

National Teacher Workforce Action Plan

Western Australian Secondary School Executives Association Feedback

INTRODUCTION

The teacher shortage across our nation has reached a critical point and is negatively impacting the education outcomes of our students.

WASSEA acknowledges and congratulates the federal and state governments for their efforts to address this crisis to date. The National Teacher Workforce Action Plan is a vital next step in progressing this work. However, the effectiveness of the current draft statement would be improved through more specific language outlining practical actions.

Meaningful change will only occur with additional funding.

WASSEA feedback offers the following:

- Suggestions to improve the plan (proposed alternative Actions); and
- Comment on aspects of the current draft plan.

PRIORITY 1 – Elevating the profession

Improvement suggestions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a campaign targeted at the public <u>and</u> aspiring teachers to elevate the status of the teaching profession 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an “Australian Educators Advisory Council” to strengthen the voice of professionals in achieving the national goals of education 	<i>i.e Mparntwe Declaration. Australian Education Act. Professional associations can support this</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and clarify the purpose of education and how we define student success 	<i>National debate</i>

Comment on draft actions

Action	4. Targets to increase the number of classroom teachers recognised as high achieving and highly accomplished.
Comment	<p>The process for becoming a HALT or equivalent requires analysis. WA evidence indicates teachers from high-ICSEA are three times more likely to be HALTs than low-ICSEA schools. Why? Predominantly three reasons – two of which can be accommodated by a different process. Staff in low-ICSEA schools do not have the same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time availability to complete the process • Ability to demonstrate high achievement • Number of years of teaching experience

PRIORITY 2 – Improving teacher supply

Improvement suggestions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove barriers and improve incentives for participation in ITE programs 	<i>For example: Paid practicums; waive HECS; equity scholarships; reduce post grad from two years to one</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the diversity of the ITE student profile 	<i>For example: pathways for existing employees to complete teaching qualifications</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise previous career skills and experience in pay scales and RPL provisions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the pay and working conditions for teachers and school leaders 	<i>For example: fund schools at 100% SRS; tax concessions; HECS debt waivers; salary sacrifice options</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require teacher regulatory authorities to facilitate more efficient national teacher mobility 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove barriers and improve incentives for suitably qualified international teachers to teach in Australia 	<i>For example: fast track visa applications & teacher registration</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require ITE providers to align course provision with identified workforce supply trends 	<i>Hard to staff areas – subjects and locations</i>

Comment on draft actions

Action	5. More teaching places at universities in the right subjects and specialisations.
Comments	Placements must be in the right location; knowing that most graduate teachers will work in their home state/territory. It is essential that online learners are noted by residence, not university. For example, Curtin University (WA) enrolls most online students from outside Western Australia.

Action	8. Trial new ways of attracting and keeping teachers in the schools that need them most.
Comment	<p>Current initiatives should only be listed under this action if it can be demonstrated that teachers were either attracted or retained as a result of the initiative. For example, travel concession entitlements in WA have been in existence for over a decade; with no evidence that this has had any positive impact on attraction or retention.</p> <p>WASSEA is concerned that listing existing initiatives will simply enable state/territory governments to avoid engagement in new initiatives.</p>

PRIORITY 3 – Strengthening initial teacher education

Improvement suggestions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a profession led review of initial teacher education, prioritising the advice of experienced school leaders to ensure that graduates are classroom ready 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the design of professional experience placements through consultation with professional educator associations 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the amount of on-the-job training in initial teacher education 	<i>Classroom skills are critical alongside theoretical knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-design with NATSIPA and others, approaches for the attraction, engagement, and retention of First Nations' teachers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include culturally safe perspectives and practices in ITE 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an assessment framework in partnership with the profession to select ITE candidates based on the cognitive, personal, and interpersonal attributes required to be a successful teacher 	

PRIORITY 4 – Maximising the time to teach

Improvement suggestions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine the roles and responsibilities of school leaders, teachers, and support staff appropriate to their professional focus 	<i>For example: who should do playground duty, prepare excursions? Are duty of care provisions overly proscriptive? What skills do contemporary support staff require?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource schools to more effectively enable teacher collaboration, planning, teaching, and assessment 	<i>Ensure that the phrase "maximise the time to teach" does not mean increased face to face hours at the expense of time for collaboration, planning and learning evaluation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrably reduce jurisdictional red tape requirements for schools 	<i>Ask schools what impacts their capacity to prioritise teaching and learning</i>

Comment on draft actions

Action	15. Build on work already underway to maximise teachers' time to teach, plan and collaborate and independently evaluate the effectiveness of these measures on teachers' time.
Comment	Current initiatives should only be listed under this action if it can be demonstrated that they have positively impacted on the time available to teach, plan and collaborate. For example, the flexibility for principals to provide Time Off In Lieu in Western Australia simply provides a monetary compensation to teachers. No additional funds are provided to schools to pay for TOIL. Student learning is disrupted by replacement/relief teachers; and the class teacher is still required to produce lessons for relief staff employed in their absence.

Action	16. Examine how to support implementation of the national curriculum and literacy and numeracy progressions
Comment	<p>It is hard to argue that a national curriculum exists, given the wide variations between states. As such, the supports provided to schools are best done so at a state/territory level.</p> <p>Advice on the frequency of the Australian Curriculum Review cycle should be sought from schools and school leaders; rather than from the organisations whose primary function is to engage in the review.</p>

PRIORITY 5 - Better understanding future teacher workforce needs

Improvement suggestions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require state and territory education systems to apply a consistent approach to teacher workforce data collection 	<i>For example: Utilising the existing ATWD</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require state and territory education systems to complete the ATWD rather than individual teachers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the needs of school students inform the design of ITE and ongoing professional learning for teachers 	

PRIORITY 6 - Better career pathways and support for teachers

Improvement suggestions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HALT programs, in collaboration with the profession, to evaluate their effectiveness in meeting their intended purpose 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide schools with targeted resourcing to enable induction, mentoring and coaching of teachers and school leaders 	<i>For example: time, training, staffing, funding, quality assured programs</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen training and professional development for middle leaders 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the resources available to support teachers required to teach outside their subject specialty 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand initiatives for retraining teachers to teach beyond their subject and sector expertise 	