



INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
UNION OF AUSTRALIA

**SUBMISSION TO THE
SENATE EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND
TRAINING REFERENCES COMMITTEE ON
THE INQUIRY INTO
THE STATUS OF TEACHERS**

June , 1997

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- (i) That education is an investment in the nation's future intellectual, social and economic well being and as such should be funded at a level which addresses the increasing gap between resource levels and students' educational needs.
- (ii) That both Commonwealth and State levels of government have a crucial role to play in resources supporting and promoting the work of teachers and schools to achieve improved student learning outcomes across the breadth of general and vocational educational courses, and this should be reflected in long term partnership commitments to the developmental needs of the profession.
- (iii) That there should be a collaborative and partnership approach to policy development which is inclusive of all the major stakeholders. To not do so is to jeopardise the successful outcomes of a particular policy, and to alienate significant groups within the industry.
- (iv) That schooling authorities acknowledge, value and call upon teachers' professional judgement in the development and implementation of education policy.
- (v) That both Commonwealth and State governments, in co-operation with other key stakeholders commit to a comprehensive and legislated approach to the planned educational provision of education, and to ensuring the educational and financial viability of all schools, and in particular, new non government schools. Policy on the funding of schools must be developed in consultation with all the stakeholders.
- (vi) A recognition that it takes time to rethink school organisational issues, and to implement and bed down policy changes at the school level while at the same time continuing to meet the ongoing demands of teaching and learning in the classroom. This has implications for the development of implementation strategies, for stability and predicability of resourcing and for the need to strengthen and resource professional development programs.
- (vii) A recognition that the issue of teacher quality and the status and morale of the teaching profession is intricately linked to the package of remuneration and work patterns that teachers experience. These affect teacher attitudes and performance and also student and public perceptions of teachers.
- (viii) That system and schooling authorities rethink the traditional work and roles of school support staff in order that their skills and knowledge and their contribution to the educative process is recognised and properly acknowledged.
- (ix) That the senate enquiry urge the development, through MCEETYA processes, of long term strategies which address issues of supply and shortage which do not impinge upon the quality of educational outcomes for students.
- (x) That a comprehensive system recognising the portability of qualifications and entitlements be endorsed by system and schooling authorities which thereby acknowledges the existence of a national teaching profession.
- (xi) That MCEETYA support the development of nationally consistent standards for the teaching profession and the incorporation of these into a comprehensive system of national registration for the teaching profession.

1. THE ROLE OF THE UNION

- 1.1 The Independent Education Union of Australia (IEU) appreciates the opportunity to put its views to the Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee on the Inquiry into the Status of Teachers.
- 1.2 The IEU is the federally registered organisation which represents the industrial and professional interests of teachers and school support staff in all non-government education institutions across Australia. It has a current membership of approximately 42,000 members.
- 1.3 The union has a known and understood mandate under its Constitution to advance and defend the industrial and professional rights and interests of teachers and support staff in the non-government sector. The IEU Constitution specifically provides that the union should encourage and initiate policies that contribute towards the improvement of the status, training and qualifications of all members of the union.
- 1.4 IEU members strongly support the union's taking a leadership role in education policy debate and development, recognising the strength, independence, commitment and resources that the union brings with its advocacy.

2. THE CHALLENGES

- 2.1 Over the past 8-10 years, successive Commonwealth Governments have initiated research projects and sought advice through key advisory and policy bodies such as the Schools Council (prior to March 1996) and MCEETYA on ways to strengthen the quality of Australia's schools through micro economic reform strategies. In doing so, Ministers have articulated the issues of teacher quality and the status of the profession as being of the highest priority. As recently as April 30 1997, Minister Kemp addressed a national conference on the topic "The Status of Teaching" noting it as

"one of the single most important issues facing not only educators but policy makers for it is essential that Australian schools have excellent teachers committed to improving the learning outcomes of all children".

- 2.2 The union has welcomed such government statements and policy initiatives intended to recognise, advocate and further strengthen the critically important contribution which the teaching profession makes to the nation. What is alarming is that despite such policy initiatives and statements of good intent on the part of governments, there continues to be a marked decline in the morale and status of the teaching profession.
- 2.3 The reasons for this are complex, but the union believes that at the core of the profession's malaise and loss of heart, the following issues are relevant:
 - (i) the ambivalence on the part of policy makers and school authorities in acknowledging and supporting the hallmark of the teaching profession which is teacher professional judgement. Teachers perceive their role and their efforts are no longer valued or respected by the community. Their professional judgements are often ignored, their input not valued at policy levels and they continue to work in the context of relative isolation. This

is particularly evident in a number of key areas such as curriculum design, assessment and reporting of student achievement. Around the country, state and territory curriculum and assessment bodies are restricting the participation of teachers, and there is a growing emphasis on the use of standardised, pen and paper style national or state testing of students, quite unrelated to teachers' professional judgement, and often contrary to the wisdom of their experience

A commissioned report from the Schools Council notes the following –

“In Australia today, educational administrators and policy bodies have become aware of the low status accorded teachers in reviews of learning outcomes. There is now recognition that pouring millions of dollars into evaluation of education systems whilst ignoring the professional judgement of teachers on educational issues is neither effective nor efficient. Teachers are rarely asked to provide their professional judgement on strategies to enhance student outcomes.”¹

- (ii) The subjection of schooling by policy makers and commentators to the ideology and rhetoric of the market place and economic rationalism. It is rhetoric which emphasises an individualistic, competitive and user-pays model, from which as well as winners, there must be losers. This jars with the collaborative and co-operative approach which most teachers believe underpins quality teaching and learning and their deep commitment to the education and welfare of every student, and that all students should be winners from their experience of school. It is not that teachers aren't familiar with and successfully working within policy regimes of reform and restructuring in education. Teachers value support, order and flexibility in school organisation and many want to be included in organisational decisions.

In the NSN publication “Teachers Write”, it is noted that

“Restructuring in education has taken its lead from restructuring in other industries where management hierarchies are giving way to flatter structures and ‘systems work units’ ... Likewise the education industry is adopting the rhetoric of the learning organisation. The new education is placed in an organisation that values continuous learning and recognises that learning does not take place in isolation... educators have to be organised in ways which foster participation and collaboration within their own professional work based relationships.”²

- (iii) Derisory and contradictory statements by government members, policy makers and media commentators are generally gratuitous and based on a poor understanding of the complex work of teaching. For example, in the keynote address on the “Status of Teaching” referred to above, the Minister for Schools, Dr David Kemp made the following statement in commenting on opportunities for negotiations on teachers' wages and conditions under the new Workplace Relations Act:

“... Connected with this is the need to eliminate over-regulation, and allow teachers to operate as professionals and not as rule-driven public servants.”

A double slur from the Minister, to both public servants and the teaching profession. It is difficult to know how the Minister (and his other government colleagues) would be able to carry out their public duties without the commitment and dedication of those professional public servants who work in his office and in various government departments. How does such a statement from the federal Minister support the members of the teaching profession and enhance their status. It is derisory and patronising, sharply contradicts with his earlier statements recognising their fundamental importance, and alienates those whose interests his portfolio is directly concerned with. The real target of the statement are the teaching unions, to which the great majority of Australia's teaching profession have chosen to belong and wish to represent them in negotiations with employers and in discussions with government and other education stakeholders.

- (iv) Most systems and schools have implemented policies which have resulted in a greater focusing on the planning, delivery and monitoring of individualised, student-centred approaches in an attempt to better meet the great diversity of student need . Alongside the move to more individualised programming has grown the need for more collaborative, team-based teacher work structures. These approaches, while supported by teachers as highly desirable, are however, less and less supported by systemic resourcing, and are difficult to sustain in traditional school timetabling and staffing structures.
- (v) In addition to changes in pedagogical approaches, the changes in the structure of families, the cultural plurality of school populations, youth unemployment and the diversification of the labour market and the increasing retention rates in schools have meant that greater responsibility for much of the socialisation and general care of students has fallen onto schools and, in particular, teachers . Most schools have developed programs concerned with the “whole student” and are becoming increasingly aware of the need to develop extensive, albeit unresourced, interagency and broad community links. Much of the work and input is unpaid in the sense that teachers take on roles that are beyond their teaching duties, and which are often emotionally stressful.

As a consequence of these increased expectations, there has been a significant increase in both the general workload and level of stress experienced by teachers. The effect of this on teachers' morale is exacerbated by their perception that they have received insufficient support from the community and government and its agencies in this area.

- (vi) Education is an enterprise on a massive scale, the largest industry in Australia in terms of both budget and workforce. It involves a very large number of key stakeholders, ranges across the public and private sectors, and involves policy making at both the federal and state government levels. Implementing school based reform across Australia's 10,000 schools and engaging its 300,000 teachers and support staff in such an endeavour is a very complex and difficult task.
- (vii) There can be little doubt that new technologies are profoundly affecting educational practice at all levels. Technology has the potential to reorganise curriculum knowledge requirements and the resources that

teachers use to prepare and deliver their programs. Its use requires not only new teacher skills, but a reconceptualisation of what it means to teach. Teachers require an in-depth knowledge about the organisation of knowledge itself in order to use the new technologies. A new pedagogy is required which is dependent on the appropriate and systematic integration of information technologies and school practices.

- (viii) Changes to industrial conditions and work practices including the introduction of performance appraisal and the development of teaching competency frameworks.

2.4 The education profession needs to be able to attract the best teachers and retain the best. The teaching profession could be described currently as at a peak in terms of experience, skill and age. As this cohort retires, there will be a commensurate loss of skills and expertise within the profession. As schools move into the next century, the demands on the profession will continue to increase. Much of the literature on future models of schooling (Lepani et al) emphasises the connections that schools need to strengthen with the local community, so that the barriers between home and school become “borderless”. Other bodies of literature emphasise the technological revolution that will enable educators to be conduits to a boundless amount of information, and will transform vertical models of curriculum delivery. What is clear however is that teachers will still be working with students and will have to bring critical professional judgement to bear upon the choice of teaching and learning strategies to suit those students’ educational needs.

2.5 In addressing issues related to the status of the teaching profession, the IEU believes the senate standing committee must also consider those teachers who work in early childhood education.

The IEU made a submission to the Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee Enquiry into Early Childhood education in 1996. That submission referred to the major policy changes which have affected the provision of early childhood education services over the past 10 years and the impact those changes have had on the professional roles of early childhood teachers.

Attached to this submission are sections from this earlier submission on early childhood education. The union wishes to emphasise its view that the issues referred to and developed in the status of teaching submission are relevant to all teachers, including early childhood teachers.

3. CURRENT CONTEXT

3.1 Well known educationalist, Professor Andy Hargreaves, speaking at the recent national conference on the Status of Teaching argued:

“There’s been a huge rhetorical move and ambition for the status and standing of teachers. Alongside all that, and quite separately, we have probably never lived in an age where there has been a more systematic, unyielding and pervasive de-professionalisation in the objective conditions of how teachers do their work... de-professionalisation in terms of things that are dumped unpredictably, in contradictory ways and in huge weights on teachers from a great height in terms of national or statewide directives.”

- 3.2 There now exists a very comprehensive body of research (most of it publicly funded) which argues that high quality education and improved student learning outcomes depend to a major extent upon high quality teaching, and that integral to this is the quality, status and morale of the teaching profession.
- 3.3 Stakeholders from across the education industry recognise issues related to the status and morale of the profession as fundamental to the national interest and to the development of sound public policy development on education. In August 1996, Brother Kelvin Canavan, Executive Director of Schools for the Archdiocese of Sydney called for the development and implementation of a long-term strategy to raise the status of the teaching profession. In his press release calling for the development of such a strategy, Brother Canavan quoted a 1995 research report from the Australian Teaching Council which read:
- “although their own belief in the worth of their role remains unshaken, teachers feel that they are misunderstood and undervalued by parents, the public in general and the media.”*
- 3.4 In December 1990, the Schools Council published its seminal report “Australia’s teachers: An Agenda for the Next Decade” which set out a long term agenda for action, based on ideas about how effective teaching can be recognised, supported and rewarded through developing more varied and defined career paths that combine incentives and opportunities for improving teachers’ classroom performance. The report was based on an analysis of teachers’ work and developed a Charter for Teaching which included the dimensions of ethics, professional work and continuous professional development. In essence, the Charter endorsed the development of standards ie. What teachers should know and be able to do.
- 3.5 This research, together with what can only be described as a mountain of other reports and projects undertaken and published since then, provide direction and advice for the way forward to addressing the problems of the profession’s status and morale. The IEU believes that it is not a lack of research, knowledge, understanding, or general acknowledgment which is the impediment to improving the status of the profession but a lack of will on the part of government (both federal and state) and system and school authorities to give reality to their rhetoric.
- 3.6 Excellent practice in teaching and learning does exist in Australian schools and is envied and studied by policy makers and practitioners from other countries. The IEU believes that not enough effort is given by policy makers and schooling authorities to develop strategies which sustain and generalise into Australian schools the recommendations from research, the best practice and genuine reform put in place by teachers and to communicating these outcomes in a positive way to the community.
- 3.7 The IEU believes that precious public funds and education resources are at best poorly focussed and at worst wasted on ill-defined restructuring, or short term reforms which are not explained well or make little sense to the profession and which confuse the community, and on inappropriate policy shifts which seem to have little purpose other than to give a *raison d’être* for a new Minister following a change of government at federal or state level. This has left the profession fatigued and frustrated, the general community confused and parents anxious

about their children's education. It has certainly contributed to the current malaise of the profession.

- 3.8 Nevertheless the rapidly changing nature of Australian society requires an education system which is flexible and adaptable to changing demands and contexts and to changing curriculum requirements and by implication this means that the system itself will be subject to reshaping and reform. While accepting this, the union believes a number of abiding principles should underpin the development of public policy on education:
- (i) That education is an investment in the nation's future intellectual, social and economic well being and as such should be funded at a level which addresses the increasing gap between resource levels and students' educational needs.
 - (ii) That both Commonwealth and State levels of government have a crucial role to play in resources supporting and promoting the work of teachers and schools to achieve improved student learning outcomes across the breadth of general and vocational educational courses, and this should be reflected in long term partnership commitments to the developmental needs of the profession.
 - (iii) That there should be a collaborative and partnership approach to policy development which is inclusive of all the major stakeholders. To not do so is to jeopardise the successful outcomes of a particular policy, and to alienate significant groups within the industry. Where the interests of particular stakeholders have not been acknowledged and sought to be accommodated, policy has unravelled. This has occurred at the highest level in for example AEC/MCEETYA meetings as well as at other levels. The IEU believes very successful partnership initiatives have been in place and should be the basis for new approaches to school and reform, and as examples, point to the NPQTL, the NPDP, NSN and Innovative Links.
 - (viii) That schooling authorities acknowledge, value and call upon teachers' professional judgement in the development and implementation of education policy.
 - (ix) That both Commonwealth and State governments, in co-operation with other key stakeholders commit to a comprehensive and legislated approach to the planned educational provision of education, and to ensuring the educational and financial viability of all schools, and in particular, new non government schools. Policy on the funding of schools must be developed in consultation with all the stakeholders. Few other issues in Australia have the capacity to divide the community in the way that the state aid debate has. As teachers in both sectors find themselves forced into taking a stance in the debate, what is lost is the united voice, sense and purpose of the teaching profession and proper intellectual debate about the key educational issues of the day. Teachers as professionals are diminished by the public/private schism.
 - (x) A recognition that it takes time to rethink school organisational issues, and to implement and bed down policy changes at the school level while at the same time continuing to meet the ongoing demands of teaching and

learning in the classroom. This has implications for the development of implementation strategies, for stability and predicability of resourcing and for the need to strengthen and resource professional development programs.

- (xi) A recognition that the issue of teacher quality and the status and morale of the teaching profession is intricately linked to the package of remuneration and work patterns that teachers experience. These affect teacher attitudes and performance and also student and public perceptions of teachers.

4. THE RELEVANCE OF SCHOOLING

- 4.1 Between 1982 and 1994, the year 12 retention rate for school students increased from 36% to over 74%, the result of government policy to encourage all students to complete year 12 and undertake further education and training. Such statistics clearly indicate that young people and their parents regard completion of year 12 as an important prerequisite for entry into the workforce and further education and training. This has coincided with a decline in the full-time labour market for teenagers and an adult labour market increasingly characterised by job mobility, career change and part time/casualisation.
- 4.2 This alone has had a significant impact on the role and purpose of schooling (while not legislated, it meant that years 11 and 12 have almost become a further level of compulsory schooling), on the need for the curriculum to serve the interests and abilities of a broader group of students not intending to go on to university, and impacted significantly on the nature, complexity and quality of teachers' work.
- 4.3 The Schools Council thus identified the key issue as "how to design educational programs in line with students' interests and aptitudes while at the same time raising overall levels of attainment to meet economic and cultural imperatives."³
- 4.4 The Schools Council conducted extensive consultations with the broadest possible range of interest groups in dealing with its Ministerial reference for its report "Pathways in the Post Compulsory Years: Patterns of Participation and Achievement"⁴. These included school and system authorities in the government and non government sectors, Boards of Studies, business and industry organisations and peak bodies, industry ITAB's, TAFE and university representatives, education unions, individual schools and teachers as well as others.
- 4.5 A clear message from the consultations was that when governments introduce new policy – properly intended to address important macro agendas – which has major implications for every aspect of a school's complex organisation, and they do so without provision of sufficient and appropriate resources and without a comprehensive implementation strategy then what is jeopardised is broad acceptance and support – from schools and systems, teachers, parents, students and the general community; and of course the policy's success and viability in terms of its intended outcomes.

Schools and teachers have been stretched to the limit, trying to integrate into the operation of their school, the large number of initiatives which have arisen from the vocational education and training reform agenda.

- 4.6 The Parramatta Catholic Diocese noted in their consultation with the Schools Council: “At this stage, we need no new initiatives, no new players. We certainly don’t need any more pilots. It’s time to ‘mainstream’ our innovations and experiments.”⁵.
- 4.7 In 1996, the federal government developed policy initiatives known as New Apprenticeships which provided for a substantial expansion of structured vocational training opportunities in years 11 and 12 of secondary schooling. This will allow students to begin an apprenticeship while still at school, and will add a significant dimension to the roles of schools and teachers and impact upon the workload of all education staff.
- 4.8 The IEU believes that the relevance and value of upper secondary schooling will be perceived by students, their parents, industry and the community when the broadest possible range of options and career paths is known and understood and can be delivered equitably, efficiently and at a high standard to students. The issues which must be addressed in a comprehensive strategic plan to ensure improved teaching and learning outcomes are:
- Strategies to address the strong cultural bias in favour of a general academic education compared to the vocational education courses.
 - Increased resources to provide equitable access to high quality and relevant inservice and professional development for teachers who are required to deliver particular vocational education courses.
 - An increased level of resources for schools to have the time to properly rethink the way they are organised, and how to prepare, deliver and support senior secondary curriculum to an increasing number of students wishing to study vocational courses.
 - Strategies to ensure the availability of properly qualified staff in sufficient numbers to meet the increasing demands of students undertaking vocational education.
 - A resource and strategic plan to establish stronger links between schools, TAFE and industry.
- 4.9 In considering the questions of perceived relevance to young people of school and the expectations of schools, an issue of particular importance is the influence of family and home support, and the socio-economic status of the family. Career choice is strongly influenced by students’ experience and expectations of schooling, particularly their levels of attainment. Student motivation and morale impact upon achievement at schools and this can be affected by factors outside of school, such as the employment status of parents. It is also clear that highly educated families understand how the ‘system’ works, have more useful networks and are generally better able to provide higher levels of support for their children than is the case for low socio-economic status families. In the interests of equity of access and outcomes, strategies need to be developed to ensure that all students are properly advised and supported during their school career.

5. RAISING THE STATUS: UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF TEACHERS' WORK

- 5.1 In a research paper entitled "How To Improve the Quality of Teaching in Tomorrow's Schools ; The Contribution Of Research" ⁶, prepared in 1996 by the NSW Teacher Education Council, a number of prominent teacher educators have remarked that

"... Helping students to live and work in this changing world places increased demands on the skill, dedication, imagination and professionalism of teachers, who must increasingly contextualise their teaching in relation to the needs of individual pupils, employers and society, particularly as mediated by government policy, parents and community leaders."

- 5.2 These increased demands must also be seen in the current context where the "education systems of all Australian States and Territories have undergone dramatic restructuring which, along with changes in curriculum and assessment, have placed further demands on teachers' time, energy, capacities and indeed, good will." ⁷.

- 5.3 The developments outlined in that body of research are shaped by two major interconnecting trends:

- increasing complexity: teachers are being asked to undertake a wider variety of tasks, sometimes fitting together and sometimes not, than ever before, as they respond to diversifying student populations with greater personal, cultural and social needs than before and to demands that more and more issues be covered in the curriculum, as well as changes in education policy which require new work to be done in curriculum, planning assessment, and school management; and
- increasing intensity: a product of the amount of work that must be done, the accumulation of demands and deadlines, and the increasing scrutiny through the media and quality assurance reviews.

Research clearly supports the contention that, as a result of these trends, teachers are less able than ever to adopt a narrow view of their tasks as simply the transmission of pre-set curriculum and their teaching skills and strategies must be sophisticated and flexible, providing them with sound professional judgements in specific situations, with specific classes and individual students.

- 5.4 Over the past two decades there have been numerous studies undertaken regarding teacher stress both overseas and in Australia.

Because of overwhelming anecdotal evidence from their members, the NSW and Victorian Branches of the IEU have conducted research projects into workloads and perceptions of occupational stress among teachers employed in Catholic and independent schools in their respective states. (See attachment)

- 5.5 These surveys confirmed other research which shows that stress has eventuated as a result of the ever increasing complexity and intensity of teachers' work. Issues of particular concern are communication, style, and the leadership approach of the school management, increasing hours of work, the lack of time for collegial work to implement reforms, ambiguities deriving from inadequate

role descriptions, lack of consultation with and input from teachers regarding role, demands upon personal and private obligations, relationships with students and parents and career prospects.

- 5.6 What policy makers must be concerned about are the detrimental affects such high levels of stress are having on quality teaching and learning and the functioning and organisation of schools. Many teachers are fatigued and have lost heart, many withdraw from their colleagues, take leave or leave the profession. The surveys reflected an evident loss of personal self esteem and pride in the value of their work and their profession. At the present time, Australia's teaching profession is at its peak in terms of skill, expertise and experience while at the same time struggling with a jaded view of their own worth and sense of alienation.
- 5.7 Over the last few years, the IEU has undertaken and/or supported research to better understand the changing nature of the work of school support staff and to make more explicit the interrelation of the work and roles of teachers and school support staff. This research shows the increasing complexity of the work which support staff are required to undertake and the changing nature of work organisation in schools.
- 5.8 The survey research results show that most school officers are women (over 90% in survey samples) in age groups over 40 years and with stable occupational histories. Most work 26 to 30 hours per week, or full time and over half take on extra unpaid hours at home or at school on at least a weekly basis. Nearly one third hold tertiary or trade qualifications, while another one fifth have other TAFE qualifications.
- 5.9 Industrial conditions have historically been poor, with casual conditions of employment, a lack of job descriptions, poorly defined career paths, low rates of pay and limited access to training. The IEU currently has a special case before the Australian Industrial Relations Commission with the aim of redressing these issues.
- 5.10 The IEU believes that the traditional thinking and perceptions of the work and role of school support officers by system and school authorities must change. The potential for teachers and school officers to work more collaboratively and for schools to use school officer time and skills more efficiently requires identification. There is real potential to maximise the contributions of school officers to student learning with a recognition of the paraprofessional nature of school officers' work and a better understanding of their existing contributions and skills. This would involve flexibility in work organisation, including job redesign and increased team-based work. A key issue is access to accredited training, with clear career path options for school officers.

5.11 Supply And Demand

The issue of supply and demand of the teaching profession is a critical one. Recent research by Barbara Preston ⁸("Teaching Supply and Demand to 2003", Australian Council of Deans of Education, 1997) indicates that the current surplus of teachers is short-term and will be replaced by a shortage of around 7000 teachers by 2003. Even if these statistics are not agreed by all stakeholders, it is important to note that they do not take into account the changes in university

funding announced by the Commonwealth, which are projected to result in reductions in student intakes for teacher education programs.

- 5.12 Factors which will contribute to the expected shortage include higher retirement rates of teachers as the teaching population ages, increased demand for replacement teachers, and changes in student enrolment numbers. The key issue that the IEU urges the senate enquiry to consider is the development of long term strategies that address the issues of supply and shortage without reducing the quality of educational outcomes for students.
- 5.13 Strategies that the IEU endorses (and outlined in Preston's report) include:
- (a) Financial commitment to improve salaries and conditions
 - (b) Increasing support for teachers (especially beginning teachers in difficult schools) and other mechanisms to improve teachers' effectiveness and professional satisfaction
 - (c) Enhancing the status of teaching in the wider community, and the morale of teachers, through public and practical support for teachers and their work
 - (d) Recruitment campaigns for initial teacher education programs and for teaching itself
- 5.14 A trigger response to expected shortages, or for that matter, supply would be damaging to the profession. The IEU would view with strong criticism any short-term responses that had as an effect a reduction in the quality of Australian schooling. These could include the imposition of increases in general teaching workloads, reducing curriculum choice in areas that require specialist staff, and the employment of unqualified teachers.

6. RAISING THE STATUS: THE RESTORATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF SALARY AND CONDITIONS

6.1 Wages

In Brother Kelvin Canavan's call for a long term strategy to raise the status of the profession referred to above, he concluded:

"The message is clear. It is in the interest of the nation to have a strong and competent teaching profession in Catholic, state and independent schools. Salary levels are an important factor in attracting and retaining teachers of high quality. And, unless teachers are well paid, the expectations of many parents will not be met." (5/8/96)

- 6.2 In 1989, the Carrick Committee reported to the NSW government

*"... it is clear that current salary rates are uncompetitive. Evidence has been presented that the salaries of teachers, compared with other professions and the market place in general, have declined..."*⁹

The table from the report for the period 1970 – 1989¹⁰ shows a marked decline in the real level of teacher salaries since 1984, and while the period 1984 to 1989 was one of general wage restraint, teacher salaries did not keep pace with other salaries over that time.

Year	Teachers' Salaries (GA8)		Average Weekly Earnings (AWE)		CPI
	\$	Index	\$	Index	
1970	6359	23.4	79.83	24.1	26.9
1974	9770	36.0	133.70	40.4	40.0
1978	15406	56.7	217.13	65.6	60.8
1982	24457	90.0	280.73	84.8	90.9
1983	25533	94.0	301.13	90.9	97.9
1984	27166	100.0	331.10	100.0	100.0
1985	28087	103.4	346.90	104.8	108.3
1986	29549	108.8	377.15	113.9	118.9
1987	30428	112.0	390.73	118.0	127.5
1988	32206	118.6	416.63	125.8	139.3
1989	33327	122.7	436.60	131.9	139.4

GA8 (NSW top of teacher salary scale, NSW govt.)

- 6.3 The second table for the period 1974 to 1997 shows teachers' salaries relative to average weekly earnings. If salary relativity had been maintained at the 1974 rate, then the current salary for a teacher at the top of the scale would be \$60,476. It is worth noting that Andy Hargreaves reported to the national conference referred to above, that a teacher in his state of Ontario at the top of the teaching scale, with a first qualifying degree and not in a leadership position earns more than \$60,000 a year. He also noted that "in some universities there is a greater demand to study teaching than law".

Teachers' Salaries Relative to Average Weekly Earning 1974 to 1997

Date of Wages Increase	Average Weekly Total Earning F/T Adult Male	%	
1974	4th October	\$154.20	146.6
1975	19th October	\$157.60	153.8
1976	26th November	\$195.50	138.9
1977	23rd December	\$212.50	136.9
1978	22nd December	\$228.20	135.5
1979	7th December	\$248.90	133.7
1980	7th November	\$289.70	132.2
1981	8th May	\$294.30	139.8
1982	1st January	\$336.40	138.6
1983	7th October	\$394.10	128.3
1984	6th April	\$415.70	126.6
1985	15th November	\$453.60	123.6
1986	11th July	\$476.20	120.4
1987	27th November	\$516.30	117.5
1988	16th September	\$538.80	117.2
1989	22nd December	\$595.90	110.8
1990	31st August	\$616.90	111.5
1991	13th September	\$637.90	117.0
1992			
1993	17th December	\$691.80	111.1
1994	14th December	\$724.50	111.1
1995	1st September	\$751.00	108.3
1996	27th August	\$778.20	110.7
1997	1st July	\$790.60	113.4

Notes:

1. The dates correspond to the last teacher wage in each calendar year.
2. There was no teacher salary increase in 1992.

- 6.4 The IEU strongly advocates an improvement in the salary and conditions of teachers. Whilst this would certainly make teaching a more attractive profession, the central argument is about the value of the work undertaken by teachers in schools. Despite some lingering perceptions in the community of teachers' lives as short breaks of minding children interspersed with long holidays, the reality is a highly demanding and stressful profession. It is a profession that requires four (and increasingly in some cases five) years of professional training and academic study and continuous learning throughout a career, yet its career opportunities in respect to promotion and financial reward are minimal.

- 6.5 There are significant differences between pay and classification structures for teachers when compared to other four year trained professions. In teaching,

specialisation is intrinsic to the profession, and there is little provision for the recognition of cross-disciplinary excellence or responsibility. Career structures could best be described as “flat” and significant curriculum and supervisory responsibilities are rewarded largely through the payment of small allowances.

- 6.6 The status of teaching can only be improved by a commitment to establishing a better career structure for classroom teachers. Currently, leadership roles in schools are more heavily focussed on administrative and school leadership. Positions of responsibility, which would involve co-ordination of a particular year level or subject attract only a small allowance or combination of time and payment. Good classroom teachers want to stay in the classroom but the financial and social rewards are lacking. Generally, after 10 years of full-time teaching, most teachers will have accessed the highest incremental level of salary, and then there are no increases for the rest of their career if they choose to stay in the position that they trained for and have gained experience in – the education of students.
- 6.7 The following table shows the starting salaries for a number of graduate occupations in 1991 and what such graduates would be earning in 1997, according to their relevant award salary scales.

Retention: Teachers and Other Occupations			
Occupation	1991 (\$p.a.)	1997 (\$p.a.)	1991-7(%)
APS Legal 1	27,183	46,300	70.3
APS Medical 1	39,094	59,009	50.9
Grad Engineer	26,500	54,500	105.7
Grad Accountant	31,548	57,804	83.2
Teacher	26,718	40,636	52.1

Source: AIRC, APESMA Cullen Egan & dell

The comparison shows that in terms of salary, teaching as a career becomes more unattractive the longer you stay in the profession.

- 6.8 Stinson has also undertaken research and in “What Jobs Pay”, he provides a comparison of salaries for various professions for people over 30 years of age based on 1994 ABS data.

Average incomes for professional occupations: 1994	
30+ AGE GROUP	
	Av \$ p.a.
Judges/Magistrates	93226
MPs/Councillors	85718
Specialist medical practitioners	73882
General Managers	69138
Dentists	67521
General practitioners	65175
Public policy managers	63175
Commissioned officers	62724
Mining engineers	61525
Data processing managers	60378
Geologists/Geophysicists	58293
Physicists	58188
Personnel/IR Managers	58188
Other specialists managers	56415
University teachers	55894
Finance Managers	55790
Secondary school teachers	46196

Source: Stinson, R. “What Jobs Pay”

Secondary teachers compare unfavourably with a broad range of other professional occupations.

- 6.9 The IEU views with concern evidence of increasing casualisation in employment contracts in the non-government sector, particularly for young teachers. Whilst this trend is reflected in other occupations, the IEU believes that the costs it may save in terms of the denial of accrued benefits to employees, are outweighed by the lack of stability that the profession should engender in both students and teachers. Any employee in a school should be viewed as valuable enough to warrant a secure tenure of employment, and short-term or relieving employees are severely disadvantaged in terms of their capacity to access the same conditions and entitlements as permanent employees.
- 6.10 Similarly, part-time employment in the non-government sector does not often offer the same protections and entitlements as those afforded to full-time staff. As many employees are women, and many need a career that can offer them both full-time and part-time work, depending on lifestyle and family commitments, it is imperative that part-time employees are afforded more equitable conditions in terms of spread of timetabled hours, opportunities to return to full-time tenure as a matter of choice, and more flexible working conditions in respect to combining the demands of career, family responsibilities and life choices.
- 6.11 These rights should be available to all employees. Currently, many other industries are becoming more 'sensitive' to the family and life needs of employees. The non-government education sector is slow to move from expressions of goodwill to actual implementation of work practices that would accommodate these needs. The after hours commitments of many teachers employed in the non-government sector include planning meetings, sport, weekend commitments to coaching and/or attendance at religious events, reporting evenings with parents, camps, information evenings, and a host of other activities with students in specialist areas such as outdoor education, music, and drama. Historically, these extra commitments have been unpaid, and regarded as part of the 'labour of love' involved in teaching.
- 6.12 There is no rostered day off or time in lieu or overtime concept prevalent in the industry (apart from a few isolated examples for specialist roles) to compensate for these regular hours per week worked overtime, or, for example, a week spent at a remote location supervising students. The IEU supports more stringent regulation of the hours of work of teachers so that reasonable limits can be set, and a clear distinction made between paid work and goodwill. The IEU is committed to the principle that work undertaken is work that should be paid for and formally recognised.
- 6.13 The IEU urges the senate enquiry to ensure that the restoration of proper salary relativities for the teaching profession are included in the development of an overall strategic plan to raise the status of the profession.

6.14 Portability Of Entitlements

In 1992, the IEU signed an unregistered Heads of Agreement with the Australian Catholic Commission for Industrial Relations which provided for the portability of long service leave entitlements across all States and Territories for teachers and support staff working in Catholic systemic and some independent Catholic schools. This agreement was renewed for a further 3 year period in 1996.

- 6.15 The operation of this Agreement has been efficient and without contest between the union and the Catholic employers, and to the best of our knowledge, between the Catholic employing authorities across dioceses and borders.
- 6.16 Like the rest of the Australian workforce the teaching profession has become increasingly mobile over the past ten years. Such mobility is not just across states and territories but between government and non-government and between Catholic and independent sectors. The teaching profession is a national (and international) profession not one limited by parochial State/Territory and sector loyalties.
- 6.17 The interrelationship of issues such as national standards and guidelines for initial teacher education, national competency standards for the profession, the portability of service and entitlements and the planning and administrative requirements related to teacher supply and shortage are evident. There is little sense or justice for a teacher who has taught for 9 years in NSW losing recognition of such service for LSL purposes if he/she moves to Victoria for reasons such as family transfer or lifestyle reasons.
- 6.18 It should be noted that in 1992, the Council of Australian Governments determined:

“The Council agreed that there are benefits in public servants being able to transfer employment between the various State/Territory and Commonwealth governments. Each jurisdiction would benefit from the experiences of its counterparts and for public sector employees this would widen career opportunities”. (7 Dec 1992)

7. RAISING THE STATUS: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS – THE TRAINING OF THE PROFESSION

7.1 Standards

A very substantial body of research already exists around the issues of initial teacher education and pre service, professional development, and competencies and standards for the teaching profession. The IEU strongly supports the development of nationally consistent standards for the teaching profession and the incorporation of these into a comprehensive system of national registration for the profession.

The IEU has strongly supported a national scheme of teacher registration, covering all teachers in government and non-government schools. Such a scheme provides the opportunity to address a broad framework of issues such as professionally established entry standards, questions of professional ethics, requirements for teacher training courses, ongoing professional development and the capacity for deregistration. Such a nationally consistent set of standards and system of registration arrangements would enhance the standing of the profession and clearly serves the public interest. The IEU points to models of excellent practice in place, in particular the Board of Teacher Registration in Queensland.

- 7.2 In the past, the union has expressed its concern about the decline in the standards of academic excellence of students entering pre service training courses. It is unsatisfactory that students of higher academic achievement continually opt away

from teaching as a career and the union believes that there is a need to develop a set of industrial and professional conditions which are likely to attract to teaching in appropriate numbers, students with high academic ability and appropriate personal and potential professional expertise.

7.3 Induction

The IEU is committed to the support of beginning teachers in schools, through both the regulation of industrial conditions and the establishment of induction programs. However, the general experience of a beginning teacher is one of being “thrown in” to the life of a school, with a swim or sink philosophy. These early years for a new teacher can be exceptionally difficult, and professional survival is often based on inner resources rather than systemic, supportive structures.

- 7.4 Current research indicates that while pre-service teacher education programs have been both adequate and innovative, induction programs for beginning teachers are not widely available, and where they are available, they are rated as only moderately helpful or not helpful. The union believes that induction is more than the provision of information to a new employee about their organisation. It includes the process whereby new staff develop knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to carry out roles effectively.
- 7.5 The regulation of industrial conditions for new employees is represented in some states and territories by beginning teachers being given a workload of face to face teaching hours that is slightly less than their colleagues. Whilst this may partially reduce the stresses associated with one’s first professional year, it does not necessarily address all the issues that face a new teacher – difficult classes, assessment and reporting, curriculum frameworks, meetings, communication with parents and colleagues, documentation requirements, and the day to day administrative and professional demands of teaching.
- 7.6 The IEU strongly advocates a more structured approach to a first year teacher’s experience, which can be achieved by a better combination of time release and effective mentoring. In “best practice” models, induction roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined and formally linked to professional development and collaborative skill review. For example, in Catholic schools in Victoria, the union and employer association worked together to develop guidelines for school development planning in the areas of induction, skill review, and professional development. (See Attachment). The implementation of these guidelines occurs on a diocesan or regional basis, and could be described as taking place effectively at the school level in only a few regions in the state.
- 7.7 The union is opposed to any form of probationary employment for beginning teachers, and any induction process that is linked to punitive or formal due process. Beginning teachers need to experience a supportive work environment without feeling vulnerable about employment security.
- 7.8 Whilst the IEU supports collaborative consultation and policy development with the key stakeholders, the gap between policy and practice in the area of induction remains a wide one. The effective induction of a beginning teacher can only be achieved when other colleagues have the time to properly support and advise a new employee. The reality of teachers’ day to day lives is that not enough time

exists for their own professional development, let alone being able to properly support the needs of a new colleague.

- 7.9 In consultations that the union has undertaken with beginning teachers, the major issues that have emerged are:
- The overwhelming gap between theory and practice
 - Class sizes and spread of classes
 - Lack of release time for induction
 - Lack of opportunity to discuss professional concerns on a “one to one” basis
 - Excessive paperwork
 - Lack of structure or format of induction program
 - Legal liability concerns – lack of information at the school level
- 7.10 The union believes that the induction of new teachers should be recognised as a major responsibility of schools and employing authorities. Attracting good teachers to the profession remains a strong concern, but retaining them and ensuring that their skills continue to develop and are recognised is an equally paramount issue. The first step of this process lies in the induction of a beginning teacher. Those teachers that are part of this process, through mentoring and the provision of professional support, should also have their input and skills developed and formally recognised within the profession, rather than the current reliance on the goodwill and voluntary labour of others.
- 7.11 The IEU urges the consideration of the following in regard to the induction process:
- The entitlement of a new teacher to a lighter workload to ensure appropriate time for consultation and advice
 - Access to adequate counselling services without any reference to professional competence at this entry level point of career
 - Provision of adequate release time for both the inductee and any colleague involved in the induction process
 - Clear understandings of the professional status and rights of the inductee, and all other parties involved in the induction process
- 7.12 The IEU supports clear guidelines and processes established at the system and school level for inductees. These should include:
- General principles concerning the responsibilities of the inductee and support teacher or mentor
 - Access for the inductee and mentor to appropriate professional development activities
 - Organisational information such as school policy, expectations, and responsibilities made explicit
 - Guidance and advice on useful professional development such as teacher unionism, professional associations, in-servicing etc
 - Regular review of the effectiveness of the induction program
- 7.13 The IEU believes that these entitlements would need to be covered in an industrial agreement, so that appropriate monitoring, accountability, and implementation can be ensured. The IEU believes that universities graduate students who display desirable attributes at the beginning of their classroom

teaching career, but many such teachers are excluded from effective involvement in further systematic, professional development.

8. RAISING THE STATUS: STABLE AND PREDICTABLE FUNDING POLICIES

- 8.1 In 1996, the education unions, the IEU and AEU, made submissions to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission for the ACTU's Living Wage Case.
- 8.2 The submission argued that as a consequence of expanded educational needs, and the failure of governments to increase funding levels at a rate commensurate to the increased participation levels and wider curriculum needs, government and non-government school communities, families and individuals have had to pay increased costs for their education at all levels.
- 8.3 The submission refers to research undertaken by the Public Sector Research Centre which indicates fees, fundraising and commercial sponsorship have now become a fact of life in government schools, despite the fact that public education is supposedly "free" and that such activities are necessary for schools to meet the educational needs of their students.¹¹
- 8.4 The report shows that the average general fee charged by government primary schools amounted to \$56.33 and \$129.67 for secondary schools. For all schools, the average was \$89.18. While such fees are voluntary in a strict legal sense, the report indicates that most parents feel compelled to pay them for a combination of reasons which include their desire that their children not be vilified for not paying, or miss out on resources or activities, their belief that the fees are actually legal and the varying methods adopted by schools to recover the fees. The great majority of principals surveyed saw fees as crucial – as the way their school managed to bring their educational standard up to an acceptable minimum.
- 8.5 The research reports that the great majority of principals surveyed "gave emphatic testimony to the crucial role of fundraising in maintaining a minimum educational service" and that the proceeds "were overwhelmingly deployed on essentials ... being spread across both physical infrastructure and core curriculum support. Expenditure on computer hardware and software was especially prominent".¹² The capacity for such fund raising was considerably diminished for disadvantaged schools in poorer communities.
- 8.6 Similar evidence was given by the IEU in its submission regarding the struggle to meet the increasing costs for students' educational needs in non-government schools. Government funding to non-government schools does not cover the full cost of non-government education, and parents have always been required to make a private contribution in the form of fees, levies, donations and fundraising.
- 8.7 The total of government grants, notional fee and other recurrent income is intended to be sufficient to cover the salaries and on costs of staff in Parish primary schools according to a published staffing schedule (Victorian CEO), together with some other recurrent costs. However, most schools also have to raise a further amount of fees, greater than the notional fee and fundraise in order to meet the costs of essential services such as electricity and gas, insurance, maintenance, library book replacement etc.
- 8.8 With regard to the nature of the non-government sector, it should be noted that the elite, high fee category of schools, often wrongly characterised as comprising

the non-government sector, represent a very small proportion of the sector. About 1.7% of national primary and secondary enrolments are in Category 1 schools which receive the lowest Commonwealth grants.

Over 88% of the increased non-government enrolments between 1989 and 1995 were in schools in Categories 8 to 12, that is schools assessed as having fewer resources than government schools.¹³

- 8.9 The National Catholic Education Commission's Annual Reports from 1993 to 1995 show the level of parent contributions in the form of fees, levies and donations for 1992 to 1994, and indicate a percentage increase in parent contribution of 14.1% to primary schools and 16.7% in secondary schools. These statistics do not reflect the various negotiated arrangements at school level regarding fee waivers or reductions. Pressures upon parents are greater now to find funds to meet a myriad of school requirements for their children.
- 8.10 The IEU's submission to the Senate Enquiry on the States Grants (Primary & Secondary Education Assistance) Bill 1996 strongly condemned the present government's 1996-97 budget initiative referred to as the Enrolment Benchmark Adjustment (EBA) and its decision to remove the Commonwealth's role in planned education provision by abolishing the existing New Schools Policy from legislation.
- 8.11 The IEU believes that the introduction of the EBA without any process of consultation or public debate has been unhelpful and counterproductive and has contributed to a growing resentment in sections of the community towards non-government schools.
- 8.12 The IEU believes that the Commonwealth government should fund State governments at a level which guarantees high quality education to all students. The funding should be on the basis of need, on the number of students in schools and on the cost to provide appropriate capital and recurrent resources. There should be a legislative regime to ensure stability of funding and mechanisms in place which allow for adjustments if students leave a system.
- 8.13 The EBA legislation provides for a 50% drawback of the alleged savings to state governments when students leave the system, but the actual reduction is made from the 10% of General Recurrent Grants paid to the States and Territories. This is an entirely inappropriate mechanism and destroys what should be the straightforward integrity of a per capita program to support the education of students in government schools.
- 8.14 The IEU believes that the necessity exists, in the public interest, for governments to fund the dominant public systems to cater for all Australian children including those in small, rural, isolated, poor and disadvantaged communities, and NESB and ATSI communities. The Australian community expects the education system to be properly resourced and comprehensive and to set the benchmark or community standard for the provision of education for Australian school students.

9. CONCLUSION

The great majority of Australia's teachers are committed to their students and struggle hard amid rapidly changing demands to update their knowledge and skills and to deliver what is asked of them by schooling authorities. They would welcome and are entitled to more evident support for their standing in the community from school authorities and government. The IEU urges this senate enquiry to take up the comprehensive set of recommendations in this submission and from other key stakeholders in the education community who have made similar contributions to this enquiry.

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 2. National Schools Network publication "Teachers Write" 1996 p. 86
 3. Schools Council. "The Role of Schools in the Vocational Preparation of Australia's Secondary Students: Final Report" Dec 1994 p.2
 4. Schools Council "Pathways in the Post Compulsory Years: Patterns of Participation and Achievement".
 5. Schools Council December 1994 p. 17
 6. NSW Teachers Education Council Research "How to Improve the Quality of Teaching in Tomorrow's Schools: The Contribution of Research" 1996
 7. NSW Teacher Education Council, 1996
 8. Preston, B "Teaching Supply and Demand to 2003" Australian Council of Deans, 1997
 9. Carrick, J (Chair) Report of Committee of Review on NSW Schools, September 1989 p.19
 10. Carrick, J (1989) p. 191
 11. Howard, M & Coulter, J "Scrounging to meet the Shortfall", 1995 p.(i)
 12. Howard, M & Coulter, J 1995 p.(i)
 13. Professor K. McKinnon "Final Report of the Review of the New Schools Policy"