

Faculty of Education,
Queensland University of Technology,
Kelvin Grove, Queensland, 4059.
31/5/05.

The Committee Secretary,
Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training.

Dear sir/madam:

Re: House Committee Inquiry into Teacher Training

I am writing to make submission to the current Inquiry. I wish to make three (3) suggestions regarding teacher training in Australia:

- 1. As a matter of policy, those involved in the teacher training should themselves be experienced teachers.*

On the surface, this would seem quite a straightforward proposition. Teacher training is not merely a matter of theory, but of practical experience. By way of professional comparison, it would be incomprehensible, and unacceptable to the community, if those teaching surgery were not experienced surgeons themselves. What happens in teacher education, unfortunately, is that those involved in this enterprise do not necessarily need to be experienced teachers. This needs to be addressed at a policy level.

- 2. As a matter of policy, there should be salary parity between professional teachers and teacher educators.*

This suggestion follows on from the previous. In order to attract personnel with professional experience, there should be professional parity of pay. At the present time, as a teacher educator, I receive payment at approximately 50% of the rate of pay I would be receiving as a professional teacher. This is a nonsensical situation which ought not to continue. I might add that I have raised this situation with my own Vice-Chancellor, who has indicated that he is not interested in discussing the matter. Such is the priority that teacher education enjoys in Australia.

3. *The under-funding of teacher education from the Commonwealth Government ought not to continue.*

If we, as a nation, are serious about teacher education, then this needs to be properly funded. Again I provide an illustration from my own experience. I am engaged in visitation work to student teachers in schools. The funding is such that (in most cases) there is no opportunity for any detailed personal discussion or debriefing following the practicum by the student. The funding only allows (in most cases) for only a superficial “meet and greet”. This situation is replicated throughout teacher education programs, with large and limited tutorials, and a lack of personal contact. If the nation is serious about teacher education, quite simply, the enterprise needs to be properly funded.

Yours sincerely,

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