

Submission
No 75

**INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES
SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 30 October 2020

Partially
Confidential

Submission on the review of the New South Wales School Curriculum - Committee's Discussion Paper and the Chair's Discussion Paper (due 30 October 2020)

To whom it may concern,

As a teacher of K-6 classes for over thirty years, I have seen first hand the decline of academic achievements in mathematics. I have been retired for six years and for the last eighteen months I have been casual teaching.

While I agree in theory that teaching for understanding of the processes involved in mathematics is important, concentrating on developing understanding rather than teaching the process has contributed to an even further decline of maths because of an overcrowded curriculum and a lack of allocated teaching time to compensate for this teaching strategy. Using this current philosophy often involves much group work which does not necessarily produce correct and accurate results by children. Sometimes because the teacher focuses on one group and encourages differing recording methods, such as mini whiteboards, magnetic numbers ect, work is unable to be checked or marked which can lead to incorrect working out and thus incorrect results. In this situation, misconceptions occur and are often difficult to correct.

I am very concerned that the time attributed to teaching maths is suffering because teaching for understanding takes up a great deal of time and it means more time needs to be allocated to this subject however, in the real world this does not happen. There is little to no time to specifically and explicitly introduce concepts satisfactorily. Another time consuming exercise for teachers is the expectation of weekly and individual testing. This means there is little to no time in the busy teaching week for much needed consolidation and fast recall of work presented. Numeracy seems to take a 'backseat' to other Key Learning Areas and social programmes that are mandatory for teachers to teach. Taking up valuable teaching time.

The Chair's Discussions Paper, in my opinion, identifies the crux of the problem. I agree with many points expressed in this paper and I feel confident if these changes were made our international rankings would increase significantly.

Most teachers I have worked with are dedicated and are very aware of student performances and with regular, sensible testing schedules along with NAPLAN results they know each student's academic standing and can differentiate effectively for individual student academic needs. Too much testing is time consuming and can become the focus instead of teaching and reinforcing the content.

I strongly suggest that the Chair's Discussion Paper be taken seriously and not dismissed because it does not necessarily agree with current teaching philosophies. I believe these ideas reflect the necessary changes required to address effective curriculum change.

May I respectfully request that my name be suppressed before publishing.
Kind regards