

Supplementary Submission 35.1

TE Inquiry

Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training

Extended response from the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Inc (WACSSO) as requested by the Public Hearing.

This additional information is provided by the Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Inc (WACSSO). The questions were presented to our representative Mrs Bernadette Garnier and put to the full representation of State Council on the weekend of the 26th and 27th of November, 2005.

The responses were as follows:

- Why would a university develop a relationship with a school?

In support of the position presented in our initial paper there are many reasons why it is good policy for Universities to have relationships with schools. For example we have spoken about the need to raise the profile of teaching and address the low uptake into teacher training directly from Year 12. One way to improve on this would be for universities to hold information sessions at schools to target the Year 12 graduate and promote the positive benefits of the teaching profession to stimulate renewed interest. This would improve informed recruitment.

The notion of life-long learning is not a new concept amongst educational commentators. To be authentic to the concept of life-long learning and multiple pathways' universities need to appeal to a broader range of students. Public school students need to be aware that university is an option for them and no longer extended only to privileged and elitist positioning. There needs to be a stronger link between all the institutions providing post senior secondary education and these partnerships need to inform students of what they offer, cost and entry requirements.

Practicum also needs to embrace mentoring by experienced teachers. Supervising teachers need to attend briefing sessions at universities as part of a two-way communication process, whereby the problems faced by pre-teachers and supervisors can be monitored, identified and solved.

- Internships.

The committee has expressed an interest in the value of internships and the position taken by parents on this concept.

WACSSO supports in principle the concept of internships. However the detail needs to be clarified. Currently in Western Australia it is our understanding that unsupervised classroom time by student teachers is not permitted. WACSSO supports the concept of structured graduate programs such as are available to other professional disciplines, where a period of time is dedicated on a rotational basis to expose pre-teachers to a variety of environments. A clearer working proposal for internships would need to be

presented in order to gauge what this means for parents and whether they would support all of the detail.

WACSSO would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for the opportunity to participate in the public debate and we eagerly await a presentation of outcomes.

Valerie Flashman
Policy & Research Officer
Western Australian Council of State School Organisations Inc.