

Secretary of the Committee – Teacher Education Inquiry

I understand papers were due some time ago. I did send a paper, but it appears not to have been listed. So here is a brief summary. I would REALLY appreciate it if this information were read to meeting. I have spoken with more than 120 teacher trainees, and around 30 first – year out teachers about my recommendations. EVERY one of them has agreed 100% with my recommendations.

Summary:

There is only so much Teacher – Training courses can manage to accomplish in preparing people to become teachers. So much learning occurs in the first year of a teacher's career but with virtually no time for reflection. I believe that at least the first year of teaching should be viewed as 'training' also.

Proposal:

First year out teachers be given the option of working a 0.75 - 0.80 teaching load. This load must be covered in four days, Monday - Thursday for reasons outlined below. In accepting this reduced teaching load, the teachers would accept 0.90 pay. (Remember, every trainee teacher I have spoken with has been positive about this proposal!)

Each term the new teachers would be required to attend say 5 days of workshops/professional development. Examples would include:

1. Report writing (Appropriate to their school's software)
2. Handling difficult students/classes
3. Subject specific PD which could be organised by their subject association body (2 days)
4. Support networking
5. Assessment strategies...

A survey of requirements from the teachers during first term would reveal other needs.

Note that the teachers are only required to attend 5 days each term. Additional days would be optional. During the other 5 days per term that teachers have 'off', some of these days could be PD within their own school, ie: Shadowing another teacher, following a class for a day to see how other teachers manage the class... Finally, first year out teachers could do with some time to prepare their own classroom materials.

Funding:

Teachers / students that I spoke with were happy to take a 10% reduction in their first year salary in exchange for the program that I have outlined. Remembering that it should be optional! The net cost for salaries over the current situation is almost nil, as many states currently offer a reduced workload for first year out teachers. The biggest contribution financially comes from the provision of professional development.

Thank you.

Peter Fox