40 weeks of the year. TAFE lecturers, as defined within their Award, are required to work 37.5 hours per week, 21 of which are contact hours.

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It is difficult to compare relative salaries internationally as the cost of living in each country differs. However, by way of indication, the OECD (2006) shows that the salary of an average Australian teacher with at least 15 years experience at the lower secondary level is equivalent to US $43,991 and ranks ninth amongst OECD countries. Teachers with the same experience earn salaries ranging from US $10,000 in Poland to US $48,000 in Germany and exceeding US $80,000 in Luxembourg.

Within the Western Australia public sector, incentives and allowances paid to encourage the education workforce to go to regional and remote areas of the State are comparatively lower than those paid to other Government sector employees. In 2007, the allowance loading on the base salary of a principal is equivalent to 123 percent, whereas for a nurse it is 144 percent (see Table 1.7). Each agency also provides incentives such as additional leave after a number of years of service, free rent, subsidised utilities and travel reimbursement. The Minister for Education and Training recently announced an increase to incentive payments for public school teachers in remote locations; however, this will still not achieve parity when compared to nurses or police. To encourage the wider distribution of good teaching and lecturing staff across Western Australian schools, equitable and appropriate incentives must be provided.

**Table 1.7: Value of allowances – percentage increase on base salary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government service</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Loading on base salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>Officer in Charge (Senior Sergeant)</td>
<td>138%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>Sergeant*</td>
<td>138%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>123%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
<td>128%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>143%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>School registrar</td>
<td>108%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education assistant</td>
<td>113%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health#</td>
<td>Registered nurse</td>
<td>144%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All police officers working in remote communities are paid a minimum rate of sergeant level.
# Registered nurses must have experience before being posted to remote communities.

Within a constrained labour market, the provision of attraction and retention initiatives plays an important role in the effective distribution of the workforce. Over the last decade employees have placed a greater focus on the “total package” on offer, not just the salary. “Total package” incorporates factors such as locality and lifestyle, accommodation, access to child and aged care facilities, school access, transport, hours of work, equitable distribution of work and benefits, and working environment.

Responding to this change in focus, Awards and Agreements now enable employees some degree of access to salary packaging arrangements. The uniformity of legislation concerning salary packaging, however, provides no leverage for the State Government to encourage effective distribution of its workforce to rural and remote regions. Further, despite the role that schools and education play within rural and remote communities, schools and TAFE are not categorised in the same way as public hospitals or public benevolent institutions, thereby restricting the “menu” from which salary packaged items may be selected.
Most education sector employees are restricted, as are public sector employees generally, to a range of salary packageable items which may have only a minor impact on disposable income.

In contrast, public hospitals and public benevolent institution employees may access a range of items with the potential to significantly increase disposable income.

In the absence of fringe benefit tax reform, a system of differentiated salaries and conditions could be considered to attract and retain high quality teachers in difficult-to-staff teaching subject areas and schools across the length and breadth of Western Australia (Ramsey, 2000)21.

Salary levels also reflect career progression and promotion possibilities within the workforce. A relatively flat salary scale may provide a greater incentive for entry into the workforce, but does not necessarily aid retention of that workforce.

“Teachers will work for love or money. Deprive them of both and they wither.”

Support staff

During the review process, a common theme reiterated to Taskforce members was the critical role played by support staff in running schools and colleges. These workplaces cannot effectively operate without para-professionals such as education assistants, Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEOs), technicians (laboratory, IT, design and technology) or library officers. Schools and colleges are supported by office administrators, and other education and health professionals such as nurses, psychologists and social workers, to name a few. As with teachers and lecturers, the levels of salaries and allowances for these staff categories are equally uncompetitive in today’s market (Table 1.8).

Table 1.8: Salary range, selected occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education assistant</td>
<td>$28,000 to $40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank teller</td>
<td>$28,000 to $56,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service officer (Government)</td>
<td>$35,734 to $48,101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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Recommendation 1: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

1.1 Implements an immediate and significant investment in public teacher and lecturer remuneration that will:
   • improve the relative position of teaching in relation to other professions
   • recognise the value of the education workforce within the community
   • provide an adequate return on investment (i.e. four-year tertiary qualified).

1.2 Ensures equity in relation to incentives and allowances in regional and remote areas of the State (e.g. housing, location, cost of living, utilities – electricity, rates, water, air-conditioning – and travel), as is provided to other Western Australian State government employees (e.g. police, nurses, etc).

1.3 Commences negotiations with the Federal Government to expand salary sacrifice provision to mirror public hospital and public benevolent institutions for teachers and lecturers, given their vital role in the development of Australian children, particularly in rural and remote regions.

1.4 Reviews salaries and allowances for public school and college support staff in line with the above recommendations for teaching staff.

1.5 Develops and implements a system of differentiated salaries and conditions to attract and retain high-quality teachers in difficult-to-staff schools and subject areas in public schools.
Chapter 2: Career Progression

“
The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.
"

MCKINSEY & CO. 2007
Chapter 2: Career Progression

The first section of this report relating to remuneration comprehensively addresses the gross financial changes which need to be implemented if an adequate supply of good teachers for Western Australia is to be ensured. Career progression specifically examines ways to better reward effort and achievement, providing more scope and greater encouragement to retain first class, experienced teachers in the classroom. It also addresses incentives to enable ambitious teachers to progress into pedagogical leadership and management within schools and to better support the teaching/learning process. It proposes that more effective orientation of principals be put into place, redirecting principals from matters which can be more appropriately undertaken by other categories of staff and allowing them to focus their attention as educational leaders in their school communities on teaching, education and other academic and leadership issues. Further, it strengthens the operation of schools by acknowledging the responsibilities and increasing the standing of support staff, allowing teachers to maximise their attention on the teaching and learning process and minimise their involvement in non-teaching matters.

It is essential to note that in Western Australia it is the public education sector in which career pathways and salary scales are set, and this inevitably establishes the standards for the non-Government school sectors. As arrangements are changed for the DET, so the Catholic and independent schools use the new standards to form the basis of the career and salary structures within their own sectors.

A review of research-based knowledge about teaching and leading, undertaken in late 2006 by the School of Education, University of Western Sydney, on behalf of Teaching Australia22, provides pertinent information concerning career progression within the education and training workforce. This research confirms that quality teaching and school leadership are found to make a substantial difference to student learning, and importantly that “quality teaching and school leadership … are contextual and dynamic” (Executive Summary p.iii). This is reinforced by McKinsey (2007)23, which clearly evidences that the quality of teachers within any education system is the prime factor in ensuring student performance. Quality matters, and quality must be rewarded.

The Catholic education sector has advised schools within its network that it will match the recent increase in graduate remuneration announced for public schools. It is likely that this increase will also be matched by schools across the independent sector. Within the public sector beginning teachers will, from 2008, enter the profession at Level 1.6 (approximately $48-50,000 per year) and have just six more incremental steps (to level 2.4 – approximately $69,000) in the teachers’ pay scale. Experienced teachers who wish to remain in the classroom can seek to progress to senior teacher status, providing a further two classification levels (up to approximately $72,000 per year).

22 Teaching Australia, February 2007, Teaching and Leading for Quality Australian Schools.
In recent times and within the Western Australian public education sector, a merit-based promotional opportunity was created to enable exemplary classroom teachers to become Level 3 classroom teachers (L3CT) through the development of a portfolio illustrating the breadth and depth of their skill and experience in teaching practice against a set of criteria. The L3CT merit process is currently under review to simplify and improve the application process and enable greater access. It is also proposed to extend it to three incremental stages or tiers:

- Levels 3.1-3.2: L3 teacher mentor.
- Levels 3.3-3.4: L3 teacher leader (school).
- Levels 3.5-3.6: L3 teacher leader (district).

This is a commendable and worthwhile initiative and is strongly supported by the Taskforce. It is also noted that, for DET teachers, a proposal is currently under negotiation which seeks to provide a further two tiers of salary beyond L3CT for outstanding teachers based, again, on merit, performance and achievement.

The number of exemplary teachers at any one school within the Catholic education sector is based on the number of students at that school. Exemplary teachers are nominated by the principal and this status is not transferable from one school to another. In the Catholic and independent sectors, progression to two levels of senior teacher is available. In addition, schools in the independent sector have implemented their own career advancement structures. However, many of these are also traditional in nature and progression often results in teachers moving out of the classroom.

Promotional opportunities for teachers seeking L3CT status and above need to be widened beyond the present, narrow teaching skills boundaries, recognising wider areas of achievement and competencies that contribute to success in schools, students, staff and Western Australian education generally, thus recognising:

- academic qualifications (honours and masters degrees, PhDs)
- the mentoring of pre-service teachers, graduates and new teachers
- developmental work with pre-service teachers and with universities
- development of syllabus, curriculum, specialisation, discipline development and leadership
- preparedness to:
  - tackle difficult classroom and school problems
  - lead or teach across a range of diverse settings
  - work in regional and remote locations and in difficult-to-staff schools
- extra-curricular activities of value to the school and the education community (e.g. committee involvement, negotiation, etc; sport; homework; promotion of education and the like).

This list provides examples; it is not comprehensive.
The process of promotion

Employers could establish promotion panels to consider applications which are likely to be presented in the form of a teaching portfolio demonstrating excellence in areas such as (but not limited to) those above. A teacher would make a case for promotion based on a selection of agreed parameters, as occurs for lecturing staff within Australian universities. It is anticipated that the most senior level would be highly prestigious and available to a quite limited cohort of consistently high-performing and achieving classroom teachers. The sector would need to develop clear policy, enable transparency and ensure equity. It is probable that quotas to each level would need to be provided during the first few years of implementation to allow orderly consideration and progression. Teachers demonstrating competencies would advance incrementally, with higher academic achievement in the earlier stages of a teacher’s career being recognised via acceleration up the scale, as well as by access to higher levels.

In addition to the financial rewards associated with a more professional career structure, care needs to be taken as to the titles accorded progression beyond the levels of senior teacher. The nomenclature of L3CT has little currency or understanding beyond the DET and care should be taken to apply descriptive terminology appropriate to the status of the positions.

The DET, in the establishment of revised arrangements limited to career or remuneration structure, should be cognisant of the role of system leader, and structure related policy and process accordingly.

It is likely that the non-Government school sector will mirror any changes to career progression made within the public school sector.

Thus, adjectives such as eminent, expert, executive, etc, could be used to indicate the importance and prestige of the positions, in a similar way in which university titles convey the eminence and ability of their most senior academics.

An initiative to reward excellent teachers wanting to stay in classrooms, but happy to spend the equivalent of one day a week sharing best practice ideas and approaches to help other teachers develop skills and experience is that of the advanced skills teacher in the UK. It is a career pathway that exploits the strengths of high-quality teachers and gives them opportunities to develop, exchange ideas, work in other schools, etc. It gives them a fresh set of professional challenges.24

School leaders

In recent years, it has become increasingly difficult for the public education sector to attract teachers to leadership positions and especially to rural and remote appointments. In the DET leadership structure, three senior administrator positions fall within the bands of 3.1-6.4: heads of learning areas (HOLAs – sometimes titled program coordinators or heads of department), deputy principals and principals. Under the Government School Teachers and School Administrators Certified Agreement 2000, it was agreed to review the classification process, yet to-date it has not been possible for all the parties involved to reach consensus.

There are a number of issues with the current structure. The application of the general concept that specialisation is preferable led to the creation of categories of schools (i.e. senior high schools, district high schools, primary schools and education support schools). In turn, this led to the formation of professional associations which lobby on behalf of a cohort of a particular set of principals. Resources are often allocated on the basis of the category of the school and, in career terms, one effect of this labelling contributes to the formation of silos that limit the opportunity for aspirant administrators to cross the boundary from one category of school to another. For example, there is a perception that principals in rural schools do not have transferable skills and knowledge to be competitive enough in selection processes for metropolitan schools. In part the perception may be attributable to the notion that the effective and efficient management of a particular school is dependent upon insider knowledge of a particular set of students and their educational program. A process whereby principals undertake mandatory leadership modules should alleviate any such blocks to progress.

The elasticity of the boundaries has been tested recently by the formation of new categories of schools (middle schools whose constituents are upper primary and lower secondary students). Similarly, secondary colleges are not senior high schools. Currently, only employees with secondary school experience apply for secondary school positions. The category of the school places an obstacle in front of the aspirant who seeks experience to broaden their operational and philosophical perspective in the world of education.

One proposition put to the Taskforce is to have schools which are defined only by the range of students (Rottnest School K-7; Wave Rock School 8-12; Sandy Beach School K-12). In varying degrees, these schools will have a range of students with learning difficulties, cultural sensitivities and age-related curriculum requirements. Where an aspirant principal or administrator can demonstrate previous experience that matches the requirements of the position, then at least they are competitive for the position.

Other issues raised with the Taskforce:

- Deputy principals and HOLAs have the capacity to earn the same as a principal without assuming any end-of-line management responsibilities.
- At the initial point of salary increments, L3CT salaries are now equivalent to those of Level 3 school administrators.
- Student enrolment numbers at each school are the only measure for classification levels. No consideration is given to any other complexities that might be involved (i.e. socio-economic environment, location, etc).
- All senior high schools (SHS) are Level 6, irrespective of student enrolments (i.e., no distinction is made between the salary of a principal of a SHS with 140 students and a principal of a SHS with 1800 students).
- A feature of the current classification framework is that administrators’ levels are embedded in the category of the school. If a school is reclassified, administrators must move.
- There is no transfer system for school administrators. Appointment is from pools that operate for 30 months at a time, and carry their own set of problems.
- Movement within the levels is limited and disadvantages certain cohorts (i.e. the example cited above of the difficulties district high school principals have moving to metropolitan schools).
- Attracting principals to country schools is becoming more difficult because of the complications of getting back into the metropolitan area once they have completed their stint in the country.
Country schools are very often the most needy yet, because it has been so difficult to attract human resources to them, they are very often staffed with the least experienced personnel. Improving salaries, incentives and conditions will go some way to resolving the situation, but more needs to be done:

- There needs to be more flexibility in the appointment process. Succession planning is most important.
- Schools need to be classified by their characteristics rather than simply by student numbers.
- The DET may wish to consider ways in which inexperienced principals can be supported and educational information better shared, by innovative developments such as having a high-achieving, experienced principal taking a guiding, mentoring and overseeing role for 3-4 schools in a regional cluster.
- Develop a program for aspiring leaders – similar to that in the Department of Health (Leading 100 – WA Health’s Emerging Leaders Program).

Support staff

Administrative support staff are generally recruited locally and very often represent a stable core in a school, especially country schools. These individuals are often the ones with the corporate knowledge and are a vital link in succession planning. They are frequently the first contact the public may have with a school and, within classrooms, very often know the students and their social backgrounds well, which can be of great assistance to new teachers. Current titles do not adequately reflect the importance of such positions and need to be reviewed along with the nomenclature of other jobs.

Delegation of certain activities to schools has increased the amount of work for administrative support staff, who have responsibility for an increasing number of tasks. In a submission to the Taskforce, the WA State School Registrars’ Association Inc lists some of these as:

- financial management
- line and performance management of school support staff
- human resource management information system (HRMIS)
- student information management systems
- IT system upgrades
- merit selection of staff
- workers’ compensation
- planning and organisation of leave and relief
- faults and maintenance of buildings and grounds
- public relations/school marketing.

25 Department of Health WA, 2007, Leading 100 – WA Health’s Emerging Leaders Program
While responsibilities increase, staffing levels within the public sector have not altered, training is inadequate, status accorded to support staff is low and there is no recognised career path. The roles within school support staff categories include registrars (sometimes called business managers), library officers, school officers, information technology support and laboratory technicians (both science, and design and technology).

“Laboratory Technicians are required to have detailed knowledge of occupational safety and health legislative requirements to ensure that the science environment is safe for teachers and students. When a science teacher does not have a science background it is often the laboratory technician who trains the teacher about the components and safe usage of required chemicals.”

Submission #180

There needs to be greater official recognition of the contribution these staff members make to the operation of worksites and to include them in leadership and planning teams. Another section of this report has highlighted the difficulties faced by school staff trying to contend with an unmanageable workload. Teachers need more help to deal with difficult students; education assistants are already in the system and, in many instances, are already helping teachers. There need to be more of them – possibly one in every class – and the funding to support them.

The Taskforce supports a recent initiative developed by the DET in conjunction with Curtin University of Technology, which provides opportunities for education assistants to complete in two years a four-year bachelor of education, based on an assessment of prior learning and prior experience. Such courses have existed for some years now for AIEOs. Assurances must be provided in relation to the standard of graduates of such programs, with performance carefully monitored, especially in the early years.

New categories of administrative support staff need to be included in the school structure, perhaps along similar lines to the way the non-Government sector operates, with senior, well-qualified corporate business managers able to undertake the day-to-day responsibilities involving finance, building management, human resources processes, etc.
Recommendation 2: It is recommended that, in the public school sector, the Minister for Education and Training:

2.1 Enables more high-performing and achieving teachers (recognising particularly those who cater for special needs – Indigenous, diversity, inclusivity, etc) to be provided with opportunities to seek promotion to the higher salary level equivalent to that of the DET’s current L3CT by following a well-developed and articulated, transparent and equitable policy pathway, as described in the chapter above.

2.2 Provides for the development of two further promotional levels beyond L3CT, with the top level attracting a salary comparable to that available in other professions. The development of initial quotas for promotion to these positions will ensure an orderly and manageable promotions process in the early years of implementation.

2.3 Offers principals salaries which are comparable to their equivalents in the non-Government sector with similar accountability, duties, responsibilities and allowances, including four-six weeks of annual leave.

2.4 Reviews the ways in which inexperienced principals in the public sector are supported and consider alternative, innovative approaches such as having a high achieving, experienced principal take a mentoring, overseeing role for 3-4 other schools in a regional cluster.

2.5 Considers the way in which public sector schools are currently categorised and how this impacts on what a principal is paid. Principals’ pay should be based on work value. A rational base for differentiation in the salary of principals needs to be established.

2.6 Formulates expanded career progression pathways for school support staff and para-professionals so as to support development and retention, thereby facilitating their development and increasing the likelihood that they will remain in the system. It is also important to address their nomenclature to reflect the increasing importance of this cohort within schools.

2.7 Supports the continued development of appropriate training programs at the universities and TAFE for education para-professionals and other assistants leading to higher qualifications which, together with classroom experience, could, as appropriate, provide a level of advanced standing into teacher education conversion courses at university.

2.8 Introduces an expanded school structure which will raise (a) the numbers and (b) the status of support staff and provide a satisfying and worthwhile career path, freeing principals and teachers to focus on pedagogy.
If we want to create a workplace that values idealism, human connection and real, in-depth learning, we will have to create it ourselves.

PETER BLOCK
Chapter 3: Workplace and Housing Conditions

Discussion at State-wide forums and consideration of submissions received by the Taskforce indicate that conditions of both the workplace and, to a far greater extent, housing are sources of dissatisfaction within the education workforce. While this is a major difficulty for the public education sector, the Catholic and independent schools are now experiencing increasing problems in locating and affording appropriate housing in many country locations, notably in the Pilbara.

“Housing is a big issue. Some teachers would stay in the area if they were allowed to buy their house. Personally I think it not too onerous for teachers in such situations to have to commit to teach in the area for a set time period if they are allowed to buy their house at an attractive price. There have also been problems in Karratha recently with teachers in privately owned GROH houses being subject to extra inspections as landlords try to find ways that the lease can be broken so bigger rents can be sought on the open market. Also for the last couple of months it has been difficult to get maintenance done as GROH say they have run out of money for this financial year. In summary housing is a big factor in why teachers leave in this area.”

Submission #63

In general, rural and remote Western Australia lacks suitable, available houses, and the condition and maintenance of existing houses is a serious deterrent to teachers accepting rural and remote positions. The Taskforce has little doubt that the provision of housing of quality is necessary if first-class, experienced teachers are to be attracted and encouraged to stay and work in regional schools.

“The Department should work in partnership with major industries in rural areas, especially mining companies that want high quality local education for their employees. If these industries can be given the opportunity to provide additional funding … it would help to attract and retain quality teachers and administrators to these locations. This will also help to stop the exodus of teachers to these industries.”

Submission #190

Housing

“A recently employed lecturer has, for the past three weeks been living in the house of a friend’s friend. The premises are unfurnished and the lecturer has been sleeping on the floor.”

Submission #47
The following are some of the points which were made in relation to housing during discussion at the forums and in submissions:

- There is a need for bigger houses for large families.
- Problems develop when strangers have to share homes.
- Either GROH or the DET needs to employ more housing liaison officers to deal with maintenance, cleaning and furnishing issues.
- It would be sensible to enter into partnerships with business, industry, local and Federal Governments to help with the housing situation.
- There is a view that mining royalties might be reallocated, in part to help manage local housing.
- Furniture supplied in houses is often of poor quality and/or inadequate.
- Garden maintenance and management is often a problem.

The body previously known as the Government Employees Housing Authority is now the Government Regional Officers Housing division (GROH). GROH’s operations are currently being reviewed and officers from both the Taskforce and the reviewing committee have met to discuss areas of mutual interest. In the first instance it has been established that communication channels between the DET and GROH need to be improved to ensure that GROH thoroughly understands what the DET requires in terms of housing for teachers so that efficient planning can be undertaken.

From the point of view of teachers, the quality of housing is a burning issue and there is much concern about the security of houses, especially in the more remote areas (but not limited to them). The State Government needs to ensure that secure and safe homes of good quality are provided for staff being asked to relocate to work, and especially for those in challenging locations.

From GROH’s point of view, there have been instances when DET employees have shown little care or responsibility for looking after homes that have been allocated to them. The obvious answer to this is to ensure that official contracts are drawn up to safeguard the rights of tenants, property owners and agents. This will include regular maintenance schedules, as well as incoming and outgoing inspections.

There are issues of inequality in relation to housing. Those teaching staff in regional and remote locations who either own their own homes or buy them believe that they rewarded less well in comparison with fellow teachers whose accommodation is subsidised. Furthermore, subsidised housing is not provided for administrative staff. Similarly, DET policy generally precludes the provision of subsidised housing for locally engaged teaching staff whereas other Government agencies routinely provide houses for their locally engaged staff. The DET needs to review such inequalities.

Subsidies for power and especially air-conditioning for housing in rural and remote Western Australia also needs to be reviewed. Present subsidies are inadequate both in terms of the amount and the period of time for which it is provided (i.e. in Tom Price air-conditioning is subsidised from October to April but 1951-2007 statistics collected 130 kilometres away indicate that an additional month either side would go a long way to making staff happier). The current situation that staff pay the bills when they are presented and then seek reimbursement from the DET should be reviewed.
Statistics averaged from 1951–2007 at Wittenoom (data not available for Tom Price)

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Workplace conditions

The DET has responsibility for managing and maintaining 780 schools across the huge land mass of Western Australia (2.5 million square kilometres), 191 of which are in rural and remote areas. The Catholic sector maintains 158 schools, with 50 of these being in rural and remote areas. The independent sector accounts for 164 schools, 43 of which are outside the Perth metropolitan area.

The DET regularly reviews the provision and maintenance of building and equipment in schools. Nevertheless, the Taskforce was constantly made aware of major deficiencies, especially in some regional and remote schools, with many teachers expressing a view that “nothing was being done for them.” It might help if DET staff better understood the plan for renovation and replacement, and communications in this area need to be improved.

In terms of the fabric of school buildings and facilities, many public schools are old and fall well below the quality being currently applied to new school construction across the State, and these problems are not limited to the rural and remote areas. Because of their age, many school buildings are awkward and costly to maintain, to heat and cool.

Another problem with school conditions that has been brought to the Taskforce’s attention, especially in rural and remote locations, is the provision of appropriate specialist working areas (e.g. wet areas for art; laboratories for science and IT). One issue that came to light during the forum process is the lack of coordination between public education establishments, e.g. TAFE and schools, and the provision and sharing of facilities.

The more remote a school, the more essential becomes high-quality ICT with excellent broadband access and this has to be accompanied by the provision of technically able support for both staff and students. Larger schools may require a dedicated technician while in other situations a technician might manage a cluster of schools. More attention should be paid to better professional development in the ICT area.
Recommendation 3: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

3.1 Works within Government to provide substantial funding to address the shortage and quality of housing provided to teachers and lecturers in schools and TAFE colleges in regional and remote areas, ensuring that all avenues of funding are being fully utilised including funds from Federal programs, industry and business sponsorship and partnerships, local Governments and Regional Development Councils.

3.2 Works within Government to:
   • reconsider the support provided to regional teachers who own or are acquiring their own homes in that location to encourage local retention
   • review GROH’s Tenant Purchase Program
   • review the Department of Housing and Works’ Home Ownership Subsidy Scheme for Government Employees in Regional Western Australia.

It is further recommended that the Minister works with the Department of Education and Training so as to:

3.3 Review current policies concerning housing with a view to:
   • achieving equity with the other State Government employees
   • considering the housing needs of AIEOs and support staff in schools and TAFE colleges in rural and remote areas
   • extending the time period of financial support currently provided for home air-conditioning in rural and remote Western Australia, and paying for the costs direct to the provider.

3.4 Ensure the safety and security of students, staff and buildings so that schools meet the present expectations of the community; ensures adequate minimum standards of working conditions in classrooms (such as the provision of air conditioning and heating); and accelerates the renewal, replacement and refurbishment of public schools.

3.5 Investigate and encourage partnerships with local communities and businesses, and public-private partnerships which may lead to the provision of better school and community amenities, equipment and services such as childcare.

3.6 Review the level of technical support provided to schools and TAFE colleges, especially in relation to the technical support of ICT.

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If we remain wedded to the way education is currently provided we cannot imagine other ways...we need some imagination, some fantasy, some new ways of thinking – some magic in fact.

HEDLEY BEARE, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
Chapter 4: Leadership and Mentoring

Leadership

“Quality school leadership may be enacted by an individual or by a number of people within a school community. It provides direction, involves a process of influence with intention, and is value-based and vision-driven.”

Leadership in the Western Australian public education sector is provided at a number of levels: policy leadership emanates from the central office of the DET and may be transmitted to schools through district offices or directly; while district directors have a leadership role to ensure that, through the school review process, schools are engaging in work that promotes successful student achievement. However, the leadership area that impacts most directly on the work of teachers is that demonstrated at the school level by the principal and the leadership team. It is also at the school level that the school community most closely observes educational leadership.

Schools are having difficulty recruiting new leaders. Some schools have a harder job than others due to their location, their student intake and, increasingly, a decline in community support. Another factor that deters people from applying for leadership position, most notably in rural and remote schools, is a lack of certainty about transfer rights and an ability to be able move to more favourable locations when required. The result has been an increase in short-term, acting appointments and these have, in some instances, had a deleterious effect upon schools and their communities. The Taskforce recognises that it is difficult for acting leaders, especially when their tenure in a position is likely to be brief, to be able to tackle long-standing problems and to both make and carry through appropriate decisions.

While principals are expected to provide leadership, they have been doing so in the context of a regulatory environment which has been developed in central office and reinforced through district offices, often in the manner of control rather than support, and often constraining creative leadership within schools. The DET’s recent strategy, Classroom First, acknowledges that each school serves a particular community and needs to develop its own unique ethos. The Taskforce anticipates that the Classroom First Strategy will empower principals by moving from a structure based on compliance to one which provides sufficient flexibility to meet the expectations and needs of the whole school community: students, teachers and parents.

The role of the principal is to demonstrate educational leadership, staff management and community liaison; however, in addition to bureaucratic processes, business, financial and facilities management have been increasingly devolved to schools, diverting school leaders from their knowledge, qualification and experience base.

In its 2007 report referred to above, Teaching Australia states that school leadership “is affected by tighter funding constraints and a growing culture of ‘managerialism’” (p.20), for which many principals are inadequately prepared, which has resulted in:

- increased accountability requirements
- market regulation of education (governments/business have more say over schooling)
- moves toward self-managing/self-governing schools (within the context of greater accountability/competition)
- more complexity in the role (performing as managers and marketers in addition to being education leaders)
- mounting parental and societal expectations of schools
- increased work hours and stress levels
- lack of focus on core work of teaching and learning
- a diminishing sense of their own expertise when dealing with elements such as centrally imposed curriculum changes.

There is currently no requirement for school principals to hold anything other than a teaching qualification and, while there are a range of developmental programs and courses provided by universities, professional associations and the DET’s Leadership Centre, they are neither mandatory nor is there any requirement for them to be undertaken in a progressive sequence. The Robson Taskforce recommended the DET provide “stronger direction on the priorities for leadership professional development” and adequately resource the Leadership Centre, which was established to address the needs of school leaders and those aspiring to leadership positions. This position is strongly supported.

Leadership matters, but a number of submissions have made the point that school leadership is not always of a quality that enhances the school within the community or is supportive of staff. Selection may need to be enhanced by making relevant leadership modules provided by the Leadership Centre mandatory prior to selection and appointment, and be more consistently used in schools to develop teachers who are identified as having leadership qualities.

*Funding should be provided to encourage teachers to enhance their professional knowledge and practice through further university studies and there should be greater recognition of further qualifications in the salary scales and in promotional requirements.*

Submission #185

Principals need more support to undertake the day-to-day corporate business so they may concentrate on classroom, educational and academic issues, provide mentoring and development for staff and student teachers, and lead by establishing the educational profile of their school, both internally and within its local community. This would be achieved by introducing more levels of senior administrative support into public schools (see the section on workload for proposals on how to achieve this), along the lines of school structures in the non-Government sector. This should include providing principals with personal assistants to deal with increasing correspondence, disseminating information and other administrative functions. School principals should be allowed greater professional autonomy in leading their schools, and provided with the central support and professional development to enable them to do so.

“Leadership aspirant programs should be fully-funded, university accredited and focus on leadership. This will encourage strong applicants and make the selection of principals a lot clearer. The model offered in New Zealand with accreditation and mentorship is worthy of consideration.

- Support educational research and leadership in partnership with the universities in WA, Australia and around the world. Use this research in developing policy and position.
- Re-establish the Leadership Centre outside the influence of the Department, possibly in conjunction with WACOT, and include all sectors and systems of education. Its brief should be about education leadership, not management.”

Submission #257

This approach would have two major impacts on public school leadership positions. One is that the level of remuneration of principals should acknowledge both the complexity and significant responsibilities that fall to a principal for the wellbeing of students and teachers (see Chapter 1). Reducing control from the central office of the DET is going to further increase these responsibilities, as is the case in the non-Government sector. The other is that, similar to principals in the non-Government sector, public school principals should be required to be onsite for specified hours and typically have between four and seven weeks of annual leave, with appropriate allowances for public holidays. This requires a considerable shift in culture but is consistent with the professional status of the principal class and with the situation noted in the non-Government education sector. It will enable full attention to be paid to the delivery of education.

Mentoring

Graduates enter teaching with experience in the classroom which varies significantly. In an undergraduate course, the practicums provide between 80 and 100 days of in-school experience and, in a postgraduate course, approximately 45 days of experience. However, the difference between the practicum and a first appointment is significant, with the degree of responsibility that a beginning teacher is required to accept being of a much higher order than that experienced in the practicum.

A system-wide, formal mentoring program is needed to assist beginning teachers to manage the responsibilities of their role, including classroom management, curriculum planning and delivery, assessment and reporting. Formal mentoring should not be limited to beginning teachers either. To varying degrees and in appropriate contexts it should be provided to:

- experienced teachers new to a school
- teachers returning from extended leave
- teachers taking on a new role including promotional positions within the school, particularly if this requires a new skill set
- teachers appointed to the school in promotional positions.

Schedule D of the School Education Act Employees’ (Teachers and Administrators) General Agreement 2006 lists the duties of senior teachers which include a requirement, negotiated within the school as appropriate, for “Providing mentoring, supervision, professional support, counselling and guidance for teachers (including student teachers and graduate teachers), about classroom performance, curriculum implementation and resource development.” The Taskforce acknowledges that the additional range being introduced into the L3CT levels represents a valuable promotional step for teachers and will include a sizeable mentor component. It must be supported with time allowances in recognition of the fact the role requires commitments from both the teacher mentor and the teachers with whom they are working.
There is a strong case for principals to play a mentoring role. As mentioned above, all principals have a teaching background and many, in the interests of upholding both their teaching integrity and credibility in the community, would like to play a more active role in classrooms. This should be encouraged. Provided that the supports the Taskforce has recommended to relieve teachers and principals in other areas of their workload are introduced, such mentoring needs to be more systemically applied in schools.

Raising the bar in relation to mentoring, and developing the skills and competencies of all educators (especially beginning teachers) in addition to providing opportunities for developing distributed leadership within schools, will enhance succession planning in the education workforce.
Recommendation 4: It is recommended that, in the public education sector, the Minister for Education and Training:

4.1 Mandates an education and training program for aspiring principals, elements of which must be completed before the appointment of new principals is confirmed.

4.2 Provides appropriate professional development for newly-appointed principals (i.e. those appointed within the last three years) and encourages all principals to undertake appropriate ongoing, extended professional development.
In a completely rational society, the best of us would aspire to be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something less, because passing civilization along from one generation to the next ought to be the highest honor and the highest responsibility anyone could have.

—LEE IACOCCA
Chapter 5: Status of the Profession

Many, if not all, individual classroom teachers continue to be highly-regarded by parents (DET 2003, 2007) and by their peers yet, increasingly, teaching is not being promoted as a profession of choice: teachers are not commending it to their students and parents are not encouraging their children to become teachers. Evidence appears to indicate that teachers are not confident of the respect they engender, particularly in their own school communities. This is tending to exacerbate feelings of low status from within the profession. Ironically, research commissioned by the Taskforce and carried out by TNS Social Research\(^\text{29}\) shows that respect and regard for teachers by the community, parents and students is greater than many teachers believe and, indeed, than most teachers have for their own profession.

Some of the contributing factors are that, over time, salary levels have failed to maintain parity with other professions which have similar qualifications and responsibilities, and the status of the profession has been further eroded by the perception of decreasing entry score requirements for university teaching courses\(^\text{30}\). This, too, is nowhere near as bad as both teachers and the general public believe. For example, the 2007 TER data shows that only 2 percent of students were admitted to teaching courses with a TER rating of 60 or lower, and that 51 percent had a rating of 75 or above, with 9 percent rating over TER 90. Also, many students with a rating of 70 or below have not come direct from school but from a variety of other backgrounds and life experiences.

“In teachers feel undervalued with continued damaging and demoralising media coverage which has a growing negative impact on parent and community support. The constant political conflict between State and Federal Government only adds to this negative community perception. Increasing workloads, negative community perceptions and the declining number and quality of university students entering the profession is adding to the problem. The Department, through the “Complaints Management Process”, also needs to deal with vexatious and false claims from parents and students.”

Submission #190

In addition to these aspects, an expectation has developed that the education sector plays a key role in resolving social problems and providing the means by which good behaviours and attitudes are shaped and elevated. In reality, the variety and complexity of many of these issues is broad and often difficult or impossible to solve, with the result that the education community is becoming increasingly cynical. Judging from submissions received and feedback from public forums, behaviour management of students at school is a significant issue, with many teachers facing challenges that distract them from pedagogical progress with the majority of their students.

This has occurred at a time when the workload of teachers has increased exponentially as a result of inclusive classrooms, increased compliance issues, additions to the syllabus/curriculum (especially outcomes based education), new requirements of Government and the like. The increased workload from such initiatives is a likely consequence of failure to provide appropriate and adequate resource support and ongoing change management information and training. The commitment demonstrated by many

\(^{29}\) TNS, 2007, Teacher Recruitment.

\(^{30}\) DES WA, 2007, TER by field of Education for 2007 intake into undergraduate education courses
teachers toward their students, their schools and their communities has suffered as a direct consequence of these factors and is hidden by the predominantly negative media of recent times. Teachers are more visible to the public today, and the media, which is often highly critical of the role that schools and teachers play, consistently seeks controversial and sensational material.

The Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT) has a key role in the promotion of the teaching profession, and public confidence can be increased through a regulatory system that ensures teachers are suitably qualified, fit to teach, meet professional standards and remain engaged in ongoing professional learning. It is anticipated that WACOT will take an even stronger role in the promotion of teaching, and the education process and system, in the years ahead as its role and importance begin to be better understood by the profession.

In 2001, the Taskforce on structures, services and resources supporting Government schools, in their report “Investing in Government Schools: Putting Children First” showed they were very aware that teachers were increasingly concerned about what they saw as the declining status of their profession. That Taskforce strongly supported the Government in the development of WACOT as a major approach toward improving the status of teachers within the community. They also made comment about the need for better career progression and higher salary levels for classroom teachers, especially at the upper end of the scale, as important factors in regard to status. These issues are central to the question of teacher status and are dealt with elsewhere in this report.

Most research reinforces the view reported above that teaching as a profession in Australia has declined in status over recent decades (DEST, 2006). From the submissions received and in dialogue within the forums around the State, there was discussion with regard to teaching no longer being the career of choice for young people from upwardly-mobile families, as it has been in the decades before.

“A number of stakeholders expressed concern that the status of teaching has been diminished as a consequence of the politicisation of teaching policy nationally and locally. This affects the attachment of current teachers to the Department, the employment value proposition for potential employees and demand for teaching degrees in universities.”

The UK’s Training and Development Authority for Schools (2006), which has been very successful in improving teacher status, quality and supply in the UK, makes a very strong point in its report that no one recommendation on its own will bring about the changes sought in education. Rather, it is the pattern of change derived from a number of recommendations, acting in concert, which brings about lasting change.

32 DEST, 2006, Attitudes to Teaching as a Career: A Synthesis of Attitudinal Research.
Recommendation 5: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

5.1 Takes every opportunity to enunciate support for teachers and lecturers and their value to the Western Australian community.

5.2 Identifies a body such as WACOT, or a select group of senior classroom teachers, to provide practical and informed comment on educational and classroom matters.

5.3 Provides financial support for an ongoing marketing campaign to emphasise:
   - the importance of well-trained, respected teachers to the wellbeing of the wider community
   - the influence which good teachers and learning processes have on the life and career of individuals
   - the role which parents should play in supporting their schools and teachers, and in their responsibility to adequately prepare their children for education
   - the professional attributes which teacher education courses provide
   - the job satisfaction that teaching engenders
   - the range of wonderful environments in which a teacher may work in Western Australia.

5.4 Notes that no one recommendation by itself will improve the status of teaching but it is the implementation of a number of recommendations (as expressed in this document) which will progressively raise the status of teaching within the general community and within the profession.

5.5 Ensures that principals in public schools are provided with and are responsible for a staffing budget which will enable them to appoint a mix of teaching and other staff at different levels.

5.6 Provides a set of delegations and appropriate accountability procedures in the public sector which will increase principal autonomy, including a greater responsibility for teacher performance management.

5.7 Ensures a budget structure for public schools which provides realistic discretionary spending in agreed areas which, while having a common core, will vary from school to school.

5.8 Recognises the importance of mentoring to the profession by establishing promotional opportunities for teacher mentors with appropriate salary and time allowances in public sector schools and colleges.
Chapter 6: Attraction and Transition into Teaching

“Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.”

MARK TWAIN
Chapter 6: Attraction and Transition into Teaching

The decision to enrol in teacher training is sensitive to the existing teacher education programs, numbers of university places available and the provision of specific initiatives such as scholarships. Similarly, individuals transitioning into a career or taking a new direction within education, whether they are school leavers, enrolled university students, career changers or teachers seeking new or different challenges, need to be provided with the means to enable them to ease their passage into the profession. This can be helped by offering both financial (i.e. scholarship) incentives and by providing maximum recognition for prior study and experience.

The attractiveness of teaching as a career was discussed at every forum and in most of the submissions made to the Taskforce. As with many of the other factors involved, attraction is not a stand alone issue and will only begin to improve when the broader picture is addressed. Issues such as the provision of scholarships, adequate salaries and allowances, reasonable workplace and housing conditions, improved career pathways, a better media profile, high quality mentoring and leadership, a supportive administration and the like are all factors which work in concert to enable teaching to be seen as an attractive career option. All of these issues impact on a potential application for a teaching course and enable teaching to be seen as an excellent option among the careers available, or not. The education system and, indeed, the profession itself have to put their house in order if they are to appeal to a larger audience. Potential applicants for teaching programs are very sensitive to what those already in the profession have to say about their own choice of career. It is clear to the Taskforce that many teachers and lecturers consistently criticise and denigrate their profession both publicly and in private discussion and that this has a large negative effect, especially on young individuals seeking a useful and rewarding career. Furthermore, it seems that some teachers and lecturers are actively counselling their students not to consider teaching as a career, especially if they have or are likely to have a high TER ranking.

“A persistently negative media undoubtedly has served to steadily erode the profession of teaching in the public’s eye, and it seems that this has further impacted on the career choices of school leavers. When banner headlines are used to parade difficulties while positive messages associated with schooling and the work of teachers are very rarely given any prominence, it is hardly surprising that becoming a teacher is no longer an attractive choice for many talented school leavers. We would welcome a healthy, informed and balanced debate of important educational issues in the public domain, but are disappointed that the media seem unwilling to engage in such an exercise.”

Submission #102
First and foremost we must address issues that have affected the attractiveness of teaching as a profession. Intrinsic factors have been mentioned but many prospective students entering University are also considering extrinsic factors such as scales of remuneration. One is almost inclined to nominate a new 3 R’s in education Remuneration, Remuneration, Remuneration.

Currently, those school students with an appropriate TER score can apply for acceptance into a bachelor of education degree at one of the five Western Australian universities and undertake their course either in the metropolitan area or in one of eight country towns, Albany, Broome, Bunbury, Esperance, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Karratha and Port Hedland.

In recent years, four public sector secondary schools, Thornlie Senior High School, Harvey Senior High School, Esperance Senior High School and Sevenoaks Senior College deliver the ‘Study of Teaching’, a stand-alone course of study for Years 11 and 12. Enrolled students undertake a formal curriculum which teaches them about the profession; introduces them to some aspects of the knowledge and skills required; enables participation in workplace learning opportunities at schools and provides them with mentors of quality to guide them through the course and to nurture and develop their desire to teach. The Taskforce believes the course would be better understood by the title, the ‘Study of Education’.

At present, this remains as a course for high school graduation, but has not as yet been accepted as a Tertiary Entrance Examination (TEE) subject. Its development has been strongly and actively supported by staff from three Western Australian universities. It has also been the subject of a successful PhD thesis within the University of Western Australia (UWA). The data derived from the latter study clearly shows that those students completing the course have successfully made the transition to teaching and teacher assistant courses at university or TAFE colleges. This appears to be an innovative and highly successful program which has the ability if more widely implemented to make a difference to the number of committed students entering the profession. Other schools are interested in being involved in the program and offering it as a TEE subject should this be agreed. The Taskforce strongly supports this initiative.

The Study of Teaching programs of learning, however, are designed to inform students about the profession of teaching by involving them in relevant curriculum and immersing them in real life teaching environments so that students can gain realistic perspectives about the rewards and challenges associated with teaching.

Students enrolled in university courses other than teaching are eligible for entry into a graduate diploma program in education. This can be an attractive career option for students at the end of their degree course, especially if they are from an area of teaching need. At this time and for the reasons explained elsewhere in this document, individuals can be induced to enter such programs given the right incentives in regard to scholarship support, including Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) repayment (or a financial inducement), better starting salary, improved career prospects and the like. It is encouraging to note that these initiatives are currently underway. The various systems, as part of workforce planning, should be monitoring the effectiveness of such strategies over time.
Attention needs to be paid toward better integrating the professional development programs available within the education systems and university courses, leading to credit toward post-graduate qualifications. This would be facilitated by having a stronger and more consistent involvement of teachers and school leaders in the review and development of teacher education courses.

In its marketing information on teaching as a career, authorities ought to take into account a most successful UK approach. A teaching career was promoted as an initial qualification, enabling a person to potentially enjoy a 7-10 year period as a teacher, after which they may wish to enter other professions. Teaching provides many skills and attributes which are of value elsewhere in the workforce. Teaching is also a profession to which teachers may wish to return after a period of time in the general workforce. It is important for both public and private education providers to welcome individuals who may take these pathways and to reward them in regard to the totality of their previous careers and knowledge.

In relation to career change, the State Government’s recent initiatives increasing support to enable teaching assistants to study to become fully qualified teachers is applauded. Many teaching assistants have wonderful skills and extensive experience, are often committed to working in a particular district or region and should be given full and appropriate recognition of their prior knowledge in entering such programs. This particularly applies to the encouragement of Indigenous teaching assistants (AIEOs) who are usually committed to their town or region and need to undertake most of their studies in that place. It is anticipated that this excellent initiative will provide alternative pathways into teaching for community groups who may otherwise be prevented from ever considering teaching as a career.

Active encouragement (financial and verbal) needs to be made for those primary school teachers who seek to be retrained as secondary school teachers and for those who seek to enter the profession after a career elsewhere.

In relation to career change the Victorian State Government has a program in place which allows two years of training and practicum in a designated school under the general supervision of a teacher while completing an approved teacher training course. This program provides a reasonable salary and allowances to enable a professional from another career to make such a transition. Similar support is provided in Western Australia. It needs to be regularly assessed to ensure that support remains sufficient to encourage and enable such transitions.

During 2007, WACOT has exercised its authority wisely with regard to the use of the limited authority to teach (LAT) provision within the WACOT Act. This has allowed schools (private and public) to negotiate the provision of a LAT with appropriately qualified individuals who hold a degree or equivalent qualification in an area of special need and/or have appropriate knowledge and life skills. This is of great value at a time of critical teacher shortage whilst, at the same time, maintaining the integrity of the profession. As part of the arrangement, the schools concerned provide appropriate levels of mentoring, support and on-the-job-training, and LATs have been very well-received by the system as a whole.
Similarly, WACOT and the schools may wish to consider a category of “adjunct educator” (similar to universities use of adjunct professors), applied to exemplary individuals with substantial knowledge, experience and community regard, to enable them regularly to teach subjects or parts of subjects within a school environment. They may also work directly to assist teachers with skills and knowledge development. It is likely that such individuals will be concurrently employed in, or recently retired from, senior positions in industry, commerce, academia or the public service. They have the potential to be of immense value to a school, not just in the knowledge they have and convey, but also in the prestige they carry.

The recent comprehensive scholarship scheme announced by the Western Australian Minister for Education and Training is noted. This scheme is aimed at attracting high-performing students into education courses, and encouraging and supporting education assistants and especially AIEOs to make the transition into teaching as a career. It is also critical for those perhaps contemplating career changes in mid-life after working for many years in other occupations. Similar provisions should be applied to enable skilled and respected tradespersons and professionals to entertain a career change into becoming TAFE lecturers.

During 2007, the DET actively promoted a career in teaching in Western Australia and managed to attract a number of teachers from overseas. This was only partially successful given that the shortage of teachers has become a global phenomenon in recent times. In addition to the areas targeted by the DET, two further areas might be considered in a future initiative:

- It is understood that, at present, large numbers of Australian qualified teachers are teaching in the greater London metropolitan area. A specific campaign may well encourage many to return to Australia.
- The Taskforce was approached on three or four occasions by South African qualified teachers currently working in Western Australia with the view that there were a large number of South African teachers who could be persuaded to come to live and teach in Western Australia. WACOT would need to be involved, as many of these teachers are three year trained.

“A government funded campaign needs to be developed to promote the importance of the teaching profession and to strongly publicise the opportunities offered in teaching. The campaign must be part of a larger, long term strategy to help rectify the declining status of the profession. Included in the strategy must be significant improvements in remuneration and career and work restructuring.”

Submission #185
Recommendation 6: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

6.1 Provides financial scholarships to graduating school students based on merit, with those students with a high TER ranking being provided with greater incentive. Scholarships should not be provided to applicants – other than those from the country – with an entry rank of less than 80. Additional scholarships should also be made available to the following categories of graduating school students who will be able to complete at least part of their education process in one of eight country locations:
- those from regional and remote Western Australia
- those of Indigenous heritage.

6.2 Regularly reviews the scholarships provided to open pathways for para-professionals and education assistants, including AIEOs, to complete their pre-service education and qualify as teachers.

6.3 Encourages WACOT to establish and promote the category of ‘adjunct educator’ within the public and non-Government school sectors.

6.4 Supports the development of the ‘Study of Teaching’ as a TEE subject, continues financial support of those schools currently involved in the project and extends the initiative to other secondary schools across Western Australia. These “lighthouse” schools would need to be clearly identified, advertised, promoted and financially resourced.

6.5 Works with the public, Catholic and independent school sectors, WACOT, SSTUWA, the Independent Education Union and the professional associations to support an extensive marketing campaign, attractive to young adults and aimed at favourably presenting teaching as an exciting, worthwhile and rewarding profession of great value to the community.

6.6 Facilitates the movement of teachers between the public and non-Government school sectors by:
   a) recognising and rewarding years of service in the system as a whole; and
   b) allowing the portability of long service leave.

6.7 Ensures that relevant experiences in other countries and Australian States are taken into account in DET employment processing.
The central idea was to conceive a school as being child-centred, with a workforce operating as a team, with up-to-date skills and knowledge. The notion of teachers educating the children, while other staff worked in the background was challenged. The role of classroom assistants was highlighted as freeing up teachers to teach.

TDA REPORT, UK, APRIL 2006
Chapter 7: Workload Issues

Classroom teachers: The key focus of a classroom teacher should be on the planning, preparation and delivery of learning opportunities for students. Within the scope of this responsibility comes assessment, reporting on student progress, and pastoral care considerations. In addition, within the context of the annual school planning cycle, teachers contribute to school review, school accountability, school improvement and school development planning.

“The Auditor General’s Report – Audit Results Report 4, April 2007, Section Four, states:

“DET needs to address ongoing weaknesses in asset management, financial management and controls in schools and the lack of follow-up of internal audit issues raised at schools.”

The reasons for this statement can, in part, be accredited to:

• Workload – lack of sufficient staffing in schools’ admin areas
• Lack of training – for admin support staff and school administrators
• Lack of qualified relief admin support staff
• Lack of trained staff in district offices to assist schools
• Lack of trained staff in central office to assist district offices and schools.”

In their submissions to the Taskforce, many teachers have evidenced concerns with the growing workload pressures. Factors contributing include the many number of routine clerical and administrative tasks within a school which are not directly related to the core business of teaching and learning, increasing levels of accountability, demands brought about by student management and inclusion of students with disabilities and expectations related to the provision of individualised programs of learning.

The Classroom First strategy recently announced by the Western Australian Director General of Education and Training is aimed at allowing teachers to devote their attention to their prime responsibilities.

In 2000, a study in the UK identified a list of 25 tasks routinely carried out by a classroom teacher which could be assigned to a support person:

• collecting money
• chasing absences (teachers will need to inform the relevant member of staff when students are absent from their class or from school)
• bulk photocopying
• copy typing
• producing standard letters (teachers may be required to contribute as appropriate in formulating the content of standard letters)
• producing class lists (teachers may be required to be involved as appropriate in allocating students to a particular class)
• record keeping and filing (teachers may be required to contribute to the content of records)
• classroom display (teachers will make professional decisions in determining what material is displayed in and around their classroom)
• analysing attendance figures (it is for teachers to make use of the outcome of analysis)
• processing exam results (teachers will need to use the analysis of exam results)
• collating pupil reports
• administering work experience (teachers may be required to support pupils on work experience – including through advice and visits)
• administering examinations (teachers have a professional responsibility for identifying appropriate examinations for their pupils)
• invigilating examinations
• administering teacher cover
• ICT troubleshooting and minor repairs
• commissioning new ICT equipment
• ordering supplies and equipment (teachers may be involved in identifying needs)
• stocktaking
• cataloguing, preparing, issuing and maintaining equipment and materials
• minuting meetings (teachers may be required to communicate action points from meetings)
• coordinating and submitting bids (teachers may be required to make a professional input into the content of bids)
• seeking and giving personnel advice
• managing pupil data (teachers will need to make use of the analysis of pupil data)
• input of pupil data (teachers will need to make the initial entry of pupil data into school management systems).

To this list the following might be added:
• school yard, bus and car park duties
• sick bay supervision
• purchasing of resources.

“Despite my experience and success as a principal over many years (22 years) I am seriously considering whether I will ever return to this position. The role impacted on my wellbeing due to the daily pressures I was under with the incredible expectations from so many areas. I found I spent so much time on non-educational issues such as applying for funds for maintenance, capital works, managing staffing & union issues, which are in some cases quite removed from teaching and learning. I did visit classrooms daily but with 27 classes it was difficult to get to every class each week and if I took the time to do this (which I did) I found I was doing huge amounts of work at home and coming in on weekends. What I did value though was developing other leaders across the school. The best part of my job was sharing the leadership successes of others, mentoring and coaching them. I was frustrated with the overburdening of computer work, administrative tasks that just had to be done, which took me away from teachers and students. One of my staff commented to me in my last year there. “You came to us a happy, energetic, outgoing principal who we saw daily in classrooms to someone who looks tired and ‘worn out’.” This was exactly as I felt.”

Submission #79

On a daily basis, the majority of a teacher’s time is defined industrially as spent in the classroom with very little opportunity for planning and assessment of student learning. Teachers who seek excellence, therefore, spend significant amounts of time outside the industrial definition of their role fulfilling planning and assessment requirements; ‘reporting time’ is often the busiest of a teacher’s year.

From a yearly frame of reference, a teacher’s working year aligns closely with the student academic year (5/6 weeks holiday over December/January and 2 weeks at the conclusion of each term). While there is a natural cycle of teaching that subscribes to the need for term holidays, the inability of all teachers to work together outside student contact time is a significant limitation to a school’s capacity to effectively pursue
their primary goal and may add to the isolation of teachers in their classrooms. Industrially, school leadership is limited in its capacity to bring staff together to plan effectively and assess student learning outside several mandated professional development days during the course of the year.

Curriculum change

Over the past ten years, major curriculum change has been introduced across the school systems in Western Australia. In Years K-10, the implementation of a student outcomes focus on learning through the Curriculum Framework has added significant workload for teachers, who have had to spend a great deal of their time developing curriculum and assessment materials as a result of the consequent cessation of the development of syllabus documents. It is only in recent times that the DET has recommenced the development of such materials to support teachers in planning and preparation. Eventually syllabus materials will be available to teachers in all sectors; to-date, however, availability is still limited. In Years 11 and 12, new courses of study have been developed, but significant difficulties in implementation have resulted in uncertainty, delays and the re-writing of courses. This has been particularly felt by English teachers who led the initial implementation of the new courses.

Education assistants

The current situation in classrooms necessitates regular teacher involvement and commitment to the behaviour management of difficult and special needs students. These areas require considerable investment of time and energy by a classroom teacher and detract from the ability of the teacher to focus on the learning needs of the majority of the class. The employment of more education assistants (special needs) in classrooms with such students would enable teachers to more fairly distribute time and attention among their students.

Inclusive education

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the associated Education Standards require that schools make appropriate provisions for students with disabilities to ensure that these students are able to participate in school programs and to have the opportunity to realise their academic potential. It also requires teachers to undertake appropriate professional development courses so as to be better able to understand and manage such students.

The implementation of the Act and the Standards requires that teachers prepare and implement individual education plans (IEPs). Aligned with this is the increasing trend toward the integration of students with disabilities into the regular classroom setting. This has an impact on teachers’ workloads both in the preparation of the plan and its integration. There is also an impact on the teaching and learning environment within the classroom given that the teacher must ensure that each student within the group receives appropriate attention.

A number of submissions indicate that at least some successful teachers find that IEPs are complicated and time-consuming to write and believe they exaggerate and maintain differences within the classroom. They say they find it more productive and equitable to use exemplary instructional design to meet the needs of all learners, incorporating peer mentoring and flexible student groupings with multi-level learning and assessment tasks. At present there are three categories for which IEPs are compulsory:

- If a school has students with identified disabilities and they want additional resources through the Schools Plus initiatives.
- For children with significant attendance issues (as from mid-2008).
- For children in care (previously wards of the court).
In 2004, the State Government invested $40 million into support for a 10-point action plan which was developed within the DET to support inclusive learning within Western Australian classrooms. The funding allowed a 5-7 year cycle of evolutionary change (the Schools Plus program) centred about having “Learning Support Coordinators” in every school to assist and integrate the initiative. The coordinators have been trained to be able to teach teachers and assist each school in the development and implementation of their own inclusive learning plan. Currently the coordinators are working within 500+ schools and will be in all public sector schools by the end of 2008. This is a commendable, well-run and organised program which is starting to have a system-wide effect. In most respects, Western Australia leads the nation in its innovative approach to inclusive learning. Notwithstanding this, in both written submissions and at the forums, many teachers commented on what they saw as the adverse consequences of inclusive education on their individual workloads and their ability to provide appropriate levels of teaching support for all students within their classrooms.

Both IEPs and inclusion are now an accepted and required part of a teacher’s work and hence a review of the support available to teachers both in the development of IEPs and within the classroom generally is necessary. This review should cover support by psychologists, therapists and education assistants. Such support is essential in ensuring that teachers are able to deliver quality education to all their students.

Behaviour management

This is an increasingly complex, challenging and difficult area that anecdotally has resulted in many public school teachers leaving the profession or moving to the non-Government sector. The non-Government sector, while working diligently to manage student behavioural problems will, when all else fails, terminate the enrolment, which can result in the student enrolling in a public school. There are examples evident in the system which show that behaviour modification is possible under some circumstances and conditions, all of which require considerable investment in human and/or capital resources. These include:

- a senior appointment within a school to handle behaviour management
- very clear policy and guidelines with consistency of application of standards and rules by all administrators, teachers and support staff within a school
- community support
- effective communication with parents concerning the behaviour expected of their children and their own responsibilities in this regard
- more male teachers in primary schools
- community police presence in the school grounds
- improving literacy and numeracy skills at primary levels so that secondary schooling is neither hampered nor made impossible for the students to achieve
- providing more special classes and/or schools
- providing more professional support for the children
- more behaviour management practice included in ongoing teacher training
- increasing collaboration and communication with appropriate Government agencies so that teachers are aware of current problems/situations relating to particular students
- greater promotion of alternative pathways
- effective monitoring of student behaviour
- focus upon leadership and accountability.
For the present system of inclusion and for the management of aberrant behaviours to take place in the context of teaching and learning, many if not most classroom teachers will require the additional support of an education assistant. The alternative is likely to be to remove both groups from the classroom and have them taught and managed in special environments.

Classroom management strategies (CMS) as developed within the DET are now incorporated into teaching courses in at least three of the Western Australian universities. It is clearly important for all teachers to know and understand the CMS approach if learning for all students is to be maximised and also to ensure that classrooms are safe and free from violence. In offering CMS professional development programs, the DET ensures that education administrators and teachers:

- develop excellent, practical strategies for handling behavioural issues
- understand their rights and duties in relation to behaviour management
- are aware of the procedures in place to call on the police as necessary
- are provided with advice about what to do (i.e. move-on notices, violence restraining orders, pressing charges, etc).

Substantial funding ($16.5 million) has been applied to the Behaviour Management and Discipline Strategy, of which the vast amount ($14.5 million) is available directly to schools to support teachers in managing behavioural problems with students and, at times, with parents. The funding may be applied in a number of ways and is often used to train youth transition workers and behaviour assistants as non-teaching support staff, directly helping with issues such as health and problems at home. The transition worker works alongside and with the student(s), assisting with performance and behaviour. The funding may also be used more generally within a school to manage aberrant behaviour; for example, at Hedland Senior High School, a dedicated behaviour management expert was identified and appointed at deputy principal level. The programs he put in place for staff and students have led to a marked reduction in aberrant behaviour within the school and could serve as a model for the system as a whole.

Support for the work of teachers by educational psychologists is essential in addressing the issues of inclusive education and behaviour management. In addition, the support of psychologists both educational and clinical, and of social workers, is vital if teachers are to be able to address both the needs of students and the ever-growing expectations that the community has of the role of schools in socialising young people and in supporting them within the context of the family. It is important that the existing ratio of psychologists to students is revised to reflect the increasing pressure on schools, and that the role of social workers as additional support be examined.

Within the Western Australian education sector there are seven schools which offer alternative settings for re-engaging students with learning which they may have missed in their education and equipping them with basic pre-employment skills and the confidence to move on. Five of these are independent and two Catholic, and they are classified by the State Government as “schools for students at risk”. A funding condition for the schools is that they are established virtually as “schools of last resort” for students with significant social, emotional and/or behavioural issues who are referred by other agencies and schools. A common characteristic is the disengagement of the students from previous schools as most have exhibited extensive truanting and non-attendance. The majority of students are referred from public schools. The five independent schools refer to themselves as the “CARE” schools – CARE standing for their focus on curriculum and re-engagement in education – and they employ social workers or youth workers to assist students to re-engage.
A recurring issue for these schools is the lack of funding. Unlike at other Catholic and independent schools, the families of the students referred do not expect to pay private school fees (as generally they did not seek to choose a “private school” education for their children) and yet the funding model applicable to non-Government schools limits the amount of public funding (State and Federal) available to these schools. Therefore, the schools have revenue deficits of around 25% compared with mainstream non-Government schools that receive similar levels of public funds. Accordingly, the schools operate with significantly lower standards of facilities and resources than conventional schools (although this creates a different kind of learning environment that in many ways is conducive to alienated students re-engaging). Not only should more schools like CARE schools be considered, but public funding to them should be reviewed if, as the schools assert, they are doing what the public schools should be doing for these particular students.

In addition to these schools, in June 2007 the Minister announced the trialling of specialist behaviour centres for violent and disruptive high school students. Three have been opened. Five behaviour centres are currently being developed for primary school students and are expected to be opened in 2008. These centres are for disruptive students for whom conventional forms of behaviour management by mainstream schools has largely failed; in these centres the underlying cause of the bad behaviour will be diagnosed and dealt with utilising competent professional support.

These facilities assist many schools that are struggling with very disruptive students. Two are metropolitan-based, with the third located in the Goldfields (Kalgoorlie), but many behavioural problems plague country schools which need far better recourse to offsite help. Behaviour management is a challenging area for new teachers, many of whom start their careers in country schools. The area is not sufficiently well-covered in teacher training courses and is an issue which needs to be addressed by course providers. Country schools also experience a greater turn-over of staff and the follow-on effect of this on disruptive students exacerbates the problem. More support structures for country schools is essential, especially in partnership with other Government departments, community services and with industry.

**Relief teachers**

Ready access to a consistent supply of relief teachers is essential to cover both short and long-term, planned and unplanned, teacher absences. The supply of relief teaches has become more critical in recent years, especially in regional and remote locations. Some DET primary schools even require teachers to find their own replacements. Relief teachers play an essential role in supporting the continuity of day-to-day activities within schools.

The OECD (2005) \(^{36}\) report gives the example of the Flemish community of Belgium (p.157) which maintains a replacement pool of a group of relief teachers, funded by the Belgian Ministry of Education. The teachers specify the geographic locations in which they are prepared to work and are then made available to schools, which register for the pool. The scheme is managed by a vocational training agency and successful applicants are assigned to an “anchor school” in which they work when they are not required for relief teaching elsewhere. The model enables schools to locate replacements for absent teachers, new teachers have job security and a salary for at least a year, and there is an opportunity to assess the suitability of these teachers. Teachers returning to the profession and others considering teaching as a career can register for the pool.

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\(^{36}\) OECD, 2005, Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers.
Within Western Australia, many schools maintain their own pool of relief teachers and have either a deputy principal or a relief coordinator whose task it is to locate a relief teacher as and when required. In the past, the DET maintained a central pool of relief teachers which proved to be cumbersome and expensive to maintain. Given its central nature, it was often unable to immediately supply a teacher for a given situation, causing a delay in replacement and additional difficulties for the schools involved. In the past when there was a ready supply of relief teachers available, larger metropolitan schools employed teachers additional to their usual establishment. When there was no need for relief, the teachers were allocated to busy classrooms to team-teach or to assist with particular students or, if there was a challenging class, to allow duties other than teaching (DOTT) time for the regular classroom teacher. Thus the arrangement could also serve as a teacher wellbeing strategy.

Similarly, the Teacher Flying Squad provides teachers for periods of from four weeks to one semester and, while an excellent concept, it is unable to provide shorter-term relief for schools. The teacher shortage has also affected the flying squad so it is not able to function at present (December 2007). The idea is commendable, although it requires additional funding support so as to be able to attract very good teachers and assure the quality of longer-term relief for schools.

The question of relief teachers for rural and remote locations remains problematic and should be held under review. Perhaps an extension of the flying squad concept allowing for replacements of less than four weeks could be considered when teacher availability increases.
Recommendation 7: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

7.1 Considers increasing the employment numbers of school support staff in public schools to relieve classroom teachers of much of the burden of dealing with routine clerical, administrative and supervisory tasks which could be effectively managed by others in line with the Director General’s “Classroom First” strategy.

7.2 Examines the capacity to alter the current structure of a working year to allow for effective planning and assessment of student learning, before and after student arrival at school each term and year.

7.3 Encourages the appointment in public schools of:
   - personal assistants to principals
   - school administrators to relieve school principals of the burden of many non-teaching related duties, thus allowing principals to concentrate on educational leadership.

7.4 Given 7.3, enables principals to routinely include a period or periods of classroom teaching on a regular basis into their schedule.

7.5 Supports a considerable increase in the number of education assistants in public schools to:
   - ensure literacy and numeracy at primary school levels
   - help manage difficult students, students with behavioural problems and inclusive education students within classrooms
   - assist individual students with particular learning problems.

7.6 Takes a strong stand against physical violence and personal verbal abuse directed toward any staff within a school environment. Such abuse must not be tolerated under any circumstances and teachers should not have to face violent or potentially violent students, parents or individuals.

7.7 Supports teachers by revising the existing ratio in public schools of educational psychologists to students, and examine the role of social workers as additional support.

7.8 Ensures that TAFE develops appropriate training programs for education assistants leading to formal qualifications which, together with classroom experience, could, as appropriate, provide advanced standing into teacher training conversion courses at university level.

7.9 Reviews the progress and outcomes to-date of the Schools Plus program in public schools in relation to inclusive education for (a) students with intellectual disabilities, (b) students at educational risk, (c) those other students in the classrooms and (d) the workload of teaching staff. This data should be used to help determine whether or not the present approach to inclusive education is appropriate or if alternative arrangements would be more advantageous.

7.10 Continues to support the development of the DET Teacher Flying Squad as a group of high-calibre classroom teachers by offering generous levels of remuneration and providing flexibility to cover replacements of less than four weeks in rural and remote Western Australia.
Whatever they do is what we do. If they’re a good teacher and they do better stuff, we do better stuff. If they’re a crappy teacher, we do bad stuff.

YEAR 9 STUDENT AT A WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL

The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.

WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD
Chapter 8: Practicums

Previous studies

The issue of practicums in teacher education is part of a long-standing challenge that universities have been working to address over many years. The structure and nature of programs in the pre-service component of teacher education inevitably attempt to strike a balance between content knowledge in courses, contextual knowledge about education and teaching, and the practical application of that knowledge in schools and classrooms.

There have been a number of studies undertaken in recent times which have considered and made observations and recommendations in relation to pre-service teacher practicums37. These have concentrated mainly on the quality, length and location of practicums and all have noted the difficulties associated with providing and financially supporting practicums in country and especially remote locations. Indeed, they show that the persistence of problems in teacher education can be attributed to “…A lack of investment in building partnerships that would help bridge the gap between theory and practice most noticeable in practicum arrangements…”38 While there are many opportunities provided by lecturers and tutors to incorporate practical classroom-related learning experiences into their teaching, it is acknowledged that the key to success in bridging the theory/practice gap is the quality of the relationship between universities and schools. The more effective the practicum component of the pre-service program, the greater the likelihood of retaining new graduates in the profession.

Practicums are particularly troublesome for Western Australian education authorities. The hands-on, practical experience in a classroom setting as provided by the practicum component of a teacher training course is a most crucial element, yet placements are difficult to arrange, finance and manage, especially in country locations. This is especially important as many pre-service teachers are concurrently employed and need to maintain income if they are to be able to continue at university.

The Australian College of Deans of Education recommend a minimum of 100 days practicum for undergraduate courses, with a minimum of 80 days of supervised in-school experience. However, they do not suggest a minimum period for post-graduate courses. In some ways the focus on ‘time served’ is a distractor, as it is the quality of mentoring support for the pre-service teachers that is the critical element in practicums, rather than just the time spent in a classroom.

At present, pre-service teacher practicums are administered by universities with funding provided by the Federal Government39. The major costs involve full-time resourcing for the arrangement and coordination of practicums; payment to mentoring teachers; and the employment of sessional staff as part of the supervision process. Other costs incurred are for travel of university supervisors and, at times, for the training and preparation of mentoring teachers.

38 Top of the Class, Report on the Inquiry into Teacher Education Canberra (p.2)
39 Refer to Recommendation 15.2.
“High attrition rates during the first five years of teaching have been attributed to poor support in the early years of teaching. Currently, experienced teachers receive a small financial benefit, but few non-financial incentives, to supervise trainee students conducting their workplace practicums. As such, not all teachers see student supervision as part of their professional commitment. New reward schemes could offer teacher supervisors: (a) credit points towards becoming an advanced skills teacher as an incentive for professional development; (b) the opportunity to incorporate mentoring requirements within all promotional pathways; and/or (c) credit towards a qualification (e.g. a leadership diploma) which could fast-track eligibility for promotion. These suggested incentives would encourage experienced teachers to mentor trainees as part of their professional responsibility.

Country practicums
A disproportionate concentration of practicum experiences occur in metropolitan areas because a pre-service teacher may have to:
- meet their own costs for travel
- locate and pay for suitable accommodation
- lose income from part-time employment
- cover rent or mortgage costs when they are away
- leave a spouse and/or children behind.

Mature age education pre-service teachers are particularly vulnerable to these costs and disadvantages. For these reasons and to encourage and support pre-service teachers in regional and remote teaching practicums, financial support must be provided for them.

Rural and remote experience programs for pre-service teachers provide many significant advantages, including:
- gaining experience in living and working in country schools and communities, increasing the available pool of teachers likely to be attracted to those areas
- country practicums instil knowledge beyond the classroom to include community engagement and involvement
- pre-service country experience helps alleviate teacher concerns relating to personal and social lives, socialisation within communities, isolation from family and friends, loss of anonymity in small towns, etc
- living and working in communities with lower levels of traffic pollution; greater involvement and sense of belonging to a community; and a better understanding and appreciation of life in country Western Australia
- a greater knowledge and understanding of the culture and needs of Indigenous pre-service teachers
- in addition, mentoring teachers gain professional development skills which can advantage them in future employment.

“Graduates and teachers new to teaching believe they are not well-prepared for teaching in rural and remote locations. They suggested the development of pre-service units of study on rural and remote education and the involvement of [practice in] rural and remote education in the delivery of such units.

Teachers highlighted the need for student teachers to have more access to rural practicum places.”
Tasmania, New South Wales and South Australia all provide financial and other incentives for pre-service teachers in country practicums. Many Western Australian country shires and districts are committed to have pre-service teachers undertake practicums in their communities and are prepared to enter into partnership with the DET to help facilitate the process and to provide comprehensive support for the pre-service teachers involved. Similarly, major industries and businesses are prepared to partner with the DET to better facilitate country practicums with a goal of eventually seeing more and better teachers employed within their towns.

From among the many submissions to the Taskforce, two suggest innovative approaches to the problem of enabling pre-service teachers to acquire skills and knowledge in rural and regional Western Australia.

1. Meekatharra District High School proposes that consideration be given to enabling them to be listed as a training school in collaboration with a university (probably ECU). In their view, pre-service education is directed more towards meeting university academic requirements rather than ensuring that pre-service teachers are connected with real teaching experiences and the variety of issues which the graduate teacher is likely to confront. Teacher preparation would then focus on the “whole teacher” with a progressive, staged introduction to assuming accountability in the workplace. This would have some pre-service teachers spending most of their fourth year in the high school, still connected to the university, with the school providing a graduated, progressive mentoring role aimed at developing a more competent, assured teacher, confident in dealing with the needs, requirements and challenges of a large rural high school. In many respects, this initiative is similar to what has been implemented in the UK, which allows a larger role for some schools in the education of teachers.

This proposal has merit and might well be further considered to see whether issues to do with university requirements and industrial relations can be adequately addressed.

2. The Rural and Remote Education Advisory Council (RREAC) supports the creation of a centre for rural and remote education, which will establish “support mechanisms to enable mentoring, professional development, collegiality, accommodation of an appropriate standard and networking” so as to facilitate and coordinate successful and enjoyable rural teaching experiences. RREAC proposes a formal partnership with the DET and is prepared to commit staff and other resources to aid the project.

This proposal is similar to an arrangement already in place supporting medical and health science education. It has merit and should be further explored.
Recommendation 8: It is recommended to the Minister for Education and Training that:

8.1 Teachers in the public education sector at promotional levels L3CT and above are directly involved in practicum supervision and mentoring. In addition, the willingness and history of teachers below the L3CT level to be involved in practicum supervision and mentoring is regarded as a positive factor when they seek promotion to higher levels.

8.2 Every effort is made to ensure that most pre-service teachers gain practicum experiences in regional Western Australia.

8.3 Pre-service teachers be financially assisted in relation to the costs of travel, reasonable accommodation and expenses, and are paid a stipend to (a) compensate for the dislocation of their domestic arrangements and (b) to help compensate for their inability to continue with part-time employment (in which many university students have to participate in order to complete their studies).

8.4 The Minister negotiates with his Federal counterpart to ensure (a) that participating schools are provided with funding sufficient to support the numbers of their pre-service teacher practicums and enable appropriate recompense for teacher mentors and (b) the incorporation of practicum standards in a system of national accreditation for teacher education programs.

8.5 Select primary and secondary schools, in partnership with a university, be given a larger role in the final year education/training process for some pre-service teachers, allowing them much greater, direct exposure and experience in the classroom (closely monitored by appropriate staff) as a major component of the fourth year of their teacher training course.

8.6 The DET and private education providers be encouraged to enter into partnerships with entities such as RREAC, country shires, business and industry to facilitate the housing, social integration and networking experiences of pre-service teachers in rural locations.
Practitioners (VET) working with industry will need an understanding of business principles, training needs analysis, resource design and evaluation if they are to successfully deliver tailored programs within workplaces.

DET, VET TEACHING AND LEARNING, FEBRUARY 2006
Chapter 9: Vocational Education and Training

The industrial framework within which TAFE operates is based on a traditional classroom paradigm, wherein workloads are determined using school-like parameters such as the hours lecturers spend in teaching and certain non-teaching duties. It is a system which incorporates inbuilt rigidities and is increasingly inappropriate for the delivery of vocational education and training in the twenty-first century. Thus, while private vocational and training providers are able to be extremely flexible and responsive to the requirements of industry and business, TAFE with its defined, limited school year and established teaching style is not.

In terms of the skills and qualifications of TAFE lecturing staff, the industrial framework within which lecturers operate gives more emphasis to the educational qualifications of lecturing staff than to vocational competencies. While it is recognised that higher levels of lecturing skills are necessary as the demands on lecturers become more varied and complex, and the settings in which delivery and assessment occurs are increasingly diverse, the currency of occupationally-specific skills and qualifications must be given equal regard. The strong requirement for acquisition of tertiary teaching qualifications during their tenure appears to be a substantial disincentive for many potential TAFE lecturers, especially those with backgrounds in trades and other occupations whose formal education may (a) have ceased long ago and (b) not have been taken to a necessarily high level.

The framework for employing teaching staff at TAFE has changed little over the last 100 years or so. Again, it is similar to the school system, delineating face-to-face teaching, DOTT and professional development. Any deviation from the traditional institutionally-based model is deemed to be alternative and, under the terms of the industrial agreement, requires approval before it can be implemented.

In many respects, the general view of the role of a TAFE lecturer is an anachronism. TAFE managing directors have submitted that specialisations will become more prevalent as the methods and places of delivery of VET increase and, in this context, the role needs to be reviewed. Such specialisations could include the following:

- curriculum/training package specialist
- business development consultant
- skills trainer
- industry and community mentor
- career advisor
- classroom teacher/educator
- learning support specialist
- learning materials designer/developer
- skills auditor.
Many lecturing and instructional staff have been attracted to the VET sector after a career in industry. Indeed, in the past, becoming a TAFE lecturer was regarded as the pinnacle of excellence in a trade. This is no longer the case. Public sector conditions used to be a major factor in attracting staff, but they are no longer competitive in a labour market where industry can offer attractive remuneration to entice staff to areas where skills shortages and occupations are in demand (primarily in the resources industry and in rural and remote areas of the State). Thus, there are critical skill shortages in traditional trades areas such as plumbing, construction, metals, automotive, electrical, etc, and in a number of para-professional areas such as engineering and maritime.

The altruism of lecturers (e.g. tradespersons) wanting to give something back/contribute to the system should not be underestimated, yet there is no systemic promotion of a career in VET, nor is there is any systematic promotion of complementary industry and academic expertise, as exists in universities. There is evidence of some mature age students coming back to lecture, but not in sufficient numbers. The TAFE lecturer is ageing rapidly, with an average age of 55 years across the workforce as a whole.

Universities, listed on Schedule I of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (PSM Act) and, therefore, not classified as senior executive service (SES) organisations, are able to exercise far greater flexibility in operation while maintaining public sector standards accountability. TAFE colleges, on the other hand, are listed on Schedule II as SES organisations. This limits their ability to operate in a competitive marketplace. As TAFE colleges will never be able to compete for salary parity with the private sector, they need the capacity to exercise flexibility in offering remuneration packages and developing relationships to facilitate co-employment with industry through industry contributions towards salaries, or other benefits, as necessary.

Western Australia’s present economic outlook is one of sustained economic growth, full employment and continued strong labour market demands, with skills shortages expected to continue in industry. Many school leavers are entering direct into the labour market and looking for on-the-job-training, which should result in an increase in the demand for VET and fee-for-service training. Contemporary reality is that industry and TAFE recruit in the same skills pool, but industry has the ability to pay and employ staff under conditions which are much more flexible and quicker to implement than TAFE can possibly manage because of the bureaucratic processes associated with TAFE appointments.

“A critical factor at present is the movement into trade areas and a declining interest in the TEE pathway. This implies the need for increased training resources into the trade’s areas and an awareness of the particular requirements for regional trade students. Lack of trainers and need for training mentors is considered a significant issue. SWL [structured workplace learning] is a flexible and innovative arrangement which deserves more support and could address some of these problems.

Clear and accessible guidance to employers and employees on options for training is important. Most government programs are shrouded in bureaucratic language and processes making them difficult to access for many employers.”
In South Australia a Skills Reform Industry Consultation paper\textsuperscript{41} states that movements toward a decentralised market-based approach would allow TAFE colleges to be more enterprising, to act more competitively, be more flexible in their employment arrangements and “that they increase their level of consultancy and training provided to industry to improve private revenue flows, the skills of their staff, and the interaction with industry.”

In recent times, given the high cost of housing and living in Western Australia, it has become very difficult to attract lecturers from other Australian States. Skills shortages in industry always have and always will compound problems, so different ways of engaging staff and working with industry need to be developed. A possible model is to use a complementary team approach, combining the skills of specialist industry practitioners as trainers with generic VET/TAFE educators as assessors.

The Government includes the following as its priorities for VET workforce development:

- the delivery of training and assessment of skills in the workplace
- growth in targets for employment-based training (apprenticeships and traineeships)
- increases in the qualification levels of people in work.

The private sector’s share of training is increasing and there is mounting pressure to allow them access to more public funding. To a great extent competition for this funding is being encouraged by the Government through avenues such as its policy on tendering, which will potentially further undercut TAFE’s ability to perform in a competitive market.

In response to conflicting demands, there is an increasing emphasis on self-governance of, and local autonomy for, TAFE institutes so they can provide a greater proportion of fee-for-service delivery. However, it remains difficult to balance local priorities and commercial imperatives with system objectives when TAFE is a primary instrument of Government policy.

Compounding these difficulties for TAFE at a time when the colleges should be more responsive to the requirements of industry, Government policy has added another level of complexity to their operation with the increase in the school leaving age to 17 from 2008. This necessitates the need for closer links between the TAFE colleges and the school system to provide VET. Not only does it introduce associated issues not previously in the remit of TAFE lecturers (namely the behaviour management aspects of a younger student cohort, not all of whom are in an educational establishment by choice), but it increases TAFE’s exposure to competition with schools and universities.

The VET sector needs to be looking for greater recognition in and by industry, developing key relationships between lecturers and employers. Promotion and advertising should focus on meeting the needs of business and industry, rather than just students. An example of responsiveness to industry is the mantra that TAFE Tasmania has developed: “Working with business; working for business; working like business”.

There is a significant role for the TAFE sector in meeting the vocational needs of Indigenous people, communities and enterprises. However, Indigenous people have been under-represented in the TAFE workforce, particularly in lecturing. The Indigenous Cadet Lecturers Program has been a success across colleges, where each college has recruited at least one Indigenous lecturer who undertakes the Diploma of Training and Assessment while being mentored by a more experienced lecturer. A salary subsidy is provided to the employer for the cadet. This innovative program is critically important and should be promoted strongly and financed appropriately. Professional development programs for TAFE staff emphasising an understanding of the culture, values, knowledge systems and ways of working with Indigenous people are essential for all.

Equally, TAFE has always played a strong role in providing for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Yet young people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are also under-represented in TAFE, meaning that the lecturing workforce does not adequately represent the diversity of the student population.

It is the expectation of Government, and rightly so, that TAFE extends the same level of duty of care for its student cohort under the age of 18. In recent years, with a stronger focus on VET in schools and the raising of the school leaving age, there are larger numbers of young people entering TAFE. As is the case in schools, behaviour management is an increasingly complex requirement for TAFE lecturers. As classroom delivery will remain an important component for many staff, broader pedagogical understandings and knowledge of classroom management strategies are required to cater for the needs of a diverse student/client population.

“As a result of raising the school leaving age, many young people who must now continue their education are those most likely to benefit from VET pathways. A range of pathways is available for these young people, for example, Structured Workplace Learning, School Apprenticeship Link, and Australian School Based Traineeships and School Based Apprenticeships, to address this need. From 2008 and onwards, the need for VET qualified staff across the state will rise in response to the increase in the number of students continuing in education/training.”

The fact that there is a notion of alternate delivery is in itself a problem in that the point of reference (or the norm) is still the classroom. A broad delivery spectrum from the classroom to the workplace must be considered the norm and made available, with recognition of prior learning, online learning, and other modes of learning and assessment being part and parcel of the daily life of a contemporary TAFE system.

Finally, the Taskforce has been made aware that the challenges involved in implementing new training packages as they are introduced into TAFE could be significantly ameliorated by increasing the public investment in professional and resources development. While there has been some investment over the years, the transformation from a curriculum-based model to a truly competency-based delivery and assessment framework demands a concentrated effort.
Recommendation 9: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

9.1 Implements a significant increase in lecturer remuneration as expressed in Recommendation 1.1.
9.2 Ensures that TAFE is provided with the necessary flexibilities in relation to appointments and operations to enable it to compete on a level playing field with private vocational providers and universities.
9.3 Allows TAFE colleges which demonstrate in the range and excellence of their programs, particularly in the skills and capabilities of their senior managers, the autonomy necessary to enable them to become more responsive and flexible in their everyday activities and more responsible and accountable for their programs and outcomes.
9.4 Encourages individual TAFE colleges to enter into partnerships and arrangements with industry and universities which will generate additional funding for the TAFE colleges concerned, under guidelines and accountabilities similar to those for universities.
9.5 Facilitates the joint employment of individuals by TAFE and industry and allows an alternative training delivery model wherein TAFE training specialists would support the work of skills specialists within industry.
9.6 Continues the Indigenous Cadet Lecturers Program initiative and facilitates permanency for Indigenous lecturers at TAFE who successfully complete their cadetships.
9.7 Considers conducting an interstate and international recruitment campaign for TAFE lecturers, focusing on the migration into Western Australia of individuals with appropriate training, skills and backgrounds.
9.8 Develops a marketing campaign raising public awareness of workplace delivery, flexible and online learning as essential contemporary methodologies available in TAFE.
9.9 Reconsiders the TAFE teaching year and holiday periods so as to enable TAFE to provide a year round service for industry and commerce and to better compete with private vocational providers.
While the importance of effective teaching and learning has not changed, the internet has enabled education to significantly alter the experience of schooling.

BILL TUCKER, LABORATORIES OF REFORM, JUNE 2007

To be a teacher you must be a prophet – because you are trying to prepare people for a world thirty to fifty years into the future.

GORDON BROWN, MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Chapter 10: Flexible Learning

Contemporary flexible learning methodologies are able to provide first-class teaching and learning experiences to students of all levels, from kindergarten to post-graduate at university. The best flexible learning is multi-modal in its approach, is developed by highly-skilled and knowledgeable teachers and discipline experts, often has an interactive, synchronous involvement with an expert teacher and/or with other students (directly or electronically) and may be visited again and again in line with a student's needs. Globally, there has been a massive investment in flexible learning and the delivery of knowledge such that learning can be tailored to the skills, abilities, circumstances and needs of most students. It is NOT just about the electronic delivery of information to passive recipients.

“Depending on the technology available, presentation of key lessons could be a combination of [an external] teacher (either synchronous or asynchronous) and the local teacher. There could be an opportunity for the [external] teacher to watch and then discuss the local teacher’s presentation and vice versa so a true collegiality can be achieved... It would also be possible for conferencing to be set up between classes or students or groups of teachers [in metropolitan] and in the regional schools.”

The education system in Western Australia has always been about quality learning, equity of opportunity, care of and for students, and accessibility to all. Another basic goal has been the provision of excellent teachers. Ideally, teachers should be able to fully apply themselves to the classroom learning situation, largely insulated from routine clerical, administrative and compliance issues, highly-educated in the discipline to be presented, supported as appropriate with an education assistant, and skilled in utilising technology appropriate to the task.

The compendium of information sources available to all teachers in Western Australian schools has to include ready access to flexible learning resources which are multi-modal in form, utilise a variety of delivery techniques and mechanisms, and are available to help all teachers in the transmission and acquisition of knowledge in the classroom. Thus the resources may be used to assist, supplement and, where appropriate, replace a specialist teacher working directly with students in the classroom.

While the basic aim of the Western Australian education system to-date has been to have a specialist teacher in front of every class, recent history clearly demonstrates the difficulty of fulfilling this objective in many locations, especially in country Western Australia. The decline in available teacher numbers generally and in specialist teachers in particular has become reality for many schools. This reality is particularly true for secondary school subjects including physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, LOTE, home economics and more. Where a specialist teacher is not available, the choices for a school are:

- to cease to teach the subject
- to have the subject entirely taught by a non-specialist teacher
- to have a non-specialist teacher present with the students while they utilise appropriate and expert flexible learning programs.
These programs can be accessed in class and in the students’ own time (and rate), thereby allowing excellent students to advance in the subject more rapidly. Those who find considerable difficulty with the subject matter can proceed at a slower rate, accessing (often electronically) individuals and databases to help their understanding. The non-specialist teacher serves as a guide, monitor and mentor, directly assisting and teaching as necessary, and enabling each student to work efficiently through the learning program. Under ideal circumstances, the specialist who has devised the flexible learning program may have direct electronic contact with the students and, in some circumstances (e.g. city/country partner schools) will interact directly with the students at some stages during the period of study.

However, even when there are sufficient specialist teachers available, flexible learning packages are more than just a useful adjunct and support mechanism to aid learning and must be viewed as a readily available tool for a teacher or school to use or prescribe as necessary. Flexible learning has to be recognised as good learning and not as a cheap alternative. Indeed, the cost for each flexible learning program is considerable, requiring regular updates and often needing to be accessed or delivered in a class where a teacher or education assistant is present.

The resources and programs need to be developed by the best teachers available in any discipline, in close association with a team of people who thoroughly understand and are comfortable with the most modern technologies available for presentation and transmission, and who are themselves expert in current learning techniques and methodologies.

Western Australia has had a distinguished history in the delivery of distance education to remote locations and the Schools of the Air have been long recognised as a successful, uniquely Australian adaptation providing education to remote and isolated students. Contemporary communications technology can provide for remote students even better and more easily understood access to distance learning, and it is noted that the Western Australian system has also developed an excellent and widely accessible information and communications technology (ICT) network which can support the carriage of information. The Schools of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE) has served remote students generally well in the past, but their methodology remains predominately paper-based, complemented by the use of some of the advances in digital content and online learning. In its development, SIDE, while being of great value to distance students of predominately European heritage, has been considered as providing little assistance to Indigenous Australian students. Furthermore, the implementation of the learning packages provided by SIDE will require a considerable extension of student access to SIDE personnel beyond the current 2.30pm daily limit.

Similarly, WestOne Services has developed an enviable reputation for the development and production of digital leaning material for the VET sector since the late 1980’s. Since 1999, it has been involved in online vocational education, which it sees not just as a form of delivery, but rather as an option which can be utilised in a variety of different ways, including distance education.

Since 2004, the curriculum development section of SIDE and WestOne have merged to provide a single focus for the development of curriculum resource materials across the education and training sectors. In this regard, SIDE has the predominant say in what is to be developed in a given time period. WestOne prepares the whole learning program and resources which SIDE then delivers, providing the central staff participation with students in the delivery of content. It is important to note that WestOne has, in recent years, developed about 50 percent of all of Australia’s online vocational programs.

Any amalgamation of the agencies must of necessity take account of the important role that WestOne also plays in supporting the development and roll-out of flexible learning in the vocational sector. This focus must not be compromised.
The State government is committed to providing broadband computing services across the whole of Western Australia, while the DET has an extensive plan, currently being implemented, to provide contemporary ICT equipment to all Western Australian public schools. A similar commitment is evident in the independent and Catholic school systems. New modes of learning require flexible learning spaces, and it is pleasing to note that three Western Australian schools, Canning Vale College, Harmony Primary School and Mindarie Senior College, are listed by a 2006 OECD publication\(^{42}\) among the top 65 schools world-wide.

The schools system recently implemented the Flexible Learning In Schools (fLiS) Project, located and delivered at SIDE, where specialists in public schools teach subjects to distance students in schools other than their own using predominantly online and packaged flexible learning technologies. Under the fLiS arrangement, expert teaching staff reside within SIDE for proportions of their time so as to deliver the education programs and the delivery is coordinated by a project manager. Thus, expert teachers, often the very best in their subject area and who are resident in Perth, deliver education to students in regional and remote Western Australia.

As structured, fLiS provides mixed-modal delivery, along with interaction between the receiving students and the expert teacher, both electronically and, in many instances, by camps and visits during the school year. Schools such as Newman Senior High School report favourably on the implementation and use of fLiS by their students. In the Pilbara, fLiS has received considerable financial support from BHP Billiton. At this stage, fLiS is small and limited in its output and subject range, and would need to be considerably enhanced if it is to have a major impact on the Western Australian education system as a whole.

In addition to the resources prepared and presented by SIDE and WestOne, there also exists within the DET the Schools Online Curriculum Services project to deliver an online teaching and learning system (OTLS) to support education in public schools. This project is ambitious and aims to deliver on the vision that schools will interact electronically to become part of a network of learning communities, initially within the State but eventually also with other national and global networks, providing even better access to contemporary knowledge. In this way the use of ICT will be integral to the functioning of a local school as part of a global community.

Coupled with State-wide broadband provision, OTLS aims to provide a platform for the delivery of education, with the flexibility to help solve many of the significant problems associated with access to education. Thus, OTLS could serve as an alternative delivery mechanism as it extends through the public system, or be developed alongside the work currently undertaken by SIDE and WestOne.

At present, many of the initiatives and opportunities listed above have been slower in their development and implementation than is ideal, probably due to a combination of the following:

- the apprehension of teachers, many of whom have little experience in ICT and in the multi-modal approach to teaching
- the upskilling of teachers to deliver in an online environment
- limited availability of appropriate technology and broadband accessibility
- the relatively slow uptake both of technology by SIDE and the training provided to pre-service teachers at university
- the resistance to change by many within DET
- the need to have online teachers and tutors available for personal student interaction beyond the usual class times
- student–teacher ratios in the online environment
- the limited availability of online material to just a few subjects and disciplines.

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“Online learning, of course, is not new. Over 90 percent of public colleges and universities offer online courses, and high schools have offered virtual learning for over a decade. Though online learning is controversial in some circles, research shows that it can be as effective as traditional classroom learning. The small body of research, focused on the effectiveness of K-12 virtual schooling programs, supports findings of similar studies on virtual courses in higher education. They find “no significant difference” in student performance in online courses versus traditional face-to-face learning.”

At present, the systems as described are producing a small amount of what is often high-quality material to mostly public schools within the State. While some non-Government school students access learning through SIDE, the substantial cost often deters many more of them from utilising this source. The current system is uncoordinated, minor in its impact on Western Australian education and substantially under-funded. If the scope, application and availability of online teaching and learning is to have a major and useful impact within the State, then it will need to be substantially enlarged and enhanced. Indeed, in the absence of a teacher to present an important discipline, especially in isolated localities, flexible learning presents the best alternative available.

The DET must resist the temptation to take the best teachers out of the classroom to implement any new strategy.

The education system in Western Australia would benefit considerably by bringing the three areas of SIDE, WestOne and OTLS together under the same management to enable optimal use of workforce and resources possible, and to facilitate the development of digital content and online delivery. The focus must be on providing Western Australian students with the best possible education allowing:

- blended and flexible learning, where traditional classroom teaching is facilitated and augmented by first class online learning
- subject learning to continue in the absence or lack of a specialist teacher by accessing online delivery, usually under the guidance of another teacher or education assistant
- independent learning, wherein students are allowed to utilise learning resources in their own time and at their own rate, helping them to take greater responsibility for their own learning (this is mandated for senior school students in some American states and European countries)
- distance education where the traditional text-based arrangements are amplified by online delivery and the opportunity to use facilities such as internet chat rooms to enable discussion of issues with a specialist teacher (e.g. often the expert who developed the package) and with other students of the same subject or discipline.

43 Tucker, B., Education Sector, June 2007, Laboratories of Reform: Virtual High Schools and Innovation in Public Education.
Recommendation 10: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

10.1 Encourages the DET to, as soon as possible, determine the optimal management framework necessary to bring together SIDE, WestOne and OTLS into a single structure and under a new title which better reflects the contemporary requirements of flexible and distance learning.

10.2 Establishes the annual financial requirements necessary so as to provide resources for the development of learning packages incorporating contemporary technologies and methods; for the training of appropriate teachers and TAFE lecturers to implement installation and uptake; and the technologies necessary for each participating school and TAFE college.

10.3 Directs SIDE and WestOne, as a first priority during the time period of such a review to:
   - target specific subject disciplines and TAFE programs identified as necessary to meet the educational needs of students in the State
   - initiate the preparation of those packages.

10.4 Provides sufficient additional funding to enable the work listed under 10.3 to proceed.

10.5 Establishes targets to accelerate the take-up of online and mixed modal learning in schools and TAFE colleges.

10.6 Makes available at reasonable cost the current and future flexible learning resources to enable non-Government schools ready access.
Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

GOETHE

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

W. B. YEATS
Chapter 11: Operational Management of Education

In general terms, schools in Western Australia are grouped and classified as public schools (776 of them), supported by the DET; as Catholic schools (142) supported by their own central structure; and schools which are largely independent in their governance systems. Some independent schools with common philosophies are governed within approved systems, for example the Anglican Community Schools established by the Anglican Schools Commission. These systems have some central control but the member schools have significant autonomy. However, the great majority of independent schools are self-governing and have their own boards to which the leadership and management of each school is responsible.

Most of the 257 submissions received by the Taskforce commented extensively on the operational management of the public sector schools by the DET and this was reinforced at each of the 15 public forums held around the State. There was little written comment concerning the management of either the Catholic or the Independent school sector, with few opinions being raised in passing at the forums. In the individual meetings held with Catholic school leaders and teachers, they voiced general appreciation of the guidance and leadership of their central office. Given the thoroughly devolved nature of the independent schools, issues of governance were never raised with the Taskforce. This situation contrasted starkly with the public education system’s view of the DET and, more specifically, of its central office and, to a lesser extent, its district education offices (DEOs).

In their representations to the Taskforce, teachers were also critical of policy development and implementation within the DET. They argued that too many policies had been developed by people too remote from schools, that they should be expressed in simpler language and that policies were not regularly reviewed and modified to take account of changing circumstances and conditions in both the classroom and community generally. The DET may wish to consider including a “sunset clause” in each policy, thus ensuring it will only continue if it remains appropriate.

The report prepared by Gerard Daniels Australia (GDA), presented to the DET in March 2007, was particularly critical of the DET and its central office, stating that DET had “…not been well-governed”; had “…clearly failed to develop a workforce planning strategy”; ran a “…cumbersome and confusing” recruitment process; needed to “…pay more attention to retaining experienced staff” and that “Non-government schools are demonstrating that they are more adept at recruiting graduate teachers.” It is pleasing for the Taskforce to note and commend the changes made by the Director General in response to the GDA report, where most if not all of the recommendations have been accepted and many are either implemented now or will be in the very near future. In particularly, the Classroom First strategy supplies an excellent direction and allows other changes to follow to support the vision. All of the changes extend the culture of support and services to public schools and classroom teachers.

The submissions and forums were quite critical of the DET, and particularly of central office. This criticism was strong and consistent, and centred about beliefs that it is too large, too remote and bureaucratic, often unresponsive and focussed too much on issues of process and compliance rather than on aiding and facilitating the learning workplace. It is quite clear that the DET recognises this criticism and has moved to
improve the situation by implementing recommendations of GDA; through other specific initiatives led by the Director General, including a central reorganisation of functions and personnel; by improving and adding to the channels of communication; and by the series of State-wide forums led and attended by the Minister for Education and Training and the Director General.

“A sound public education is a fundamental and vital component of our society. With more money and effort being spent on another taskforce we expect that real and tangible improvements will be made to improve the system and support for our State school teachers in particular, but also for the teaching profession as a whole.

“We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback and look forward to the tangible changes to the present system that will make a difference to benefit our educators and the larger community.”

Submission #189

Public sector management standards emphasise the need for compliance on a large range of issues and especially in relation to public sector employment issues. These are very time-consuming and, when poorly applied, become unreasonable. While the rationale for the various parts of the PSM Act are themselves sensible, it is the level and extent of their application that makes them difficult to manage. The Public Sector Commissioner believes that the DET takes a most conservative view of the implementation of the public sector standards and that additional layers of complexity and compliance are added at each level within the DET. There is a clear need to simplify these processes, especially at the school level and particularly in relation to the employment of teachers. A culture of compliance allows little in the way of individual initiative, emphasises central control, restricts local entrepreneurship and restricts local empowerment.

At every forum there was considerable discussion on the devolution of authority. Dialogue centred around the following:

- What must be managed and located centrally?
- What can be readily delegated to local school or district locations, and where are decisions best made?
- Devolution must include both authority and the means of implementing decisions.
- Questions of responsibility for decisions and accountability for them.

It is the general view of the Taskforce that there ought to be greater diversity within the system and that more issues need to be delegated to local levels (i.e. to schools, districts or clusters of schools in an area). From an educational standpoint central office should focus on providing an excellent service to schools and only retain major control over those areas which are clearly system-wide.

In two recent papers, *Teachers Matter* 44 (2005) and *Demand-Sensitive Schools* 45 (2006), the OECD expresses the view that diversity within contemporary education systems worldwide is an argument against retaining strong, central systems controlling education and for greater the devolution of authority, funding and responsibility closer to where operational decisions need to be made (i.e. to individual schools or to clusters of schools).

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44 OECD, 2005, *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers.*
45 OECD, 2006, *Schooling for Tomorrow: Demand-Sensitive Schooling?*
The ongoing role of the DEOs was questioned in a number of submissions and forums, and especially when meeting with principals and staff within schools. There are some regions in which DEO support is strong and where there was considerable praise for the leadership provided and the way in which schools were supported. However, in most districts comment was critical, with many questioning the continuing need for DEOs and often raising support for a return to the system of superintendents, either at district or subject discipline levels. Should the DEO arrangement continue or, indeed, if some schools are grouped together in some other model, there remains a need for greater input from the community and stakeholders in schools. A system of advisory committees or boards of governors could allow for this as circumstances enable and encourage. A more thorough consideration of the ongoing functional of the DET is beyond the terms of reference of the Taskforce. However, it is an issue of public importance, central to the efficiency, effectiveness and well-being of the Western Australian education system.

There is a need for the DET to learn from the Catholic system and become more compact and efficient; to allow greater earned autonomy for some schools; to show a friendlier, more caring face to its employees; to support the classroom in reality and not just by rhetoric; to delegate decision-making as appropriate and require individual accountability for decisions made; to ensure that teachers in central office are essential to its operations, performing tasks which cannot be done by others and, if not, encourage their return to the classroom; to listen to teachers on a regular basis through regional and metropolitan forums, reporting back to the teachers whenever necessary to demonstrate that notice has been taken and action implemented; to support local partnerships with businesses, shires, universities, private schools, significant individuals, parents, etc; to consider the question of permanency of DET employees and whether they ought to be permanent to the DET rather than to a particular school or district location. All of this would promote more efficiencies within the system and, importantly, address the lack of confidence that the education workforce has in feeling valued.

“DET transfer the responsibility for staffing schools to the local level. The payment of salaries and allowances would remain a central function, delivered by Shared Services so as to negate some of the workload issues raised by principals in Victorian schools.”

Submission #69
Recommendation 11: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

11.1 Urgently addresses the culture of the DET central office so as to reinforce the “Classroom First” approach of the Director General, since the prime educational purpose for central office’s existence is the provision of service and support to Western Australian public schools.

11.2 Delegates autonomy and responsibility to public school principals and schools that are able to demonstrate, through the appropriateness and consistency of their performance and decision-making, that they are capable of so managing.

11.3 Reviews the role and necessity of district education offices in the public sector as they are currently organised and considers how else schools may be appropriately grouped.

11.4 Establishes advisory or governance boards, and provides guidelines to define the extent of their obligations and powers, for a school or cluster of schools.

11.5 Reviews the schools under his control to look for and achieve size and staff efficiencies via appropriate amalgamations and/or closure.
One of the saddest things about US education is that the wisdom of our most successful teachers is lost to the profession when they retire.

JOHN DEWEY
Chapter 12: Workforce Planning

It is essential that the providers of education in Western Australian public, independent and Catholic schools, TAFE and the vocational sector, and universities work more closely with the State Government to effectively plan for the ongoing needs of the education workforce. Strategic planning will enable the more effective utilisation of human resources through alignment of the supply of the workforce to best meet the rapidly growing demands of the whole system. To do this within the present economic and employment climate, the system must be realigned so as to focus on its core business of delivering quality education to meet changing community requirements and expectations.

Workforce planning is a management framework incorporating:

- a clearly articulated vision, mission and objectives
- clear principles
- appropriate management structures and stakeholder engagement
- project and policy development and evaluation
- workforce projections based on accurate, relevant and timely qualitative and quantitative data
- transparent monitoring processes and forecasting tools
- an appropriately resourced unit to undertake and analyse the planning processes.

The education workforce

The education workforce consists of more than 40,000 individuals who represent the largest single cost to the education system. Within the public sector alone, employee benefits total 54.8 percent of all expenses for the DET (2006/07)\textsuperscript{46}. Teachers represent approximately 70 percent of the total education workforce.

As noted in the GDA report\textsuperscript{47}: “The Department operates a very centralised employment system and it struggles to create a rapport with its employees or potential employees.”

The Western Australian economy has a considerable and rapidly growing investment in education ($3.8 billion in 2006/07\textsuperscript{48} and estimated to be $4.2 billion in 2007/08), recognising the connection between an educated workforce and continuing economic growth and prosperity in an environment of economic growth, constant innovation and change. The impact of an ageing population and an increasingly competitive labour market within the State provides challenges to traditional models of schooling and education. Projected shortages in education personnel are predicted, particularly in regional Western Australia and especially in a number of specific subject discipline areas (mathematics, science, languages other than English, and design and technology).


In parallel to initiatives aimed at increasing the size of the education workforce, the system needs to carefully consider whether or not the current paradigm of delivery of education is appropriate to the changing circumstances and environment. Consideration needs to be given to the better utilisation of scarce resources and ways in which high-quality education programs can be delivered to students. This must include a thorough consideration of flexible learning and a multi-modal approach in delivery of education in both metropolitan and regional situations.

Some initiatives worthy of consideration:

- Refocus educators on the core business of teaching and learning, while other categories of staff within the staffing profile take on non-teaching tasks such as social skill development, resource management and routine clerical tasks.
- Establish co-located public/private facilities that may enable the more flexible mobilisation, utilisation and management of key personnel.
- Develop education precincts (especially in regional Western Australia) which focus on life-long learning and which better utilise the capital infrastructure of school premises.
- Increase access to and utilisation of information and communication technology in Western Australian communities.
- Ensure the greater utilisation of flexible learning packages as an important part of quality education for students.
- Extend core school hours thereby enabling implementation of more flexible timetabling options to assist the delivery of subjects and also to provide greater opportunities for part-time employment in secondary schools.
- Rationalise the number of schools, particularly in the metropolitan area, so that:
  a) economies of scale can be achieved with both capital and human resources
  b) sufficient student enrolments can be achieved to support delivery of a more comprehensive suite of courses that will improve student outcomes and opportunities.

The sustainability of Western Australia’s education workforce will require the public and non-Government sectors to work collaboratively in order to remove barriers to supply, improve participation rates of qualified teachers, share physical resources, support efficient and effective distribution of staff, and develop and implement strategies aimed at retention of the existing workforce, including better preparation and support for new entrants into teaching.

Collaboratively the Western Australian education system must:

- assess and redesign attraction and retention policies and programs, which have traditionally been universal in their intent and application, toward more tailored initiatives that will appeal to individuals by fitting their stage in career and life
- agree on and collect data appropriate to facilitate whole-of-State teacher workforce planning
- have a greater focus on the supply and retention of the workforce
- review existing regulatory arrangements such as registration legislation or immigration processes, and the impact of these on the supply, distribution and mobility of the education workforce across Western Australia
- support a change in focus of the workforce and the community from the traditional schooling structures to a focus of ensuring all students are able to access a quality education.
In response to the GDA Report (2007) the Government is establishing a workforce planning team within the DET and is working with other States to progress national workforce planning for the education sector. It is noted that the Western Australian Government has established a Western Australian public sector workforce strategy and anticipates that a workforce plan will be developed for the Western Australian public sector by April 2008. To facilitate this, an advisory committee should be established, for the Western Australian education sector to develop, oversee and implement an education workforce strategic plan for the State.

The advisory committee would provide advice to the Minister for Education and Training concerning all aspects of demand, supply, development and distribution of the education and training workforce. It is envisaged that the committee would be responsible for the development and implementation of initiatives aimed at achieving a sustainable workforce and development of a workforce planning framework that will ensure collaboration and alignment across all stakeholders. Thus it would be able to:

- provide advice to the Minister for Education and Training and relevant stakeholders concerning workforce policy and strategic priorities
- align and allocate State resources (public and private investment) to these priorities
- provide advice to the Minister with regard to implementation of projects on priority workforce issues
- oversee and coordinate activities, including workforce subcommittees, working groups and projects
- work with the higher education sector in relation to teacher education programs
- facilitate alignment of education and training workforce activities with the Australian Government and other State Governments where possible
- engage peak groups and organisations across the education sector, as required.

The advisory committee should appoint an independent chairperson and invite its membership from the following:

- Department of Education Services
- Department of Education and Training, representing schools (both rural and metropolitan) and the vocational education and training sectors
- Western Australian College of Teaching
- Independent schools sector
- Catholic education sector
- Federal Government’s Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Western Australian branch
- higher education sector
- regional local Government authorities
- unions.
Recommendation 12: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

12.1 Establishes an Education and Training Workforce Advisory Committee consisting of an independent Chairperson and membership invited from appropriate education and community groups.

12.2 Facilitates education workforce planning for Western Australia by enabling the DET workforce planning group to work in close collaboration with Western Australian private education providers, universities, TAFE and other Government agencies to ensure the collection of meaningful data so as to guide future action.
Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.

H.G. WELLS
Chapter 13: Legislation

Public Sector Management Act 1994

Both the TAFE sector (as a whole) and the Western Australian Secondary Schools Executives Association (WASSEA) question the need for the continued inclusion of TAFE colleges under the PSM and associated Acts, as they consider it adversely affects their systems as follows:

- The appointment process for teachers and lecturers is unnecessarily long, convoluted and difficult to manage.
- The non-Government sector goes through a shorter, more effective process that provides them with a significant advantage in recruitment.
- There are often requirements for TAFE to recruit lecturers other than under normal award conditions in order to fill specific needs (e.g. overseas delivery) or because of skills shortages. Current arrangements limit flexibility and rapid response. For instance, securing the services of a qualified staff member from industry appears to constitute the ‘procurement of a service’ if payment for those services is made to the company. Employment of the staff member may not always be possible or the best solution.

There are provisions under the Vocational and Education Training Act 1996 (Section 57) (VET Act) for staff to be appointed under conditions other than those encompassed by the PSM Act; however, these provisions (which were included to cover such circumstances as those noted above) have never been invoked.

It is now proposed to amend the VET Act to make the Director General of the DET the employing authority for all TAFE staff. This is consistent with the broader employment policies of Government; there is concern, however, that the Department’s recruitment and deployment policies may further constrain the flexibility available to colleges.

Universities are included under Section 2 of the PSM Act, which provides them with greater flexibility in relation to recruitment, remuneration and business opportunities. There is a case for TAFE colleges to have similar flexibility so that it becomes relatively simple and fast to clear an individual to be concurrently employed by TAFE and in industry, unless there are real problems in relation to that other employment. Similarly, with regard to entrepreneurial issues, questions of equity and merit need to be addressed whether DET is under Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 of the PSM Act. The difference is that, under Schedule 1, the checks and balances are applied before employment, whereas this happens after the event in Schedule 2. Operation under either schedule is equally transparent and subject to appropriate governmental checks and balances to ensure probity and fairness.
Dr Ruth Shean, the Public Sector Standards Commissioner, advises that:

- appointment processes within the public sector are currently under review with the goal of ensuring that recruitment, selection and appointment processes are less complex and time-consuming. (Since meeting with Dr Shean, the review has been completed and its recommendations should be implemented by late 2008.)
- within the public sector, appointment and selection processes are often managed unreasonably and poorly applied by government departments (including DET). In her view, the process could be simplified considerably. The reasons for the various requirements under the Act are in the main appropriate and correct.
- public sector standards emphasise compliance issues. The Public Sector Standards Commissioner believes the DET interprets the standards in an unnecessarily complicated way and that there is a clear need to simplify the process.

Rather than necessarily changing the rules, DET might seek to work more closely with the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner office to hone the process more efficiently.

**Western Australian College of Teaching Act 2004**

While making available the mechanisms to respond to a need for staff, especially at a time of shortages, it is essential that standards of the profession are upheld. This can best be handled through the provision in the *Western Australian College of Teaching Act 2004* for a LAT to be given to a person who is not yet in a position to meet all qualification requirements. WACOT has utilised this provision very well, thereby considerably assisting schools at this time.

**The Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993**

As identified elsewhere there is a need to increase the number of salary increment points for teachers, as teachers reach the top of their pay scale within seven years. As of 2008, four-year trained school teachers will be appointed to level 1.6 on the salary scale, rendering the five salary points beneath this level ostensibly redundant. This has occurred incrementally over the last decade as various negotiated agreements have resulted in higher commencement salaries. These salary levels are used to deal with staff on various transitional arrangements, which could be dealt with elsewhere in the Award.
Recommendation 13: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

13.1 Institutes a thorough review of the policies, procedures and practices involved in the public education sector concerning:
- the recruitment, selection and appointment of teachers and lecturers
- the concurrent employment of TAFE lecturers with other organisations and industries
- entrepreneurial initiatives and activities.

13.2 Ensures that the DET works with the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner to simplify DET public sector requirements and responsibilities to achieve:
- maximum flexibility under the present Public Sector Standards, ensuring transparent, reasonable and efficient application
- more flexibility and autonomy, especially for TAFE.

13.3 Reviews its current ICT systems to ensure a rapid central response to employment and other human resource related issues, including synchronising with WACOT the electronic transfer of information to facilitate the speedy recruitment of teachers.
Chapter 14: Equity

“All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talent.”

JOHN F. KENNEDY
Chapter 14: Equity

The present Australian community is culturally and socially diverse, a situation reflected by the student population of many schools and, to a lesser extent, by the teachers in those schools. A diverse school community has the following attributes:

- It assists in building greater understanding and knowledge of various cultures, languages and social behaviours
- It provides inspirational role models within the school
- It facilitates career pathways for a greater range of individuals.

Thus diversity of the workforce enables education and training to respond appropriately and effectively to the needs of leavers and the challenges they will face within the global economy.

It is important that the education system and individual school communities develop their workforce policies, practices and services so that they can adapt and be responsive to the needs of a diverse community.

The Office of Multicultural Issues, emphasises that the employment of staff from diverse backgrounds who may be bilingual and of a variety of religious or cultural backgrounds would not only meet the needs of the changing student cohort, but also provide entry into teaching and related occupations for groups of people whose knowledge, experience and skills may, at present, be untapped. A workforce that reflects the diversity of the community is better able to deliver appropriate and effective services to that community, overcoming some of the disadvantage experienced by some groups.

The Western Australian Government has developed and implemented a policy framework concerning substantive equality. This framework recognises that access to resources, services and opportunities is not equally distributed throughout society. Therefore, application of rules (developed for the majority) to these “unequal groups” will, by default, limit opportunities and access for people from different backgrounds.

It is, therefore, necessary to develop different avenues for these diverse groups in order to provide access to the same opportunities. This could be through differential funding or programs delivered to assist (a) students’ educational outcomes and (b) entry pathways into the workforce.

“In order to treat people equally, you may need to treat people differently.”

Relating this directly to the education and training workforce in order to get the best teachers teaching, different avenues into the workforce need to be developed. For example, the TAFE Indigenous cadet program provides an internship model to assist aspiring Indigenous lecturers into the workforce.

49 Office of Multicultural Issues Submission to Taskforce number 107 p 6.
Western Australia’s public education system actively promotes and supports the development of a diverse workforce through implementation of its *Equity and Diversity Plan for the Public Sector Workforce 2006–2009*, in which the DET works towards whole-of-Government targets. Described throughout the DET’s plan are strategies to:

- improve the identification and support of people from diverse backgrounds in the workforce *(Working in Harmony)*
- improve the representation and identification of people with disabilities *(Disability Employment Plan)*
- increase the representation of women in leadership positions so that it reflects the overall participation of women in the workforce *(Women in Leadership Strategy)*
- continue to monitor the representation of youth in the workforce, particularly in relation to graduate teachers (traineeships and graduate programs)
- increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees with a focus on improving their career prospects *(Culture Strong, Career Proud)*.

In addition to the key strategies above, the DET, through recruitment and retention strategies, also seeks to improve:

- the representation of men in primary teaching
- the retention of men in teaching
- the perception of the ageing profile of its workforce.

Western Australia’s private education sector has also demonstrated a commitment to developing a diverse workforce through continued involvement in various national working parties, such as the Australian Education Systems Officials Committee (AESOC) Senior Officials Working Party on Indigenous Education.

While Taskforce members support the recommendations and strategies of the DET’s equity and diversity plan and notes that the independent and Catholic school sectors have similar goals and aspirations, it encourages the public and private sectors to work even more closely to amplify and extend these important themes.

### Cultural diversity

Western Australia continues to have the highest proportion (27 percent – 531,743 people) of its population born overseas. Within Perth itself, 31.3 percent were born overseas, placing Perth second only to Sydney (with 31.7 percent) for the greatest proportion of overseas-born of any Australian capital city.

The DET estimates 2.45 percent (957 people) of its employees are identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Of these 957 currently employed, 1 percent hold a position of principal, 13.5 percent are teachers and 74 percent are AIEOs. Over 80 percent of the DET’s Indigenous workforce is female.

It is difficult to accurately measure the diversity of the education workforce. However, as an indication, less than 1 percent of the public sector education workforce identified themselves in their employment record as coming from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background.

“I work in a school with a significant Islamic population and Buddhist population. Many students are from the Middle East, East Europe and Vietnam. I have only one TEACHER fitting these groups. I know that it will take time, but I want to see teachers with hijabs in our school. I want to see more diversity in our schools and community so that we have a greater diversity of teachers.”

*Submission #30*
In its submission to the Taskforce, the Office of Multicultural Issues (OMI) highlights that over 20 percent of students come from language backgrounds other than English. OMI also identifies an increasing number as humanitarian refugees newly-arrived in Australia. These students need approximately three times the level of support provided to other migrants. It is often useful, for effective educational development of these students, that education assistants come from similar cultural backgrounds.

In relation to African humanitarian entrants, the OMI identifies the need to increase education assistants and lower the student-to-teacher ratios for this cohort. Such recommendations would be equally applicable to Indigenous students, for whom the necessity to engage AlEOs has already been identified. Indeed it is interesting to note that Indigenous Australians receive less than half the investment in literacy improvement available for migrant children in Australia and yet for many Aboriginal students, English is a second or third language.

**Non-Government education sector**

Other feedback received by the Taskforce demonstrates that the current education workforce feel they are not sufficiently equipped with appropriate strategies to be able to deal with the diversity of students and their respective communities, particularly in areas which have high enrolments of Indigenous students or culturally diverse student cohorts. It is clear that, in general, graduate teachers do not have the necessary strategies to deal appropriately with students from diverse backgrounds. Universities would do well to reconsider this aspect of the education of pre-service teachers.

First and foremost, the education system in Western Australia has to attract quality teachers regardless of their gender, background or race. However, the system must also provide a variety of entry points and different pathways from which people of diverse backgrounds and experiences are able to enter the workforce in order to get the very best workforce to meet the community’s needs.

> “These teachers’ may need to take a different route through university, and may need to have different initial teaching experiences and entry into their first years of teaching may need to be transitioned, which may require significant investment. However the long term achievements will be worth that investment.”

Submission #10

For example the DET currently supports AlEOs to assist them to complete a bachelor of education degree. This initiative has proven to be successful, with 25 people graduating in 2007. DET has funded an increase in the number of AlEOs undertaking this course and now provides financial support to schools to facilitate relief staffing during the practical components of the course. This is an excellent initiative which has recently been extended to all education assistants with diverse backgrounds, and the non-Government education sector is encouraged to actively support similar developments.

Many schools showed that their AlEOs are critical to the success and engagement of Indigenous students. Their roles with schools vary from that of an education assistant to student mentor, and they provide liaison between the community and the school. Their career paths are important and require attention if they are to remain in the education workforce.
“Efforts need to be made at the sector and at the college levels to address the low number of Indigenous people working in lecturing, management and “non identified” support roles. Initiatives might include:

- more effective use of Indigenous media outlets for advertising
- recognition that Indigenous people may need support in the critical early phase of employment not just to transition into a job role but also to become accustomed to working in a large, bureaucratic organisation. This support could take the form of lengthened inductions, mentoring, coaching or making extended use of the Indigenous Lecturing Cadetship model currently being used in TAFE colleges
- professional development for lecturers and non-teaching support staff should include skills in working with people from a diversity of backgrounds as a matter of course. Currently most professional development in this area is targeted or just-in-time training, which reinforces a notion that working with diversity groups is somehow an appendix to teaching rather than an integral part of the skills set all vocational education and training practitioners should possess.”

Submission #203

The whole education workforce must be adequately prepared to teach and engage students from diverse backgrounds.

It is noted that the University of Notre Dame in Broome offers a suite of educational qualifications from Certificate III Teacher’s Assistant right through to a Master of Education. Notre Dame’s qualifications include compulsory Indigenous studies to ensure graduates have an understanding and appreciation of Indigenous people, history and culture. Feedback from the university indicates that graduates of their course feel better-equipped to teach in the Kimberley and that the retention of locally-educated teachers has improved.

The Taskforce is of the view that all universities should include compulsory Aboriginal studies for all prospective educators to ensure a greater understanding and respect for the language, culture and history of Indigenous Australians and the difficulties Indigenous students may face throughout their schooling.

Suggestions received by the Taskforce to improve cultural awareness amongst the workforce included:

- extended induction programs for staff commencing a new appointment, with particular emphasis on introducing relevant information of a cultural nature pertinent to the student profile
- increased opportunities for pre-service teachers to gain greater experience with students from diverse backgrounds during practicum placements
- ongoing support across the education system concerning behavioural management and teaching strategies for cultural diversity.

Gender diversity

Leigh and Ryan (2006) identify that the relative pay, particularly for male teachers, continues to decline and this fact is contributing to the declining quality and numbers of people entering the education workforce. As discussed previously in this report, relative remuneration was the number one issue raised in submissions and throughout consultation; however, it was particularly an issue for male teachers.

In summary, the three main barriers for men are also applicable for the workforce as a whole, notably:

- relatively low salary and poor career progression of classroom teachers
- little incentive to stay within the classroom
- the perceived low status of teaching.

Each of these issues has been addressed elsewhere in the report.
Recommendation 14: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

14.1 Negotiates with the Federal Government to ensure that financial investment in the literacy of Indigenous students at least is equal to that provided to migrant children.

14.2 Encourages WACOT to engage in dialogue with the Western Australian universities and other providers of pre-service teacher education to ensure:
   • they have strategies in place to provide substantial acknowledgement of prior learning to better enable Indigenous and minority cultural groups to gain appropriate entry into a pre-service education courses
   • that substantial studies in Indigenous culture, values and knowledge systems are an integral part of all pre-service teaching courses.

14.3 Funds appropriate market research to identify barriers concerning the recruitment of culturally diverse peoples into the education workforce.
“Everything that is really great and inspiring is created by the individual who can labor in freedom.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN
Chapter 15: The Federal Government

Under the federal system the roles and responsibilities of the Federal and State Governments in delivering education and training services is often unclear. Complex legal policy and funding arrangements often clash with differing State and Federal agendas.

This is by no means a new issue as the relationship between the State and Federal Governments, particularly in the vocational training agenda, demonstrates ongoing difficulties in achieving an agreed set of deliverables and responsibilities from the two levels of Government.

Governance

There are two key State/Federal governing bodies across the education and training portfolios: the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) and the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE). Both of these groups have relevant sub-groups that support and address key policy development and reform. There is, however, no single workforce coordinating body for either group that is charged with examining workforce planning issues, despite a number of ‘subgroups’, ‘action groups’ and ‘taskforces’. This is surprising given both sectors are labour intensive industries, requiring a highly proficient and skilled workforce, noting that the teaching profession is the largest profession in Australia.

Similarly the Western Australian education system does not currently have a coordinated approach to comprehensive workforce planning and development across either portfolio.

The Federal Government’s core responsibility within the education system is in broad policy setting and funding. The main areas of policy reform being progressed by the Federal Government in collaboration with the States are:

- national curricula with national standards
- developing outstanding principals and a high quality teacher workforce
- performance reporting and performance pay issues
- ‘harmonising’ teacher registration
- reducing red tape.

Competing agendas

In addition, the Federal and State jointly fund TAFE colleges through The Skilling Australia’s Workforce Agreement (Funding Agreement) 2005-2008. The Federal Government has increasingly expanded its control of and the delivery of vocational education and training over recent years, notably by recently establishing technical colleges throughout metropolitan and country areas across Australia. These Australian Technical Colleges (ATCs) are funded directly by the Federal Government and are effectively in competition with the State-based TAFE system. To-date the number of students attending ATCs is low relative to the cost of establishing and maintaining the colleges. While there is capacity for the ATCs to work with the established TAFE system (as illustrated by arrangements in the Pilbara), it is arguable that this is the optimal use of the resources. The TAFE sector has ongoing difficulty in attracting and maintaining quality staff, and many of the courses offered also have small enrolment numbers. A further fragmentation of resources is likely to worsen the current situation.
Incentives blocked by Federal legislation

Initiatives to attract and retain educators in schools and training sectors in rural and remote locations, whether they are scholarships, grants, the provision of housing or other benefits, are subject to Federal taxation arrangements. This often makes the cost of such intervention inhibitive for the employer because of fringe benefits tax (FBT) or personal income tax implications (the total cost of providing a scholarship, for example, is almost doubled when FBT is taken into consideration).

When considering employment options, employees are increasingly focusing on lifestyle factors and on non-cash elements of remuneration. Federal legislation adversely influences the ability of the Western Australian education system to compete with what other industries are in a position to offer and this in turn makes it difficult to achieve necessary workforce distribution, especially to rural and remote locations.

Debt forgiveness is another way of achieving a more appropriate distribution of the education workforce. The Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) results in a significant debt for many teachers. Graduates of teaching courses can incur a HECS liability of between $15,000 and $20,000. Debt forgiveness can be used as a method of attracting teachers to remote and rural areas. However, as with FBT, the current structure does not provide an appropriate vehicle for this to occur without prohibitive cost to the employer.

The Federal Government has other mechanisms to redress distribution of the education and training workforce through a variety of transfer payments. In particular, eligibility and entitlement under Austudy and Abstudy could be altered to provide greater incentives to students undertaking teacher training courses. The articulation of other benefits (sole parent pensions and family benefits) could also be reviewed in this context. Childcare support throughout participation in pre-service education training could be a significant support for women seeking to re-enter the workforce and have other positive impacts such as the movement of parents from welfare to employment.

National workforce planning framework

With the current forecast of strong employment growth in general and of slowing labour force growth, the risk of significant teacher shortages is emerging as an issue of national significance. In this regard, the development of a national workforce planning framework would provide a coordinated approach for workforce planning of the education workforce for the respective jurisdictions and the Australian education sector as a whole.

The following issues have initially been identified as priority areas for collaborative work between the Federal Government and Western Australia:

- The funding, allocation and prioritisation of university pre-service teacher education courses.
- The efficient distribution of the education workforce, particularly to rural and remote locations.
- Diversity of the education workforce, particularly the provision of sufficient Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers.
- The mobility of the workforce enabling supply flow between States and internationally.
- Access to accurate, timely and consistent workforce data that will underpin workforce planning nationally.

There are many issues which would benefit from a collaborative approach between the Federal, States and Territories. Teachers constitute the largest professional workforce in Australia, yet there is only limited coordinated planning. The provision of a high-quality teacher workforce would underpin national and economic development and the very future of Australia, and the following recommendations should facilitate this.
Recommendation 15: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

15.1 In collaboration with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, develops a comprehensive agenda of the education and training issues that will lead to a more collaborative relationship with the Federal Government in regard to the vocational education sector so as to reduce waste and duplication, and to ensure that resources (including workforce) are used to maximise the delivery of services and training outcomes across Australia.

15.2 Maintains and progresses a centrally coordinated agenda, addressing key workforce issues, as an important part of the overall coordination of Federal/State interests and in concert with the non-Government education sector. The following areas are viewed as requiring priority attention:

- Together with the Federal Government, the education system undertakes workforce planning, both on a local and national basis, to ensure the future sustainability of the teacher and vocational education and training workforces. A further priority consideration is to review the adequacy of the current number of pre-service teacher education courses in Western Australian universities.
- Federal taxation arrangements should be reviewed, with particular emphasis on supporting education and training staff in rural and remote locations.
- The State Government should negotiate with the Federal Government to remove the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) differentiation for teachers who train in areas of need, particularly the science, mathematics and technology-based courses, and develop a debt forgiveness regime for teachers in priority subject areas or who undertake teaching in rural and remote locations.
- The State Government negotiates with the Federal Government to increase the level of funding for practicums, with a major emphasis on supporting rural and remote placements.
- The State Government negotiates with the Federal Government to increase funding for English as a second language (ESL) programs for the children of 457 Visa holders and Indigenous students.

15.3 Pursues potential areas of collaborative State and Federal action to assist in the provision of the following:

- more and better housing for education and training staff in rural and remote locations
- up-to-date technology in schools (with appropriate broadband and technology infrastructure)
- a national marketing campaign to raise the status of teaching.
“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

NELSON MANDELA

“If you can read this, thank a teacher.”

ANONYMOUS TEACHER
Appendix 1

Teacher labour market in Western Australia

The current trends being experienced and projections for the Western Australian education workforce indicate that the current system of education delivery in Western Australia is not sustainable. The ageing of the workforce combined with an increasingly competitive labour market is resulting in constrained growth for the teaching workforce.

The public sector has struggled considerably to fill teacher vacancies in recent years, and 2007 marks a particularly difficult year with over 200 teacher vacancies at the commencement of the school year. The situation has been worsening and is indeed set to continue in the same trend. The difficulties have been the catalyst for significant review of DET human resources practices.

Feedback received by the Taskforce suggests that non-Government schools are also experiencing increasing difficulties in recruiting teachers. The number of applicants for vacancies has declined significantly compared with previous years.

Secondary school vacancies represented 80 percent of the total vacancies in the public sector at the start of the 2007 school year. The largest proportion of vacancies is in the subject areas of science, English, mathematics, and design and technology.

It is anticipated that there will be between 250 and 300 vacancies in the public sector alone at the commencement of the 2008 school year and that the aforementioned secondary learning areas will again form the majority of these vacancies.

The evidence tells us that the current mode of delivery of education cannot and will not be sustained under current trends. A significant reinvestment in the education sector is essential to redress a significant and persistent teacher shortage.

The following are the issues contributing to the worsening teacher shortage in Western Australia:

1. Students

The student population in Western Australia is expected to increase over the next decade. In Semester 1, 2007, there were 359,139 full time, pre-compulsory, primary and secondary students in Western Australia. Based on the current demographic trends, i.e. increased birth rates and increased migration (both international and interstate) this figure is anticipated to grow by up to 12 percent to over 400,000 students by 2017. In contrast, Western Australia's student population increased by only 2 percent over the last decade. As such the demand for teachers over the last decade has been only marginally affected by changes in student numbers. Increases in student numbers over the next ten years, however, will result in a substantial increase in demand for teachers.

The two key factors are (1) the marked increase in the birth rate, which has increased from 1.7 births per woman in 2002, to almost 1.9 in 2006, and (2) the departure from the school system of the half year cohort. It is noteworthy that the retention of Years 11 and 12 may also have an effect on teacher demand.

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1 As a result of changing the school starting age in 2001, a reduced number of students entered the education system in that year’s intake. This cohort of students is known as the “half year cohort”.
It should be noted that the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations projections do not incorporate the changes to school leaving age that will result in higher retention rates for Year 11 and Year 12 students; however, initial projections indicate that there could be up to an additional 4,000 students in Years 11 and 12 across Western Australia.

The half year cohort of students in the Western Australian education system that resulted from the change of school starting age is currently in Year 5 (primary school). These students will commence secondary school in 2010, resulting in a decline in demand for secondary teachers and a spike in demand for primary school teachers.

Based on the current distribution of students across public and private schools, in 2010 the number of secondary school students in the public sector could decline by 7,000 students, attributed to the half year cohort commencing. However, this figure could be as high as 11,000 as a result of redistribution of students between public and private schools, if the non-Government sector is to maintain current secondary student capacity.

Similarly, there will be a significant spike in the number of students in 2015 as the half year cohort leaves the system. For the first time in over a decade there will be a full complement of students in the Western Australian education system.
2. Labour market trends

The economic boom and labour market shortages in Western Australia are well documented. High employment growth (4 percent) (particularly full-time employment growth – 3.5 percent), coupled with low unemployment (below 4 percent) and unprecedented high workforce participation rates (almost 68 percent), illustrate that the Western Australian labour force is running closer to full capacity than ever before.

The working age population (15-64) in Western Australia is calculated to increase over the next decade in absolute terms; however, the flow of additional people entering this group will fall considerably from approximately 23,000 to approximately 12,000 persons per year\(^2\). As such there will be depletion in the number of people available to work unless there are discernable changes to immigration or the participation of older persons in the labour force. Even the higher population growth (ABS Series A) scenario predicts a decline in the growth of the Western Australian working population of more than 7,000 persons per year from the current levels.

Graph A1.2 Western Australian Working Population 2005 to 2019

Furthermore it is likely that labour force participation rates will fall over this period due to the changing age composition of the working age population, as proportionally more people are represented in the older age cohorts. Not surprisingly there are expectations of further labour force shortages, particularly in the labour intensive industries such as education and training.

The booming Western Australian economy continues to provide excellent job possibilities both in the resources sector and in other industries, not only for school leavers and graduates, but also for skilled workers seeking other opportunities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a concerning number of teachers are resigning to pursue other non-teaching employment. In the Government sector there has been a steady annual increase, from 58 in 2003 to 168 at the beginning of December 2007, from teachers who have indicated they are resigning to take employment outside the education sector, (comparative data is not available for the non-Government sector). It is probable that this is an under-representation as it is dependent on teachers disclosing their reason(s) for resignation.

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The number of teacher resignations in DET has increased 190 percent since 2003; an increase from 286 in 2003 to 826 as the beginning of December 2007 (DET HR data).

Graph A1.3 Public sector teacher resignations 2003 to October 2007

The combination of a strong resources sector and a tightening of the labour market will continue to have significant ramifications for the education and training sector.

As presented below, employment growth in the teaching workforce from 2012 onwards is expected to be restricted, despite increases in student numbers. This is influenced by the reduction in labour force growth.

Table A1.1 Estimated Annual Employment Growth, Teachers, Western Australia

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<td>Growth</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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Source: DET unpublished, Monash Labour Market Forecasts

The Monash model projects employment growth, by occupation and industry share, based on economic and labour force data.

A study commissioned by the DET, ‘Beyond the Resources Boom’, also models employment growth in each of the key industry/occupations in Western Australia, taking into account the ‘labour constraint’ issues associated with the current resources boom in the State. The impact on the labour-intensive service industries such as education and training may be substantial as, in a scenario of labour scarcity, these industries are ‘crowded out’ as workers drift into the more lucrative resources sector. This research suggests that the growth in the education workforce will be significantly less than the growth rates presented above.

The significance of these projections is twofold. Firstly, ensuring an adequate supply of high-quality teachers in light of these significant demographic and labour force changes presents challenges to the education sector. Secondly, the importance of increasing productivity through a highly-educated and skilled workforce is also critical if economic growth and development is to be maintained in Western Australia in times of increasing labour scarcity.

3 Beyond the Resources Boom, State Training Board (WA), 2007.
3. Teacher profile

In November 2007 there were 43,588 teachers registered with WACOT. This number is significantly higher than the figures recorded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) of 27,498 in 2006\(^4\).

The difference is due to the large number of teachers undertaking various relief and non-teaching roles (for example, district support for curriculum development). Many in this group would only work on a casual basis; however, their contribution to the delivery of education may be understated.

From a workforce modelling perspective this group presents significant challenges in relation to how they ought to be included in projections as their numbers are significant (25 percent of the total), and a key issue is the extent to which they will be replaced by teachers leaving schools to take on these roles.

The chart below indicates the number of teachers in Western Australia, showing their age group breakdown. This data was obtained from WACOT.

**Graph A1.4 WA registered teachers by age, 2007**

The graph illustrates the particular challenge the public sector faces with a large number of teachers reaching retirement age. The average age of the total teaching workforce is 43.3 years, with the relief teacher workforce recording the highest average at 45.0 years, followed by the public sector at 43.8 years and the non-government sector at 41.6 years.

There are 7,455 teachers registered with WACOT who are of retirement age (55 and above), representing 17 percent of the total workforce. Of these older teachers, 40 percent (3,084 teachers) are aged 60 and over, and 12 percent (930 teachers) are aged 65 and over. In contrast, only 14 percent (6,033) of the teaching workforce is under the age of 30.

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\(^4\) ABS, 2006. Schools Australia (Catalogue 4221.0)
Almost half of the teachers in the public sector are over the age of 45. This is not the case in the non-Government sector, where all age cohorts are well-represented.

The number of retirements in the public education system has increased significantly from 162 in 2003 to 300 in 2006. This trend is expected to continue as the ‘baby boomers’ enter retirement age. By the beginning of December 2007 there have already been 318 teacher retirements, with many more expected by the end of the school year.

**Graph A1.5 Public sector teacher retirements 2003 to October 2007**

Source: DET unpublished

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet published a Retirement Intentions Survey which highlighted that, within the public sector alone, 30 percent of the teaching workforce will retire in the next five years. This survey found that the largest proportion of respondents (33 percent) intended to retire between the ages of 60-64, another 30 percent between the ages of 55 and 59, and 19 percent at 65 or older.

Regardless of the year in which these retirements occur, the current age profile and trends indicate that retirements from the teaching workforce will be a significant factor impacting on the supply of teachers over the next decade.

The chart below highlights the sensitivity of the public sector teacher workforce, reflected in retirement behaviour, to any change affecting the education system. The trend line identifies the expected retirements modelled on retirement patterns over the last five years.

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Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Retirements Intention Survey, 2006.
Changes to federal taxation legislation may see significant numbers of workers retire at 60, the ‘medium’ line identifies the impact if one-third of teachers who are 59 retire at 60 in the following year and the ‘high’ scenario is if this rate is increased to half.

In summary a relatively small change could result in a significant reduction in the available supply pool of the teaching workforce. Any change (be that policy, curriculum or legislative) must be carefully considered for its impact on the workforce. It is also noteworthy that the projected number of teacher retirements will fall after the year 2017, by which time most of the teachers in the 50-54 age cohort (see chart above) would have retired.

A 2004 MCEETYTA report identifies that between 30,000 and 40,000 teachers will retire from the workforce by 2010, assuming most teachers retire between 55 and 60 years of age. Western Australia makes up 10 percent of the teaching workforce, meaning that between 3,000 and 4,000 teachers could retire by 2010.

The Western Australian teacher workforce is also highly-feminised, with female staff comprising 73 percent of the total workforce, of these:

- relief teachers – 76 percent are female
- public education sector teachers – 74 percent are female
- non-Government teaching workforce – 70 percent is female.

The proportion of males across the system is low and falling. Of particular concern is the decrease in male enrolments into education studies, which decreased by 29 percent over the period 1983 to 2000. The 2004 MCEETYA report identified three major causes for the drop in males entering teaching:

- salaries are uncompetitive and career advancement opportunities limited
- teaching is perceived as an occupation for women
- fears of being labelled a child abuser or sexual deviant have grown.
4. Student to teacher ratio

The proportion of students per teacher is slightly higher in Western Australia relative to the national average, measured through student to teacher ratios (STR). Western Australia's STR in 2006 was 12.3 for secondary schools and 16.4 for primary schools; both of these statistics were slightly above the national STR of 12.2 and 16.0 respectively.

These statistics have steadily declined (indicating smaller class sizes) since 1996 when Western Australia had a secondary STR of 12.9 and primary STR of 18.2. The number of teachers required will also change significantly based on movements in these ratios.

MCEETyA estimated that, for Australia, growth demand over the period from 2002 to 2007 for teachers would be limited to 4,000 if student to teacher ratios remained constant. If student to teacher ratios continue to fall in line with recent trends, the demand for teachers could rise by as much as 10,000, depending on the ratio change.

5. Graduates

The number of graduate teachers available to teach in Western Australia is expected to increase only marginally in the coming years, from 1,500 available to teach for 2007 to 1,557 for 2008 and 1,598 for 2009, and to remain at this level into the next decade.

The MCEETyA report (2004) identified that employment opportunities for new graduates was very low in the early to mid-1990s (only 55 percent of the graduates received offers) but by 2001/02 this had increased to 80 percent. This indicates that the teacher ‘pool’ of available staff has fallen over this period.

Moreover, there has been a marked decline in the number of teacher education applications in Western Australia in recent years. Tertiary Institute Services Centre (TISC) data indicates a total of 1,760 have applied for education courses this year, which is down significantly (30 percent) from the 2,569 applications in 2003/04.

The impact of the half year cohort of students will present further challenges in 2016 as these students will influence the supply of teachers as they feed into tertiary education. As presented in the information above, it is also likely that the labour market will continue to be tight, therefore, competition for these students in the employment market is also expected to be high.

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7 Demand and Supply of Primary and Secondary School Teachers in Australia, MCEETyA, 2004
6. Workforce projections

The culmination of these factors presents a bleak outlook for the teacher labour market, with considerable shortages expected over the next decade.

Graph A1.7 Western Australian Teacher Workforce Shortfall/Surplus 2007–2017

It should be noted that there is no growth in the number of projected graduates beyond 2012 (it is assumed that the training capacity will remain constant). An increase in the number of graduates from 2008 is required.

The surplus of 2010 is a result of the half year cohort exiting primary and entering secondary, and the spike of 2015 is extenuated by their departure from the school system. The graph masks a considerable divergence of the primary and secondary labour markets due to the progression of this cohort.

The secondary teacher labour market is expected to be in surplus in 2010 and 2011, moving into shortage as retirements increase. While the overall number of secondary teachers will be in sufficient supply in 2010 and 2011, shortages will, however, remain in the key subject areas (science and maths) if current university enrolment trends continue.

In contrast, the primary teacher labour market is expected to move into significant shortage for 2010 and ease over the next decade. The extent to which the pool of teachers currently not working or providing relief can or want to fill this shortage will determine the extent of the shortage.
7. Western Australian TAFE workforce

In October 2007 there were approximately 5,000 lecturers employed across Western Australia to deliver vocational education and training in TAFE colleges. Currently there are ten TAFE colleges included under the TAFE banner and one independent college operated by Curtin University in the Goldfields-Esperance Region.

TAFE module enrolments in the VET sector have increased by an average of approximately 2.3 percent per annum since 2002. The past 2 years (2005 and 2006) have seen an average growth rate of 3.8 percent and this is expected to continue into the foreseeable future due to the current levels of economic prosperity in Western Australia. Projections of requirements for TAFE lecturers are based on this growth factor but the factor is expected to reduce to approximately 1.9 percent in 2013 due to the flowing through of the half year cohort.

The lecturer population is primarily recruited from industry where experience in specific vocations is required in order to give the most up-to-date training. This situation leads to the workforce being largely based around casual contracts so that there is flexibility to give the best training outcome. On average across the State there are approximately 1.29 people per FTE, which indicates a major reliance on the part-time workforce. Data from October 2007 indicated there were approximately 2,600 people on casual contracts equating to 1,800 FTE which represents over 50 percent of the workforce.

The average age of this workforce is approximately 47.5 years and there are nearly 1,500 people aged 55 and above. The expectation of retirement for these lecturers appears to be at a lower rate than that of teachers, with many lecturers continuing well past 60, and this trend is likely to continue based on the large cohort of part-time and casual staff. The table below shows the current number of lecturers by age group.

Graph A1.8 TAFE lecturer workforce by age, 2007
Appendix 2

Research into teacher attraction and retention

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FROM TNS SOCIAL RESEARCH

Background

This research was commissioned to assist the Ministerial Taskforce, Education Workforce Initiatives, in its objectives to address the education workforce supply and demand issues by reviewing target groups, as tabulated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Methodology approach</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students in Years 10, 11, 12</td>
<td>Mixed methodology (in-class completion and online via panel)</td>
<td>n=545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents of students in Years 10, 11 and 12</td>
<td>Online completion via panel</td>
<td>n=202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary students (education area, and learning areas of need)</td>
<td>Online completion disseminated via universities</td>
<td>n=296 undergraduate education n=117 postgraduate education n=88 areas of learning need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General population</td>
<td>Online completion via panel</td>
<td>n=404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All sample groups were inclusive of metropolitan, regional and remote respondents, as well as the public and non-Government school sectors.

The common objectives for all target groups related to understanding:
- attitudes towards the teaching profession
- impressions of the role of a teacher
- perceived benefits/positives of teaching
- drivers/motivators to considering teaching as a profession and teaching in rural/remote areas.

Results

Education was consistently rated a ‘top priority’ by all sample groups. Teachers contribute significantly to society and are rated in the same tier as fire and emergency services, medical practitioners and police officers.

There is evidence among the sample groups that parents, the community, teachers and the Government take education/schooling more seriously now than they did 5-10 years ago, while a higher proportion of children indicate that they take education/schooling less seriously now.

The most frequent spontaneously mentioned negative aspects of being a teacher (particularly a secondary teacher) relate to perceptions such as:
- dealing with disruptive children
- dealing with lack of respect from children
- classroom safety (physical and verbal).
The education system and teaching as a career are perceived to be more difficult today, while the qualification is seen as easier to obtain. Other negative associations are:

- interaction of parents with teachers (parents not trusting/interfering)
- pay and conditions:
  - low pay
  - low social status (a perception held by current education students)
  - hours/merking on weekends (in relation to primary teaching)
- preparation time for subjects (in relation to secondary teaching).

There are also positive associations/motivators with being a teacher including:

- emotional benefits:
  - being a positive influence on children
  - helping shape the future of children
  - helping children develop
  - making a difference.

- functional benefits:
  - the subject:
    - teaching a subject you enjoy (particularly for secondary teaching)
    - specialising in a subject.
  - working hours:
    - long holidays/weekends off
    - shorter working hours (particularly for primary teaching).
  - the environment:
    - fun working with kids/fun environment (exclusively for primary teaching).

In regional teaching, the key spontaneously mentioned positives relate to:

- social aspects (community spirit/friendlier)
- work-related (more one-on-one teaching)
- interaction with children (kids more respectful, easier to teach, better behaved).

However, the potential barriers to regional teaching include:

- geography (isolation/fewer resources in the community)
- social/family isolation (not having family/friends around you)
- school funding and resources (lack of teaching resources, funding, equipment and lack of support from DET).
The overall result is that teaching as a career currently:

- records strong acknowledgement of the altruistic aspects of the career (e.g. a job with responsibility, making a contribution to society)
- is considered challenging, but is less about being highly-skilled
- is relatively weak in relation to workload, especially in terms of associations with professional development opportunities and autonomy
- is weak in relation to conditions or terms of reward and recognition, appropriate and competitive salaries
- is weak in all statements that relate to support and support networks.

Overall, the likelihood to recommend primary teaching as a career is slightly more positive than for secondary teaching. The key perceived difference relates to the behaviour of secondary school children. For both primary and secondary teaching, however, there remains a considerable proportion of all sample groups included in this research who would strongly recommend against it as a career.
Appendix 3

Public consultation process
During the first few months of the review, the Taskforce sought consultation from any interested party, inviting written submissions and then conducting 14 public forums throughout the State. The submission process sought to identify areas having a significant influence on the retention, supply and distribution of the education and training workforce, and over 250 were received. Included amongst these was one from the Western Australian College of Teaching\(^1\) which had been prepared on the basis of responses received from over 500 teachers. The forums focussed principally on seeking solutions, especially solutions to fit local contexts.

Throughout July and August, the series of forums was conducted in the following locations:
- Kimberley – Broome and La Grange
- Pilbara – Port Hedland, Tom Price and Paraburdoo
- Goldfields – Kalgoorlie
- Wheatbelt – Merredin and Narrogin (Narrogin via teleconference)
- Mid West – Geraldton
- Great Southern – Albany and Esperance
- South West – Manjimup and Bunbury

In addition to this, the Chair visited schools in Karratha and Roebourne, and held a number of phone conversations with principals and teachers in other schools, both remote and metropolitan.

As has been mentioned earlier in the report, the Taskforce was set up as a result of shortages of teachers in both the immediate and long-term education workforce. While the Taskforce has been underway, initiatives have been implemented by the Minister for Education and Training, the DET and by the non-Government school sector to deal with immediate problem areas. While these may go some way to alleviate problems in some areas, communications through the Taskforce website has indicated that their impact on the existing workforce has, if anything, led to a further decline in morale.

- Lots of publicity has been given to incentives to attract graduates and retirees – what about existing teachers?

Feedback obtained from both the written submissions and the forums was an essential component of the Taskforce’s undertaking. It indicated a generally low level of morale and attitude, both within and toward the public education and training workforce in particular, and revealed a depth of frustration and anger about perceptions that their work and effort is undervalued. As the education and training workforce is in daily contact with those who are potentially the next generation of teachers and lecturers, morale and enthusiasm has a direct influence on the future education workforce.

In the following sections, this appendix mirrors the outline of the report and serves quite simply to report information received from submissions, with a variety of solutions proposed at forums indicated in boxed italics.

\(^1\) http://www.wacot.wa.edu.au/submissions/Taskforce.pdf
1. Remuneration

Relative remuneration was undoubtedly the major issue raised in submissions, especially parity with other professions and links between pay and the declining status of the teaching profession. Many submissions noted that teaching used to be on par with other highly-regarded professions (i.e. Parliamentary backbenchers, healthcare professionals and the like), but have fallen well below those salaries now.

- Pay more/a fair pay – for all staff (teachers, lecturers, support, admin, psychs, etc.).
- Make pay comparable to other professions and Australian education departments.
- Pay allowances commensurate with those of other Government agencies.

Many teachers feel the return on investment, not only after four years of university study but also in terms of professional development (higher degrees, specialisation, etc), is inadequately recompensed.

- Pay for extra-curricular activities and professional development.
- Reward higher qualifications and special skills (behaviour management, special needs, etc).
- Recognise the intangible things staff do and value contributions to school and college life.
- Reward relief teaching in difficult locations/teaching out of area, etc.
- More recognition/reward for excellence.
- Recognise the time put in by teachers after hours and for extra duties.

A number of the submissions covered allowances and incentives, especially in rural and remote locations, with feedback ranging from the lack of parity with other Government agency employees working in the same locations and the insufficiency of pay and allowances to cover costs of living.

The workforce wants better and real incentives that will attract and motivate people to enter or remain within it; incentives should be excellent, not just acceptable. For example, a number of teachers might be willing to re-enter the workforce if childcare facilities were more available and the cost (particularly in regional areas) more manageable. Combined with flexible working hours and timetabling, this could facilitate the re-entry of a large number of people into the workforce on part-time basis.

- Offer salary packaging arrangements (health cover, childcare, mortgages, etc).
- Boost superannuation for retirees.
- Allow schools more flexibility to look after staff (dinners, etc).
- Entitlements (allowances, subsidies, etc) should be automatic, transparent and accessible.
- Review allowances for working in remote areas – and start them from day one.
- Increase air-conditioning allowances to adequately cover the warm months, and DET pay costs direct to the suppliers.
- Subsidise utilities in some country areas, especially when people have to pay a premium for them.
- Offer the best teachers incentives to teach in difficult schools.
- Remote packages must be extended to admin support staff.
- Provide subsidies for mortgages and/or rent in country areas.
- Provide transport costs for partners/family and more trips annually back to home base.
- Encourage exchanges to broaden experiences and refresh.
To reflect the varying costs of living across different geographic locations, it was suggested that an improved regional ‘weightings’ methodology should be developed and applied. There were also claims of injustice in terms of the definition of a “remote” location and, consequently, which public sector schools may be more able to access certain benefits.

It was largely agreed that regional schools should, in certain respects, be treated as a completely separate group. Submissions suggest that there should be a separate process within the Government to staff rural and remote schools establishing, for example, a specific “rural service division”. One submission states:

“It is inconceivable that in this day and age the participation and achievement rates for students in rural and remote Western Australia do not match that of their metropolitan counterparts. It is also inconceivable that a public strategy does not exist … to address rural, regional and remote issues.”

As well as salary increases, many submissions suggested that the reimbursement (in some form) of higher education contributions (HECS) or some assistance towards servicing this debt, which would go a long way to making the profession more attractive to new graduates and be useful in enticing these teachers to rural and remote locations. It was suggested that HECS relief could be used as a manipulative ‘tool’ for attraction and retention.

- Offer scholarships and provide HECS relief to the best students and get them into rural areas.

It was suggested that a sliding scale could be used for reimbursement relative to where a person is willing to teach.

Submissions claimed that teachers are currently not being offered bonuses for work and/or professional development above and beyond the call of duty, and it was suggested that performance pay might encourage teachers to be more committed. Conversely, the Catholic Secondary Principals’ Association of Western Australia made the point that any bonuses labelled ‘performance pay’ are likely to be disincentives as most of the workforce is currently performing to maximum capacity. Some also argue that there should not be a competitive streak within the education and training workforce because it goes against the grain of what instruction should be: “Teaching is a profession that is characterised by the collegiate sharing of ideas, skills and knowledge and the support they give to each other.”

Other bonuses/rewards put forward included accessing unused sick leave, long service leave and compensation for mentoring. Currently the only opportunity for bonus that exists within the public education system is the DET’s Level 3 Classroom Teacher (L3CT) status, which also came in for criticism in the submissions for being an onerous task which, in some case, results in the removal of good teachers from the classroom.
2. Career progression

Teaching needs to become a more accessible career for a greater number of people in order to alleviate
the current, significantly limited labour supply. Submissions suggested that the current one entry point for
teaching is inadequate and further avenues to enter the workforce should be developed.

- Create multiple points of entry – offer cadetships, traineeships, internships.
- Acknowledge and value prior learning.
- Be more flexible in re-employment terms – allow staff to leave and return at appropriate levels
determined by their experience.

The general feeling from the submissions is that there are people who do not look at teaching as an
attractive career choice given the time that needs to be invested in studying at university. There are also
people looking at a career change, but taking time out of paid employment to study to become a teacher is
rarely a viable option given the cost.

In terms of pathways, the career scale for a classroom teacher in the public sector reaches a plateau after
approximately eight years when teachers have nowhere to rise other than enter the administration area.
There is a general consensus that the promotional structure needs to be revised to allow for potentially
longer-term careers, with different avenues for achieving more rewarding levels.

- Improve the currently limited career structure/make separate pathways available – teaching and
  support – especially in the public sector.
- Develop a more rewarding and interesting career path for non-teaching staff.
- Introduce business managers into schools (smaller schools could operate under shared services
  arrangements).
- Give EAs limited authority to teach and make conversion courses available for them.
- Develop/promote multiple, more flexible, pathways for teachers to progress, esp. excellent teachers,
  and introduce more diversity of roles.
- Introduce career counselling.
- Recognise teaching isn’t a lifelong career for younger generations.
- Improve the onerous L3CT process.
- Develop a career progression and qualifications framework.
- Introduce creative leadership pathways.
- Develop a career path and university courses for classroom management consultants, and have them
  based in districts.

There are many who feel that amongst school support staff (i.e., para-professionals in classrooms such
as education assistants and laboratory technicians, and staff from within administration teams) there is
an untapped supply of potential teachers and business leaders. These are people familiar with school
environments and they are an obvious source of succession planning. These employees should be
encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities to expand their qualifications base and
enhance their careers.
• Allow greater choice and flexibility in professional development and how it is delivered (distance, onsite, video, etc).
• Provide more onsite professional development in country schools.
• Look for innovative up-skilling programs in areas of shortage via school placements and provide strong support.
• Increase pay and reduce holidays to allow for more professional development.
• Professional development needs to take into consideration both system needs and personal interests.
• Lecturers trained in adult learning and need support for new cohorts.
• Provide more training for relief teachers (in behaviour management, inclusive education, etc).
• Provide relevant training which has practical application.
• Make subject-specific professional development more accessible for country teachers.
• Allow staff to take sabbaticals for further education.
• Accredit professional development.
• Provide better access to quality professional development for people working in rural and remote locations.
• Fund summer schools in Perth for regional staff, meeting all costs.
• For promotion observe teachers in classroom; don’t rely just on folios.
• Follow up on professional development with in-class support/mentoring.

3. Housing and workplace conditions
The issue of housing was highlighted as one of the priority areas for those working in regional locations, which has a huge impact on whether or not staff choose to accept positions.

Availability and the quality of housing must be improved. It is the perception amongst the teaching profession that other Government employees (i.e. police and nurses) are provided with superior accommodation. This perception is creating low morale and the feeling that teachers are not valued. While there has been comment on the lack of interest that some staff show in maintaining GROH properties, a point has also been made in relation to the expense of maintaining gardens, for example, the cost of water in some country areas, quite apart from the time involved.
Many people highlighted concerns about having to share accommodation, poor maintenance and the quality of available housing. Personal safety was also of concern. As an example of the difficulties faced by some members of the education and training workforce, Kimberley TAFE have recently invested in a caravan for lecturers who have to travel to different locations within the region. Prior to obtaining the vehicle, lecturers were obliged to sleep in swags in the open.\textsuperscript{4}

- Plan better for the provision of housing, either temporary or permanent, for all staff relocating to country areas.
- Redress the inequities between what is provided for other Government departments and for DET staff.
- More subsidised housing needs to be made available in rural and remote areas, and in those regional areas where the housing market is creating difficulties for people relocating there.
- Housing support needs to be provided for school and college administration staff.
- Housing policy needs to be reviewed as sometimes people are out of pocket.
- Staff should not have to share (a) houses in country areas or (b) accommodation with strangers when attending professional development.
- Housing and transport should be localised to allow more flexibility.
- Develop a support/integration system in country communities by (a) providing transit housing; (b) welcome packs and (c) making introductions to local ‘social hosts’ for newly-arriving staff.
- Pay graduates an allowance or make salary available in advance so they can set themselves up, especially if having to relocate.

In relation to workplaces, submissions highlighted that many schools and colleges in Western Australia are in a diminished state of repair (i.e., one submission mentions staff working in passageways that have been transformed into a makeshift office\textsuperscript{5}) and that physical conditions and working environments for teachers and students are unacceptably low in some places. The point is made in many submissions that a professional environment will breed a professional school.

- Many schools need to be physically upgraded.
- Raise the $25,000 limit on capital works.
- Raise the general maintenance/cleaning standards and improve appearances.
- Districts should be involved in maintenance and capital works programs.
- Some workplaces are not properly set-up (teachers/lecturers should have access to desks, chairs, computers, filing cabinets, etc) and space is inadequate.
- Some schools do not have space for carrying out curriculum requirements (i.e. no wet area).

\textsuperscript{4} Submission #217
\textsuperscript{5} Submission #214
4. Leadership and mentoring

Confusion about the roles of some of the DET’s district offices and that of central office was indicated in certain submissions, with feedback suggesting the roles and expectations of those entities and their respective interactions with schools need to be redefined.

This quote from one submission underscores what needs to be happening in schools: “Let the leaders lead; let the teachers teach and let the students learn.” Leadership within a school was identified as an important factor in cultivating a respectful working environment. A clear message from many submissions was that principals need to be given more authority and supported appropriately in order to lead their schools.

- Identify potential leaders and provide opportunities for development.
- Share educational information/provide structured leadership mentoring (executive/consultant principal model, working with a cluster of schools).
- Let leaders return to teaching roles in classrooms.
- Encourage experienced leaders to work in rural and remote areas.
- Encourage curriculum leaders/networking.
- Use aspirant programs to lead curriculum and manage change.
- Reintroduce superintendents and subject specialists.
- Expand the sister school arrangement.
- Improve communication lines in schools through all levels – classroom to leadership.
- Employ supernumerary staff to support leadership and program development.

A lack of continuity within school staffing was identified as a major issue (for example one primary school has had five different principals in five years). The Western Australian Principals Federation pointed out that merit selection has brought about too many ‘acting’ positions. Without continuity it is difficult to gain respect; without respect you do not have leadership.

While schools need committed leaders who are educators themselves, careful selection of principals should be a major undertaking as there is some concern that many people entering these positions do so without any formal, mandated leadership training.

- Leadership modules work – make more use of them.

Many submissions make the point that support and mentoring currently being offered is inadequate, especially for new teachers. The degree of support required may vary for each individual and the circumstances in which they are placed.

- Ensure adequate time and support for mentoring, for both the mentor and the mentee.
- Use experienced teachers at universities as mentors.
- Reward teachers who run mentoring programs.
- Employ supernumerary staff to support leadership and program development.
- Acknowledge mentors/teacher preceptors with specialist roles, additional time/resources, advanced standing, etc.
- Formally recognise mentoring positions.
- Baby-boomers are not necessarily good mentors for Gen Y and different approach may be required.
5. Status of the profession

Submission feedback highlights that, while societal expectations and workload are increasing, teachers perceive that the status of the profession is declining. From the perspective of the Level 3 Classroom Teachers Association, “Increased respect for classroom teachers from within the profession and by the employer will lead to greater status and respect overall.”

- Market the profession better and stem the tide of derogatory reporting in the press.
- Return to the culture of valuing teachers/respect from the community.
- Use “real” teachers to promote the profession, and let them go to universities and schools to speak to students.
- Advertise vacancies in the professional appointments sections in newspapers.
- Capture local talent in country areas by marketing via local chambers of commerce and industry.
- Allow schools – especially country schools – to go to universities and market themselves to pre-service teaching students.
- Need strong advocate of profession – is this a function WACOT could fulfil?

6. Attraction to the profession

Attraction into the education workforce is an overarching topic in most of the submissions because, until improvements are made across the board, a career in teaching does not appear to be an appealing option amongst other choices offering a better return on investment.

Submissions highlighted that the passage into teaching needs to be eased if shortages are to be resolved quickly and efficiently. More courses need to be offered to suit school leavers, graduates, career changers and retirees; however, pre-service teacher training is relatively expensive. The introduction of an array of scholarships was a common theme, as was recognition of prior learning and experience. Submissions were particularly vocal about providing adequate measures to support new recruits and reduce attrition rates.

The skills in which teachers and lecturers are trained are easily transferable to other industries and, given the trend towards people having more than one career in a working lifetime, more flexibility should be introduced to allow greater ease of entry.

- Graduate mentoring within a school could become a leadership position.
- More effective mentoring for graduates.
- Introduce work-shadowing and FTE for supporting beginning teachers.
- Graduates: better support, mentoring, induction, reduce teaching hours.
- Leaders to return to teaching roles in classrooms.
- Experienced leaders should be encouraged to work in remote/regional roles.
- More support to grads in the first year, especially in rural and remote locations.
- Appoint a trained mentor/coach to work across a cluster of schools with graduates.
- Longer duration of integration into the workforce – five years.
7. Workload

Resourcing can mean a variety of things and in most cases the lack of adequate resources will mean an increase in workload. In short, the submissions allege that schools and colleges are under-resourced in a number of areas ranging from teaching staff, support staff, cleaners, groundsmen, facilities, furniture, stationery – the list goes on. In some submissions teachers talk about how they have had to buy resources from their own pockets. Some submissions stated that it should not be assumed that all schools need the same level of resourcing, while others highlighted that the specific needs of their student population required differential resourcing and budget allocation.

There were repeated references to the increase in administrative tasks being devolved to classroom teachers and, in TAFE colleges, to lecturers, especially in terms of reporting, assessment and policy, with no additional support offered to cope with the increased workload. Not only is this adding to stress but many instances have been reported whereby staff are given little opportunity to develop educational leadership roles because they are too busy facilitating day-to-day operations. Suggestions have been made that more DOTT time and more administrative support is needed for teachers. It has been noted that this will worsen with the increased school leaving age. Throughout the submissions is the theme of having more administrative support within schools so that teachers are freed to concentrate on the core business of educating students.

- Employ other staff to undertake unnecessary duties that are deflecting teachers from teaching (administration and supervision – playground, etc).
- Allow more time and support for teaching staff to meet and plan.
- Provide more administrative support in schools.

Another workload issue that was seen as a priority area for attention surrounds the constant changes to curriculum. These appear to be happening for all the wrong reasons and not necessarily for the good of education. As one submission states, “Get the curriculum under control – stop experimenting with kids.” It was argued in submissions that the shift from centralised to teacher curriculum development was not underpinned sufficiently in terms of either support or resourcing at the school level. It has been suggested that the curriculum needs to be structured and progressive from kindergarten to Year 12. Others argue that the curriculum is overcrowded. The Curriculum Council was criticised for not taking heed of advice that the curriculum needed to be developed as a supportive tool.

- Provide curriculum resources.
- Trial/develop major system changes in consultation with teachers and without interference (political, lobbying, religious, etc).
- Return to the basics of the three R’s for kindergarten to Year 3 students, and provide a syllabus to ensure foundations of literacy and numeracy are covered.
- Reduce the curriculum substantially.

It was frequently noted that amongst the ever-increasing array of tasks and responsibilities for which teachers are being held accountable, many fall in the domain of parents or guardians (i.e., dealing with obesity issues, teaching manners, instilling morals and values). The Catholic Secondary Principals’ Association of Western Australia makes the point that teachers are expected to carry out an almost parental role. If schools are indeed going to be expected to play a greater role in raising children, then more specialist resources need to be made available. There has been an enthusiastic call for central hubs in which the services of specialists such as psychologists, social workers, nurses and police, amongst others, could synchronise their operations within schools.
• Work with other appropriate Governments to improve parental support for students and acceptance of responsibility.
• Provide pastoral carers in every school.
• Introduce the concept of shared services schools – hubs in which psychs, nurses, police and other service providers work together/collaborate.
• Better coordinate support from services across agencies for dysfunctional families by forming partnerships with other agencies, especially in early childhood education.
• Clarify the boundaries between parenting and education/make parents more accountable.

Behaviour management was a divisive issue in submissions, being cited as the reason that many teachers had ceased working because of an inability to continue in stressful situations. Bullying and intimidation from other staff members also appeared as an issue in some instances. Respect from and for staff was often a topic: “Earn, receive and expect total respect from students, not negotiable.” While generally supporting the concept of inclusive education for special needs students, submissions indicated that resourcing and support was inadequate in many situations.

• Provide more in-class support (non-teaching specialists) to enhance literacy/numeracy, help with inclusive education and behaviour management.
• Provide extended support/alternative programs for high risk students.
• Provide more support for secondary teachers and TAFE lecturers for managing raising the school leaving age and behaviour management.
• Show zero tolerance for bad behaviour.
• Ensure sufficient funding for good programs until they are embedded (i.e. CMS).
• Ensure better personal safety for staff, especially those having to deal with drug and violence issues.
• Review complaints management processes/automatic legal service for school staff.
• Empower schools in terms of dealing with vexatious claims.
• Ensure recruitment to backfill support roles as AIEOs/EAs are upskilled.

Adequate provision for relief was another priority area and, while there was an acknowledgment in some submissions that relief is an expensive option, the overwhelming majority of people who addressed it felt it was an area that needed to be reviewed.

• Relief for country schools is imperative.
• At key points in school year, fly in experts (assessment teams/specialist teachers, etc).
• Reduce class size in remote schools so that teachers can better handle behaviour issues.
• Reduce class sizes when teachers have students in the class with behavioural or special needs.
• Review the system of suspensions and removal of high risk students.
• Misbehaviour is a community issue. Find a model whereby all country schools can be supported.
• The Schools Plus application process needs to be refined.
• Provide one SPER/off-site centre in each location for challenging students, especially in country areas.
• Provide greater access to leave for teachers in stressful schools.
• Ensure equity of DOTT for secondary/primary teachers.
• Reduce the amount of teaching time for new graduates.
• Provide more flexible conditions for rural/remote staff (long weekends, relief, flexible working week, etc).
8. Practicums

Submissions highlighted the need for more financial support for pre-service teacher practicums, not just for the students but also for coordination and administration of placements and incentives for classroom teachers to mentor practicum students. The students themselves should be adequately supervised, debriefed and have opportunity for reflective learning, which needs to be reinforced while on campus. More time for in-school experience needs to be incorporated into courses and this should include a fully-supported (i.e. funded) country practicum component.

Schools and universities need to collaborate more, establishing formal relationships and ensuring student outcomes and perceptions are monitored and measured, and that their experiences are meeting their needs. Quality of mentors is also an important aspect and, wherever possible, these should be experienced classroom teachers.

In terms of funding, one submission succinctly summed up what is required: “Recommendations… need to be thoughtfully considered and funding necessary for their implementation needs to be sourced in partnership between the State and Federal Governments, with Government schools also being able to have the budgetary flexibility to use their own funds to put resources into such measures.”

- Attach experienced teachers and/or those retiring to university courses for mentoring pre-service teachers.
- Look at compacting pre-service training to provide graduates for Term 4 vacancies.
- CMS should form part of pre-service teacher training.
- More practicum time in pre-service teacher training.
- Post graduate education courses are inadequate.
- Teaching degrees need to include more behaviour management, special needs, CALD, cross-cultural training.
- Include first year professional development into final year studies at university and avoid large workload in first year of teaching.
- Make available full year internships in final year of pre-service training courses.
- Make practicums more conducive to the needs of schools and applicable to needs of pre-service teachers.
- Appoint DET teacher liaison officers in universities to organise practicums.
- Pay students for practicums and subsidise costs country practicums.
- Establish centres for training in rural areas – training schools.
- Place much greater emphasis on practicums in rural locations.
- Provide better financial, personal and professional advantages for the 10-week ATP in difficult-to-staff schools and locations.
- The bonding system worked well – return to it.
- Allow time off to teachers for supervising/mentoring practicum students.
9. Vocational education and training

Issues facing TAFE lecturers largely mirror those of teachers, covering areas such as poor remuneration and allowances, housing and workplace conditions and equipment, lack of acceptable housing in rural and remote locations, workload, hours of employment, a lack of teaching assistants and support staff, lack of relief staff, information technology (especially in rural and remote areas), the size of Western Australia (Pilbara TAFE covers an area larger than Victoria11), low status, ongoing professional development, lack of adequate DOTT time, attraction, retention and transition to teaching, etc.

Workload is severely impacted by increased numbers of apprentices and trainees as a result of (a) the resources boom and (b) an aggressive marketing campaign and the raising of the school leaving age. More students are attending TAFE who might not otherwise have done so and this has raised behaviour management and duty of care issues which did not previously exist in the training sector.

Aspects unique to TAFE surround such issues as the recruitment of lecturers, which is more problematic than for teachers in that TAFE competes with the open labour market for tradespeople but is hampered by the inflexibility of public sector recruitment practices. Salaries, allowances and conditions are far higher than TAFE is able to offer. Competition, especially in the resources area, has resulted in a consistently high attrition rate. TAFE lecturers are also required to maintain the currency of their industry skills, which could be facilitated with industry partnerships, and it is imperative that colleges develop closer links with industry and have the flexibility to be more responsive to industry and business is required.

The requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) and lack of training resources available to lecturers impacts heavily on their workload, and is repeated every time a new package is introduced. Multi modal training necessitates the development of courses over different levels. TAFE does not have a ready pool of qualified teaching staff and many lecturers study concurrently as they teach for the first time.

- Provide more support to TAFE lecturers to acquire qualifications/transition into teaching.
- Do more to attract (a) a younger cohort and (b) an experienced one in TAFE colleges.
- Facilitate the release of lecturers back into industry to maintain/update skills.
- Look again at the workplace supervisor model.
- Develop the Curriculum Support Network more and encourage networking.
- Allow regional colleges to recruit lecturers above Level 7 without university qualifications.
- Provide more financial support for mentoring/training of less experienced/new lecturers.
- Introduce contract arrangements rather than salary to reduce disparity between trade/lecturer incomes.
- Provide a central source of relief lecturers.
- Recom pense lecturers who have to travel away from home/family.
- Allow for flexibility in teaching times.
- Some class sizes are too big – dangerous in workshops/equipment.
- There is a need for more teacher assistants in TAFE colleges.
- The AQTF currently involves too much paperwork and too many minor details. It needs revamping.
- Develop mechanisms to encourage rotation, transfer and secondment opportunities around TAFE sites.
- The TAFE training framework must be more relevant to industry.
- Change the onus on TAFE/apprenticeships from too much on time served to competence.


- Inflexible wage arrangements hinder the engagement of quality tradespeople.
- The increasing DET/national regime of control needs to be examined.
- Greater autonomy of TAFE colleges from DET is necessary.
- TAFE needs to look at employer demands and expectations, and respond accordingly.
- Colleges need to be more flexible and allow sharing of resources.
- Encourage industry/external partners.
- Strategic plan needs to match demand for services in communities/create business.
- Need school records transferred to TAFE in relation to the new cohort of students coming to TAFE because of the raising of the school leaving age.
- TAFE lecturers need more behaviour management training to deal with the new student cohort.
- To ensure staff wellbeing there needs to be more access to counsellors, etc.

10. Flexible delivery

Submissions have highlighted that there is opportunity for delivering a better quality of education by supplementing classroom learning with flexible methods, delivered via a multiple of media. The general consensus is that schools should be at the forefront of cutting edge technology and, of equal importance, provision must be made to having suitable support for such technology. Information technology must be recognised as a long-term investment. While it was pointed out that flexible learning is a step in the right direction, the point was made most forcibly that it must not be used to replace the teacher.

- Inadequate literacy levels will prevent many students from working independently – especially in the remote areas.
- Need reliable infrastructure, hardware, access etc esp. in country areas.
- Information technology experts MUST be provided to all schools.
- Improve technology for program delivery.

11. Operational management

The public education sector is the single largest employer within Western Australia's education and training workforce. A significant number of submissions highlighted the adverse experiences of some staff members when dealing with central office at the DET, to the extent that retention within the workforce became an issue for many.

The DET has evolved into a centralist model and is deemed to be out of touch and unable to respond to the local needs of educational establishments. Much criticism was made about the DET not understanding, being unsupportive, etc. Efforts need to be made to decentralise and change the culture (i.e. remove the policy-driven “them and us” mentality). Submissions received from education professionals illustrate that they do not generally feel they have the support of the DET, especially in times of need.

In particular, the DET’s recruitment processes are criticised for being too slow, cumbersome, unable to meet the needs of schools or colleges and, therefore, the learning needs of students. Many schools emphasised that it was important to be able to locally select, but that they needed sufficient budget to access resources specific to their needs. Local knowledge must be given more credence and aspects should be delegated to schools so they can be more responsive to local demands.
For those contemplating or currently working in regional locations, the concept of “right of return” was highlighted as a major issue. What was once motivation in accepting a regional posting now appears to be one of the major disincentives. Feedback from submissions highlights one of the major reasons for a reluctance to accept regional posts is the inability to access preferences once employees have “served their time”.

- Make country teaching compulsory.
- Overhaul the transfer system.
- Ensure proper interview to establish “job fit”, especially people going remote.
- Rotate central office senior stratégic staff via secondment to schools.
- Congratulate and acknowledge staff; length of service; achievements, etc.
- Regional DEO staff should receive same leave as other Govt. Departments (i.e. Kimberley five weeks).
- Central office needs to be far more customer focused.
- Make someone else responsible to the Minister and let DET focus on education.

In particular, submissions had much to say about the DET’s staffing practices.

- Improve succession planning and staff development.
- Change processes like leave without pay/transfers.
- Modernise staffing/recruitment processes.
- Allow human resources power to reside locally.
- Merit selection process should not distract from core business.
- Allow for early offers of positions and simplify permanency; review ‘limited tenure’; offer work location choices ‘after tenure’, job security.
- Improve the timeframe for merit selection and review it as it is too anti-family.
- Appoint earlier so people know where they’re going and can get organised.
- Recruit earlier in universities to get good graduates.
- Lack of job security/allowing teachers to hold positions but not teach in them.
- Respect personal situations (return to Perth care for family).
- Interview teachers after one and five years, and always conduct exit interviews.
- Provide employment certainty for teachers.
- Allow principals to return to the transfer system ‘at level’.
- Develop an efficient process of accountability (e.g. peer review, performance review).
- District directors should have the power to appoint.
- Allow long-serving administrators/teachers to have priority in moving to place of choice.
- Increase permanency.
- Review/increase points system.
- Rationalise/co-ordinate policies, and create them by those with significant teaching experience.
- Remove red tape/reduce bureaucracy.
- Responsibilities need to be devolved – too centralised.
- Increase the timeframes of work sent out from central office (surveys, etc).
- Properly resource changes, initiatives, strategies, policies.
- Provide equal conditions for those employed under the Education Act and those under the Public Sector Act.
• Look closely at the definition of ‘remote’.
• Simplify and reduce reporting and accountability.
• The turnaround in criminal screening for staff in both TAFE and schools is too long.
• Allow more flexibility for schools and colleges in terms of what to do with their funding.
• Decentralise funds to districts and allow carry-over.
• Better coordinate financial support to reduce paperwork.
• Consult, review, reduce, simplify and properly resource policies.
• Try to regain confidence and goodwill of staff.
• Allow staff to speak out without punishment.
• Provide more opportunities for central office staff to build rapport with schools.
• Show a ‘human face’, support/promote staff more.
• Overhaul the DET Website so it is more customer-friendly.
• Change needs to be better managed; it is currently too reactive.
• Improve contact with local services to enhance flexibility and responsiveness.
• Improve communications with school and college staff and strive for quicker response times.

12. Equity

More needs to be done to facilitate attracting Indigenous people into the workforce: teacher training needs to be more accessible, and personal costs and the cost of study must be reviewed. This may require alternative pathways into the profession for those with diverse backgrounds. However, vital though diversity may be and important that is to for greater effort to be put towards a staffing profile reflective of the whole community, the focus should be about getting the best teachers in front of classes.

• Make conversion courses accessible for more AIEOs.
• Develop leadership roles for AIEOs.
• Make more use of programs such as the Cadet Indigenous Lecturer program running in the Kimberley.
• Don’t offer secondary education services in remote locations: improve support/access to hubs – expand boarding facilities.

Conclusion

The Taskforce would like to formally acknowledge the effort that many people put into formulating submissions and participating at the forums. It is fully appreciated that the timing was not convenient for many of those employed in the education sector; however, responses to the submissions and forums provided ample material for the Taskforce to confirm opinions on the identified issues and to give it confidence that the recommendations in this report are endorsed by many within the education and training workforce.
### Appendix 4

1. Interviews

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization/Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alison Gaines</td>
<td>Gerard Daniels Australia</td>
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<td>Alison Woodman</td>
<td>Western Australian Secondary Schools Executives Association</td>
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<td>Andrew Thompson</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training</td>
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<td>Anne Blythman</td>
<td>Central TAFE</td>
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<td>Bethany Hiatt</td>
<td>West Australian Newspapers</td>
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<td>Bruce McCowan</td>
<td>Gerard Daniels Australia</td>
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<td>Colin Pettit</td>
<td>Western Australian Primary Principals Association</td>
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<td>David Ansell</td>
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<td>Deanna McGowern</td>
<td>Conference on Indigenous Child Protection</td>
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<td>Don Boyd</td>
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<td>Don Rowe</td>
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<td>Bryn Roberts</td>
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<td>Geoff Hutchinson</td>
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<td>Graham Harman</td>
<td>Woodside</td>
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<td>Jackie Tang</td>
<td>Department of Indigenous Affairs</td>
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<td>Jan Little</td>
<td>Schools of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE)</td>
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<td>Jayne Johnston</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training</td>
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<td>Jeff Macnish</td>
<td>Western Australian District High School Administrators’ Association</td>
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<td>Jim Hopkins</td>
<td>Country Hostels Authority</td>
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<td>Jim Shanahan</td>
<td>Chamber of Minerals &amp; Energy</td>
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<td>Jo Gaines</td>
<td>Community and Public Sector Union</td>
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<td>Julie Bishop</td>
<td>Federal Minister for Education*</td>
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<td>Kath Partridge</td>
<td>Sevenoaks Senior College</td>
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<td>Keith Newton</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training</td>
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<td>Ken Perris</td>
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<td>Kevin O’Keefe</td>
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<td>Lynette Buoy</td>
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<td>Marnie O’Neil</td>
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<td>Mary Cowley</td>
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Meath Hammond  Woodside
Michael O’Loughlin  Pilbara Iron
Mike Beach  Education Foundation
Nellie Connors  Roebourne
Pat Dudgeon  Curtin University
Peter Browne  Consultant
Peter Collier  Shadow Minister for Education*
Peter Tannock  University of Notre Dame Australia
Robert Player  Department of Education and Training
Rosalba Butterworth  Department of Education and Training
Simon Walker  Department of Education and Training
Stedman Ellis  Department of Industry and Resources
Stuart Hicks  Consultant
Tom Jamieson  Department of Education and Training
Trish Baron  Pilbara Development Commission
Vicki Jack  Department of Education and Training
Wendy Newman  Rural and Remote Education Advisory Council

* Title at the time of interview

2. Visits

Albany District Education Office
Baler Primary School, Port Hedland
Boulder Primary School
Broome Chamber of Commerce
Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School
Bunbury District Council
Bunbury District Education Office
Cassia Education Support Centre, Port Hedland
Cassia Primary School, Port Hedland
Central West TAFE, Geraldton
Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Manjimup
City of Kalgoorlie Boulder
Curtin University, Kalgoorlie
CY O’Connor College of TAFE, Merredin
Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Kalgoorlie
Edith Cowan University, South, Bunbury
Esperance District Education Office Administrators Conference
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<td>Geraldton Residential College</td>
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<td>University of Notre Dame Australia (Broome Campus)</td>
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<td>Waggrakine Primary School, Geraldton</td>
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<td>Warren-Blackwood District Education Office</td>
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<td>Wheatbelt Development Commission, Merredin</td>
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<td>Wongutha Christian Aboriginal Parent-directed School</td>
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Appendix 5

References

Executive Summary


Introduction

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Appendix 2