

## *The Tasmanian Council of State School Parents and Friends Associations Inc*

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The Secretary  
Standing Committee on Education and Training  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

### **Inquiry into Vocational Education in Schools**

*The range, structure, resourcing and delivery of vocational education programs in schools, including teacher training and the impact of vocational education on other programs*

There should be equal opportunity for students choosing vocational education studies as there is for students seeking tertiary entrance.

When students seek a career pathway during their secondary education, whether this be mechanics or medicine, they should be able to choose the subjects that will give them entrance into post-compulsory studies or training.

Generally speaking, students proposing to enter higher education institutions will gain entry through attaining the prescribed results in year 12 pre-tertiary examinations. If students have chosen vocational education subjects at senior secondary level, then universities are not generally accepting of those subjects. Universities want to dominate and influence the school curriculum in the last years of schooling.

It is often more difficult for students wishing to enter into an apprenticeship or other form of post-compulsory training in a vocational field. Positions are often limited in number, and insufficient to meet the need.

Teachers in all areas of education must be qualified to teach the subjects required of them. This is equally important whether it be the highest level of mathematics, or whether it is catering.

There needs to be greater status given to vocational education. It is often seen as the only choice for students deemed unable to attain university entrance. However, equally intelligent students may in fact choose vocational in preference to pre-tertiary subjects. There needs to be provision within vocational studies for students wishing to gain tertiary entrance at the end of their senior secondary studies.

*The differences between school-based and other vocational education programs and the resulting qualifications, and the pattern of industry acceptance of school-based programs*

School based vocational education programs are more likely to be accepted by industry if there has been some industry input into the school-based program.

There needs to be clear pathways for students to progress to further training or studies on completion of the school-based program

Students completing vocational education courses at secondary level need to know and understand what those qualifications mean and where they go from there.

*Vocational education in new and emerging industries*

It is important for Education Departments to maintain contacts with industry to ensure that the programs being offered meet the current market.

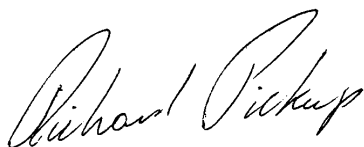
Tracing the outcomes of vocational training has shown that in most areas of trades there is low retention in the trades in which training occurred. It is important to recognise this in training. Skills learned in vocational education studies need to be transferable.

Employers are looking for specific levels of literacy and numeracy, and schools must ensure that this is included as part of vocational education courses together with the ability to work as part of a team.

*The accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education for indigenous students.*

Programs should be accessible to all students.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Pickup".

**Richard Pickup**  
**President**