



New South Wales Teachers Federation

a branch of the Australian Education Union

AEU NSW Teachers Federation Branch ABN 86 600 150 697



29 November 2021

A letter to public school parents

Teachers and principals have made the difficult decision to go on strike on Tuesday 7 December.

This will be the first 24 hour stoppage in a decade and it reflects the gravity of the situation we find ourselves in.

We are deeply concerned about growing teacher shortages and the impact they are having on students across NSW.

There are more than 1800 vacant permanent positions in schools now from Bondi to Broken Hill.

The Department of Education's own research shows large and growing shortages of teachers.

Due to rising student enrolments, an ageing workforce and a significant decrease in the number of people enrolling in teacher education courses the teacher shortages will only get worse.

What is causing these teacher shortages?

Uncompetitive salaries and unsustainable workloads are making it harder to keep teachers in the job and have reduced the attractiveness of the profession to high achieving young people.

While the work of teachers has become more complex and challenging, their salaries have fallen well behind the average of other professions.

Teachers' workloads are also excessive, particularly the administration and compliance obligations which detract from the time they have for lesson planning and focusing on the needs of individual students.

For 18 months we have tried to reach agreement with the NSW Government on a reset of teacher salaries to better reflect the work teachers do and make them competitive again with other professions.

We have also sought an increase of two hours in the preparation time teachers have each week. (The current two hour entitlement has not changed since the 1980s for primary teachers and the 1950s for secondary teachers.)

Unfortunately, the NSW Government is refusing to make this investment that will help retain our teachers and attract the ones we need to stop the shortages.

What will happen on Tuesday 7 December?

You will need to make alternative plans for your child on this day because teachers will not be at the school.

We understand this is not ideal. But if we do not take action now, teacher shortages will only widen and the disruption in the years ahead will only be greater.

If you would like more information or to show your support for teachers, you can do so at morethankings.com.au

Yours sincerely,

Angelo Gavrielatos
President