INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Teachers' Work in Schools Research Team

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NSW Parliament Inquiry into teacher shortages in New South Wales

Submission from the Teachers' Work in Schools Research Team

Associate Professor Rachel Wilson, Sydney School of Education & Social Work, University of Sydney
E: rachel.wilson@sydney.edu.au
W: https://www.sydney.edu.au/arts/about/our-people/academic-staff/rachel-wilson.html

Professor Susan McGrath-Champ (Honorary), University of Sydney Business School
E: susan.mcgrathchamp@sydney.edu.au
W: https://www.sydney.edu.au/business/about/our-people/academic-staff/susan-mcgrathchamp.html

Dr Mihajla Gavin, Business School, University of Technology Sydney
E: mihajla.gavin@uts.edu.au
W: https://profiles.uts.edu.au/Mihajla.Gavin

Dr Meghan Stacey, School of Education, UNSW Sydney
E: m.stacey@unsw.edu.au
W: https://www.unsw.edu.au/staff/meghan-stacey

Associate Professor Scott Fitzgerald, School of Management and Marketing, Curtin University
E: s.fitzgerald@curtin.edu.au
W: https://staffportal.curtin.edu.au/staff/profile/view/scott-fitzgerald-dd1835a1/

The *Teachers' Work in Schools* **research team** makes this submission to assist the Education Committee of the NSW Upper House in its "examination of teacher shortages in the NSW school system, both the factors contributing to the shortages" including "the various contributions of long-term teacher shortages, loss of the casual teaching workforce, vaccination mandates, COVID-19 and other factors", and "the best ways to address them".

Together, over nearly ten years, through a series of research projects, the above colleagues at the University of Sydney, University of New South Wales, University of Technology Sydney and Curtin University have examined the issues of work, workload and conditions of work of Australian school teachers and school leaders. The past ten years have seen **considerable shifts reported in the amount and nature of work undertaken by teachers**. Our programme of research has documented these experiences and challenges, reviewing it nationally and in detail across state contexts, particularly NSW and also WA.

Our research has:

- Documented, in finest detail, the specific work activities and working hours of teachers and school leaders
- Determined changes to teachers' work over the past ten years
- Highlighted the challenges teachers experience, including but not limited to administrative burdens and workload

- Identified augmentations to teachers' work and workload challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Brought attention to large-scale precarity and job insecurity in the teaching profession
- Documented reasons for the current, and worsening, teacher shortage in New South Wales
- Highlighted the low professional status of the teaching profession that is contributing to the teacher shortage
- Been acknowledged as a key foundation necessitating the formation and inquiry headed by Emeritus Professor Geoff Gallop (Gallop et al., 2021)
- Achieved far-reaching impact by establishing a unique evidence-base of issues pertaining to teachers' work and working conditions including with the NSW Teachers Federation and the Department of Education (McGrath-Champ et al., 2022) and public media

Examining the teacher shortage crisis in NSW – its causes and ways to address it – is important as **teacher supply and work conditions affecting that supply directly impact on students' learning outcomes**. We encourage the Education Committee in its Inquiry to consider the current and future needs of the teacher workforce in Australia and the ways in which current state school education policies are augmenting, or in some cases burdening, teachers' work and affecting the environment in which teachers carry out their work. Teaching is often understood primarily in relation to student learning, rather than as a form of labour for the worker in question. This can fail to recognise the relationship between conditions of work and the character or nature of that work, leading to problems such as teacher shortages.

In this submission, we respond to the Terms of Reference by providing a list of recommendations for positive policy progress to address current teacher shortages and challenges confronting teachers in NSW schools, present detailed substantiation of the associated reasons, and summarise our recent relevant publications underpinning these recommendations.

*_**Please note that the Teachers' Work in Schools research team is happy to provide expert testimony and/or answer any direct queries from the Legislative Council on these important matters, should that be desired. Contact details are above_**_

Response to the Terms of Reference

Based on our collective and substantial research work as part of the *Teachers' Work in Schools* team, we present the following recommendations and evidence in response to the Terms of Reference.

Recommendations

1. Enhance teachers' remuneration to equate with professions requiring equivalent years of study and professional work demands. Ensure that such appraisals of work effort encompass all significant aspects including emotional labour and psycho-social dimensions of teachers' work. Provide a suitable pay gradient for teaching careers.
2. Ensure future consideration of teachers' salaries and working conditions articulate the message of the value of teachers to students' learning and within the community, and attract support from other stakeholders.

3. <u>Oppose the introduction of misguided performance structures, including performance pay</u>, which have been shown as failing to improve teacher performance and student outcomes and can lead to reduced morale and collegiality in the teaching profession and heightened competitiveness.
4. <u>Develop a national, or state-wide, teacher recruitment strategy,</u> to induce greater interest in teaching careers, and through this affect heightened public/community perceptions of teaching and those who undertake teaching work.
5. <u>Reduce temporary employment proportions and accompany this with increased permanent full-time and part-time teacher positions</u> (the latter for those whose circumstances determine a need for less than full-time employment). The fixed-term and casual 'buffer' appears disproportionate creating unacceptable levels of precariousness, employment insecurity, and employment 'scarring'.
6. <u>Review and modify funding arrangements to provide principals with greater capacity for confidence in offering permanent positions to teachers</u>.
7. If and where merit selection is to be maintained in staffing policy,<u> ensure principals and school-level committees have requisite skills for equitable and effective merit-based recruitment and selection of teachers</u>, and that recruitment/selection processes enable the exercise of these competencies.
8. <u>Reduce administrative workloads, audit data and paperwork required of teachers and principals</u> (without establishing 'quasi-professional' teaching assistants). In doing so, determine what is really needed, with the goal of a substantial, net reduction in the quantum of paperwork and data reporting. Further, apply these principles in relation to both existing and future requirements for data, compliance information and related administrative activity, and do so at all levels (teachers, principals).
9. <u>Remove external, performative accountability processes</u>; accountability, while important, should be embedded in teachers' everyday work and the exercising of their professional knowledges, rather than being imposed from above.
10. <u>Work with media organisations to establish understanding of the vital role of teachers in creating and maintaining a vibrant, democratic society</u> plus strong student outcomes, and the benefit that can be achieved through deservedly positive reporting of schooling matters and teachers' work.
11. <u>Extend and improve data collection and reporting on the NSW teacher workforce</u>. Work with other jurisdictions to strengthen Australian Teacher Workforce Data, and provide more transparent monitoring of teacher recruitment, initial teacher education (ITE), teacher specialisms, teacher geographic allocation; and develop strategies to link teacher workforce management to key educational challenges, like growing school and student inequity.
12. <u>Provide greater transparency on the academic and non-academic standards required for entry to the profession,</u> with data provided for 100% of intake cohorts. One option is to provide minimum benchmarks for entry standards and completion rates for ITE providers, however, we caution that any such approach must take serious account of the role of advantage in schooling outcomes to ensure that the teaching profession recruits from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.
13. <u>Value teachers' professional judgement</u> and understand the complexity of what they do.
14. <u>Provide supports for, rather than purely make demands on, school staff,</u> with particular attention to the demands of educational agencies and government education departments in this matter.
15. <u>Reduce segregation across schools</u> and fully support schools according to need.

Evidence in relation to Terms of Reference

Teacher shortages, including issues of:

(a) Current teacher shortages in NSW schools

Our research team has noted a lack of data available and absence of routine reporting on this matter.

In our appraisal of media coverage it is evident that in many instances, the NSW Department of Education continues to deny that there is a problem with teacher supply. As recently as 28/7/2022, NSW spokesperson comment provided on vacancy rates included:

> ""very low for a system of our size"…"Seventy four per cent of schools have no vacancies, or only one. Our $125 million teacher supply strategy has a range of initiatives to make sure we have the quality teachers we need, in the right subjects and the right locations," (SMH, 2022)

This comment is surprising given the numbers quoted here state that over a quarter of schools have unfilled vacancies, with large numbers having multiple unfilled vacancies. Regional and remote schools and public schools suffer more severe shortages.

Our line of research uncovered pre-Covid increases in workload, declines in work conditions, and increases in job precarity, that all directly relate to poor teacher retention. These difficult work conditions have been exacerbated by the Covid epidemic. Several reports have forewarned of teacher shortage based on demographic data (e.g. Rorris, 2020). We have also researched teacher supply, through examination of Initial Teacher Education data, which indicates decade long declines in academic standards at entry and degree completion rates, and a recent slump in entrants. Detail on this research is provided in the following sections.

(b) Future teacher supply and demand

A small-scale study by Stacey (2022) on pre-service teachers' preferences for employment upon finishing their studies has indicated that the private sector may be perceived as offering greater opportunity for feeling like a 'professional', with the public sector understood as consisting of more challenging work environments. This suggests that one factor for future teacher recruitment is to consider how the public sector is perceived in relation to the private sector and whether, of the graduates available, the public sector is able to effectively entice new teachers to its ranks.

We also note that rising inequity in Australian school education is a major hurdle to effective supply of teachers across the full school spectrum.

(c) Out-of-area teaching, merged classes and minimal supervision in NSW schools

Out-of-area teaching is a key dynamic in the current teacher shortage. It may be helpful to consider the current teacher shortage as the sum of both chronic and acute lack of teacher supply.

The chronic shortages are well documented in research and relate to shortages of teachers with subject specialisms in mathematics, science (particularly physics), technology and special education. These chronic shortages have been the focus of varied, and unsuccessful policy initiatives, and persist to such a degree that at some point in the course of their schooling, the large majority of children sit in classes with

teachers who do not have the appropriate subject specialisation. The Australian Maths and Science Institute estimates that approximately 70% of students have some experience of mathematics classes taught by out-of-field teachers in the years 7 to 10. This jeopardises students' progression to maths in later years, particularly advanced (high-level) maths both of which are vital to a huge array of occupational pathways. Breakdown of teacher specialisation by state jurisdiction is not available and state and national data frameworks, including Australian Teacher Workforce Data, do not hold capability to monitor this situation effectively.

The Australian Design and Technologies Teacher Association *2019 Technologies Teacher Shortage Survey* (DATTA, 2019) reported that '39% of schools surveyed have reduced the amount of Technologies education they offer, and 68% of these schools have indicated that the quality of the remaining programs has also been affected by the shortage of qualified teachers....96% of the schools surveyed have experienced difficulty in finding qualified Technologies teachers…84% of schools are currently using teachers from a variety of other learning areas to make up the shortfall and to deliver the expected level of Technologies education required by National and State curriculum authorities'. This puts increased pressure on Technologies teachers to support out-of-area teachers and 'creates significant and growing Work Health and Safety risk to those teachers and their students'. Further it is foreshadowed that 'if significant action is not taken as outlined in [the DATTA] report, the Technologies learning area in Australia will be unsustainable by 2025'. Life in the 21st century is already saturated by digital technology and will be increasingly so, and industrial technologies are a conduit to many trades that are in severe shortage. The inability to provide technology teaching in schools holds dire consequences for NSW and Australia.

In this context, loss of every single teacher matters. The difficulties are illustrated by an outstanding recent (2021) Manual Technologies-major graduate who topped her year cohort, was awarded the Technology Teachers Association prize, but upon assessing prospective workload, stress, and lack of professional support/mentoring as an early career teacher, has instead taken a training and development pathway in the commercial sector instead of pursuing her lifelong dream of school teaching.

More broadly, as teacher specialisation is an indicator of teacher curriculum expertise and disciplinary pedagogical expertise, it is a critical aspect of teacher pedagogical content knowledge which has been shown to have substantial impact on student learning outcomes. Thus the effective monitoring and management of teacher specialisation is a critical component in effective teacher workforce management. Investment in data structures that would enable monitoring and reporting on out-of-area teaching, and indeed appropriate allocation of teacher specialisations across the state, would be a worthy investment.

Other chronic aspects of the current shortage relate to increasing teacher age distributions that has not been matched by teacher graduates, due to declines in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) completion rates, which have occurred alongside, and correlate with, declines in ATAR scores of entrants. The more acute aspects of the current shortage are due to the Covid crisis. Although it could also be argued the current acute shortage is also due to an ongoing lack of effective workforce management strategy and the cumulative effects of chronic shortages. As has been pointed out by teachers in our research, Covid-19 has just pushed many teachers to breaking point and departures from teaching.

(d) ***The NSW Teacher Supply Strategy***

This has not been a direct focus of our research, however we have produced analyses of other departmental policies, particularly *Local Schools, Local Decisions* (see Gavin & Stacey 2022, see p23 below) which have impacted upon the work conditions of teachers.

A core focus of our work has been on teacher workload and we note that the NSW Teacher Supply Strategy does not seem to be addressing current work conditions for teachers, which our data indicate are discouraging teachers from continuing within the profession. Additionally, we note that the plan to recruit teachers interstate may be problematic given indications of shortages beyond NSW (e.g. Queensland); while acceleration programmes such as NSW Department of Education's FASTstream may only exacerbate experiences of burnout given current workload imposts upon teachers.

International research has explored the key drivers for teacher supply. The most recent review of the research evidence by See, Morris, Gorard and El Soufi (2021) concludes:

> "The only approach that seems to work at all is the offer of monetary inducements, but there are caveats"

The findings are discussed in relation to the Australian teacher shortage here. Key considerations include:
1. The need for a national strategy in teacher recruitment, placement and retention.
2. Recognition of the influence of broader structural system dynamics on this issue, as teacher working conditions are critical to retention and professional development of teachers
3. The critical importance of valuing the profession, and the need to extend expressions and provide concrete and high-profile indications of ow teachers are valued by governments and broader society (professional status, professional voice in policy, professional recognition programs).

(e) Teaching workforce conditions

Our research findings, founded on vast empirical quantitative and qualitative data, show that teachers in schools retain their primary focus on matters directly related to working with students in teaching and learning and place highest value on these activities. However, they do not value administrative work which is impinging on this core focus, and is experienced as time consuming, cumbersome and concerned with compliance. Our studies also provide evidence that teachers require more professional respect, time and support for their teaching and the facilitation of student learning. This is not evident in the recent additions to teachers' workload, which is viewed as being largely focused on compliance.

Working Hours and Workload

Our evidence from our very large survey of 18,234 (33.6% response rate of NSW Teachers Federation membership) public school teachers (McGrath-Champ et al. 2018 see also p18 below) shows that classroom teachers in NSW work 55 hours per week during term, 44 hours at school and 11 at home. Assistant Principals' or Head Teachers' average term hours are 58 per week (approximately 45 hours at school and 12 at home). Principals' or Deputy Principals' self-reported hours are 62 per week (50 at school and approximately 12 at home).

The category of 'very long working hours' of 50 or more hours per week, has been defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2003). All categories of teachers are, by this definition, working 'very long hours'.

The survey also found that the increased demands on teachers' work and time are threatening teaching and student learning. Our data is the first to make it clear that there is also another effect of changes to work in schools: the obstruction of teaching and students' learning. A very large majority of teachers report that teaching and learning is hindered by their high workload (89%), by having to provide evidence

of compliance with policy requirements (86%), and by other new administrative demands introduced by the Department of Education (91%).

These data are consistent with data from the international 'Teaching and Learning International Study' (TALIS) which indicate that not only have the hours of Australian teachers increased, they are also higher than the OECD average (Thomson and Hillman, 2019).

Administrative burden

Our research highlights how teachers in all types of NSW public schools are experiencing increased, and debilitating, administrative work demands. These demands are felt in addition to demands related to differences in school type, location, and level of socio-educational advantage. Work and workload differences related to the contextual specificities of schools have been found in many of the research team's studies (see e.g. Fitzgerald et al. 2019; Parding et al. 2017; Stacey, 2017, *in listings below* pp 19, 23, 19 respectively), suggesting that reducing disparities between schools is an essential area for redress. However, even beyond this, the increased administrative demands identified in the NSW survey (McGrath-Champ et al. 2018) appear to have reached the point of having a 'blanketing' effect; that is, to be affecting all teachers and school leaders across all NSW public schools, largely regardless of and in addition to other contextual differences. Increased demands relating to the navigation, implementation and documentation of teachers' work were reported to be impacting schools everywhere and having adverse effects on the scope and scale of teacher workload. The problems that we have identified are clearly systemic.

The challenges currently experienced by teachers and identified above in relation to increases in workload and the resultant negative effects on their personal and professional interests may well be affecting retention across the profession, as some of the qualitative responses to the NSW survey indicated. In the words of one teacher, for example, the job was: *"not about teaching anymore, and, in the words of my own Principal, 'it's not enough to be a great teacher'. We're all required to constantly complete menial tasks so that the person one level above us can tick pointless boxes that demonstrate accountability or implementation of policy x or policy y. Good teachers leave because they have the sense to get out of a system which is fundamentally broken."* The many comments such as this suggest that reducing excessive administrative demands and allowing teachers the space to focus on their core work of teaching and learning is likely to support increased retention.

Within an increasingly devolved public education policy context (see (r) below), increased accountability primarily through paperwork and reporting requirements are re-shaping and re-defining what it means to be a teacher, and what teachers 'do'. Such demands have created a substantial workload increase for almost all teachers, leading to a perceived need for teachers to undertake 'triage' in their work, leaving some activities ultimately incomplete. Our research revealed that many teachers report not having enough time to complete their work, with time available being identified as either "never" or "rarely" sufficient. There is a clear pattern that teachers' work has expanded to the point where some tasks cannot be completed satisfactorily. As one expressed it, *"we don't have time to…get things done properly…the only way I can lead my life and not go crazy in this job, is knowing that I just cannot do it all"*. While previous research documents that teachers have always been busy and that teaching is 'boundless' (e.g. Connell's, 1993 book *Schools and social justice*, Temple University Press), our research suggests that for many, teaching may be increasingly characterised by a sense of never being able to be 'finished' or satisfied that their work can be 'done properly'. It is widely known that job dissatisfaction contributes to workers changing career, or moving to other settings, such as training and development roles outside the school sector.

(*f*) *Initial Teacher Education*

The 2020 report by Wilson (submission author), The Profession At Risk, and the subsequent discussion paper of the Commonwealth Inquiry into ITE, both attest to a range of concerning trends in initial teacher education. These focus on data related to entry and completion requirements, there is no data available on the quality of ITE, nor any evidence that the decline in Australian education are related to Initial Teacher Education processes. Nor is there any evidence suggesting that our educational woes are due to a "teacher problem", despite this being a common theme in media reporting (Mockler, 2022).

What the available data does make clear in these two reports is that there are **systemic problems in relation to attracting, recruiting, qualifying and retaining teachers**. Major weaknesses have been identified in relation to:
> 1. The lack of a cohesive, national strategy for recruitment and retention of teachers,
> 2. Inadequate data to monitor the pipeline of teachers from ITE through to teacher workforce (e.g. subject specialisms, out-of-field teaching and geographic placement are not monitored).
> 3. Inadequate data, and a lack of transparency, in the monitoring of academic and non-academic standards required for entry to ITE.

The executive summary of The Profession At Risk reports:

1. There is a **clear downward trend** in the academic attainment of students entering initial teacher education. While the data available is not sufficient to monitor standards comprehensively, where ATAR and subject preparation (e.g. level of maths undertaken) data are available they show concerning downward trends; academic standards of intakes are neither stable nor assured.

2. There is a notable **lack of transparency in the monitoring of academic standards** of students entering initial teacher education. ATAR is reported on entry for only 17 per cent of the 2017 cohort, and no other indicators are available. More than 65 per cent of entrants would have an ATAR granted within the past two years but this data is not recorded if entry is on a basis other than ATAR. Over the decade there has been rapid growth in students entering initial teacher education on a basis other than ATAR. No other measures are available to monitor academic standards at entry to teacher education programs.

3. Within the limited ATAR data available, the past decade shows increasing numbers of students entering with low ATARs (30–50 increased by x5 and 51–60 by x3) and declining numbers are entering from mid to high ATAR brackets (71-80 down by 1/5; 81-90 down by 1/3). However, the numbers of students entering from the highest ATAR bracket (approximately 500 nationally) are stable — although declining as a proportion of the total, as **cohorts have become dominated by lower-attaining students**. While it is reassuring that teaching continues to attract this small, high-ability cohort, the diminishing esteem of the profession — possibly fueled by entrants with weak academic backgrounds — threatens the retention of this small group in the future.

4. The ATAR trends sit alongside **rapid growth in the number of students entering initial teacher education**. This growth is not fully explained by growth in population and school student numbers. **Growth in commencing students is not matched by growing numbers completing initial teacher education.** The number of students entering initial teacher education in 2016, when compared with 2006, grew by roughly 4800, but over the same period the number of students completing initial teacher education grew by only 600.

5. The most recent six-year completion rates for these students are extremely low**. Less than 60 per cent of students complete their course after six years**. There has been a clear downward trend in the six-year completion rates for teacher education.

6. **Growth in online initial teacher education** accounts for an increase in approximately 4000 students in annual intakes over the 2006 to 2016 period. There has also been substantial growth in the numbers of **students entering from TAFE** (nearly 1200 more in 2016 than in 2006). Although growing, **these cohorts have very low completion rate**s (online courses = 41 per cent, TAFE entry = 50 per cent). It seems reasonable to question whether the growth in initial teacher education is driven by a quest for enrolment numbers; including via pathways that **have not been verified as legitimate foundations for the deeply challenging intellectual work of teaching**; and through delivery modes that offer cost efficiencies but have not been validated in terms of outcomes and knock-on effects on student achievement.

7. **Low completion rates for initial teacher education are related to academic standards at entry** (ATAR), type of program and socio-educational background. The completion rates are related to ATAR scores (e.g. ATAR 30-50, 3000+ entrants, 58 per cent completed versus ATAR 91-100, approximately 450 entrants, 69 per cent completed in six years by 2016); the mode of the program (external mode (online) approximately 3000 entrants, 41 per cent completed versus internal, approximately 14,800 entrants, 59 per cent completed in six years by 2016) and the type of enrolment (part-time, 3000+ entrants, 36 per cent completed, versus full-time, approximately 6400, 60 per cent completed in six years by 2016).

8. Completion trends suggest that many students are entering initial teacher education with little prospect of completing the degree. This also suggests that **the system is highly inefficient**, recruiting students who are not likely to complete their course, and/or providing course design (part-time/online) that increases the likelihood of students failing to complete their course. The costs of this inefficiency go beyond monetary terms, with large numbers of students bearing the psychological weight of failure as well as financial burdens.

9. The three key findings: 1) ATAR declines; 2) poor transparency/incomplete reporting; 3) increases in numbers and declines in completions; suggest that **Australia's academic standards for entry to teaching are neither stable nor assured**. This situation poses a serious threat, with spiralling and accelerating dynamics negatively impacting on the esteem of the teaching profession, Australian students' outcomes, and national educational and economic progress.

(g) Impacts related to COVID-19, including the impact of government responses such as remote teaching and safety restrictions

Our research, along with numerous other studies, had established prior to the onset of COVID-19, that teachers were already under considerable pressure. The pandemic, overlaying this situation, has produced at least two further shifts to teachers' work, which are:

1. teaching in 'COVID-wary classrooms'; and
2. teaching via remote learning.

Heavy demands for up-skilling, particularly for the second of these shifts, teaching via remote learning, and the development and implementation of new public health understanding within schools, have created new and additional challenges for the teaching profession.

At the invitation of the NSW Teachers Federation, our research team undertook another survey of teachers' work in April 2020 immediately prior to and during (nation-wide) COVID-19 lock-down. The study, which attained a high 21.5% rate (n=11,789), can be considered broadly representative.

Immediately prior to the remote learning period (ie 'pre-remote'), a large majority of teachers reported that there were increases in:

- complexity of their work (74%)
- administrative tasks (72%)
- lesson preparation time (61%)
- increase in school meetings (53%).

Smaller numbers reported increases in:

- work hours (46%)
- student welfare issues (45%), and
- collection and reporting on data (39%).

For many teachers, concerns regarding increasing work demands were overlaid with personal anxiety regarding their own risk of contracting COVID-19; and/or the risk of their family members and their students doing so. Approximately one in four teachers reported that they were in 'high risk' categories, leaving them vulnerable if they contracted COVID-19.

In open-ended qualitative comments made on the questionnaire, concerns were expressed not only in-relation to the above-mentioned anxieties but also in relation to how teachers were currently valued, or undervalued, by their communities – and, most specifically, by the government. Many teachers' comments suggested that they were striving hard, with additional work, despite feeling at risk and undervalued.

When the pandemic necessitated a shift to remote learning for the majority of students, teachers' work intensified again. Teachers again reported escalations in complexity, administration tasks and lesson preparation time, beyond what had been experienced in the pre-remote phase.

During the remote learning phase a large majority of teachers (75 per cent) also reported an increase in working hours. The biggest change was felt in relation to the complexity of teachers' work. As with the pre-remote learning phase, smaller but still substantial proportions (>50 per cent) reported increases in school meetings, student welfare issues and data collection, analysis and reporting. It must be remembered that many NSW teachers continued to work on school premises, teaching both in-class and at-home students through remote learning systems during this lock-down. These impacts were felt to similar degrees regardless of the level of school socio-educational disadvantage.

Teachers felt they were juggling many tasks in early 2020 – for more than 16% of teachers this included maintenance of their full teaching load on school premises; balancing face-to-face contact with a small number of students in their classroom, whilst also delivering remote learning for the large majority. Others, some 60 per cent, taught their classes from both school classrooms and at home; whilst only 24 per cent of teachers were working solely from home for the duration of the nation-wide pandemic 'lockdown' in NSW.

In contrast to the pandemic response in many other parts of the world, in April 2020, Australia implemented only partial school closures – as schools were kept open for the families of emergency responders and essential workers. Less than one per cent of NSW public school teachers reported that their school was 'closed' at the end of Term 1, the peak of the first wave, and these 85 teachers were in schools where confirmed cases had resulted in an acute response, with the school completely closed for cleaning. The majority of teachers reported that their school was 'partially closed' (49 per cent) or 'not at all closed' (50 per cent).
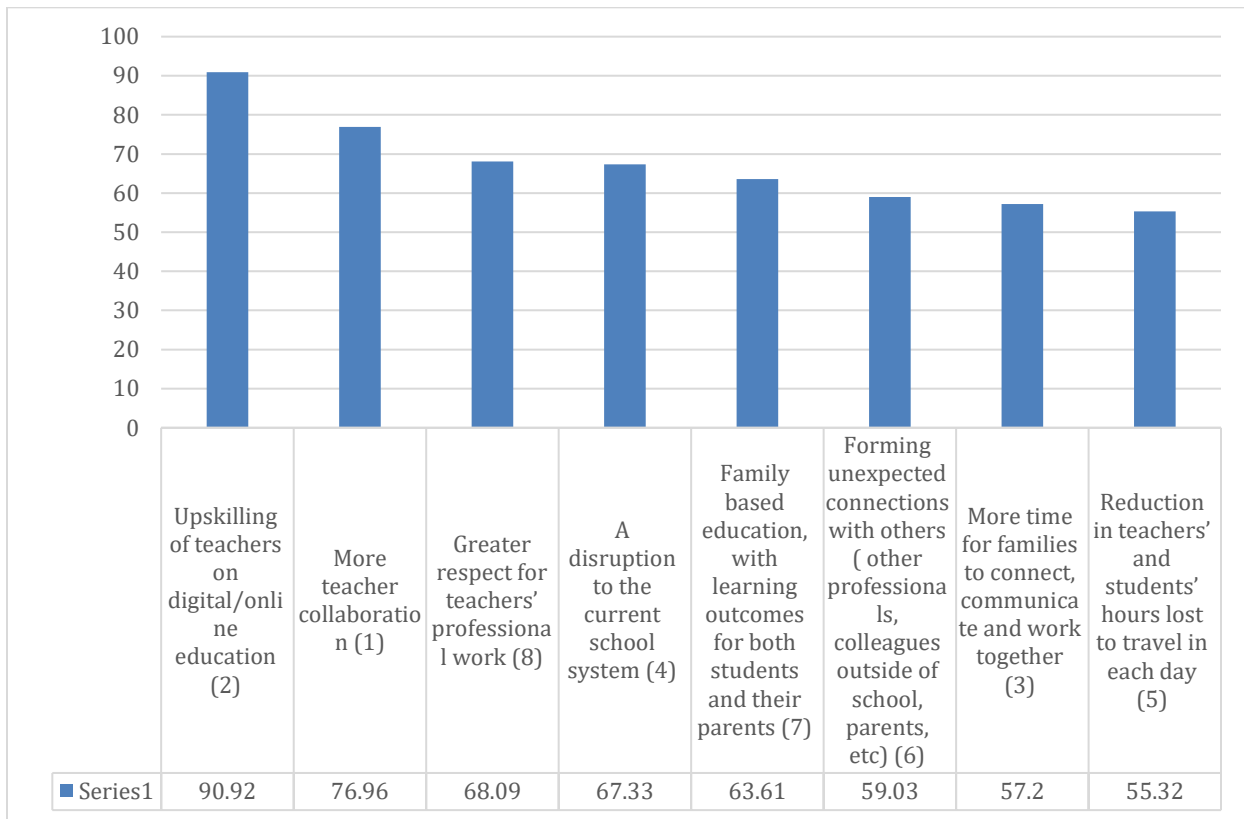
Together these findings suggest a sharp pandemic-induced amplification in the intensity and demands of teachers' work, which is experienced alongside teachers' personal and professional concerns regarding the preparedness and resourcing for that change. Many teachers also held concerns about how the pandemic was impacting their students.

When we consider that the pandemic-shifts in teachers' work overlay recent escalations in teachers' working hours and intensity (see above), the likelihood of detrimental knock-on effects on the teacher workforce is high. Writing in 2020, at the early-pandemic stage we foreshadowed that this would be so 'particularly if there are ongoing waves of pandemic and extended periods of educational adjustments' which indeed is what has come about.

Already under duress from workload and work intensification, additional imposts from teaching amidst high-risk circumstances, with sudden shifts in the manner in which their work must be done, has the attendant likelihood of endangering teachers' physical and mental health. In addition, this risk is situated within a profession that is already documented by the NSW Public Service Commission's *People Matter Survey* having high levels of work stress (in 2017, 60 per cent of teachers reported work stress at unacceptable levels, compared with 41 per cent for the public sector overall).

Whilst many impacts outlined above are burdensome and negative, teachers in our survey nevertheless voiced positive views on some of the experience. We documented levels of agreement with a list of eight potentially positive outcomes from the pandemic (see Figure 1) and also provided open-response opportunity for them to make their own assessment of positive outcomes.

Figure 1: Percentage of teachers who agree/strongly agree on positive outcomes from COVID-19 pandemic

	Upskilling of teachers on digital/online education (2)	More teacher collaboration (1)	Greater respect for teachers' professional work (8)	A disruption to the current school system (4)	Family based education, with learning outcomes for both students and their parents (7)	Forming unexpected connections with others (other professionals, colleagues outside of school, parents, etc) (6)	More time for families to connect, communicate and work together (3)	Reduction in teachers' and students' hours lost to travel in each day (5)
■ Series1	90.92	76.96	68.09	67.33	63.61	59.03	57.2	55.32

The third-ranked positive outcome, 'greater respect for teachers' professional work' attracted the most attention in the qualitative comments which provided further insight, outlining that this was a hope, an aspiration not yet in evidence:

"I do hope that the community and students start to see the value of teachers in the classroom and the work we do, which is taken for granted the majority of the time…"

"Hopefully the community values the time, energy and commitment of teachers. Hopefully learning is also shaken up so that when school returns priorities are better adjusted."

Nevertheless, this positive hope was also curtailed by public discourse that suggested some corners of society, and government, were displaying less understanding of the value of teachers:

"After a few days of home-based learning in NSW, there was some positivity around how amazing teachers are. But now I tend to find that the general public's attitude is resentment towards teachers who are 'not really working' and are 'making us do 'sooooooo' much work with our kids.' "

Many teachers felt frustrated and offended by poor public, and in particular government, acknowledgment of the risks they exposed themselves to as they continued to work; and the efforts that they had expended to support their students and their families:
"Although there has been greater respect in some areas, our Prime Minister and many media outlets are still continuing to make alarmist and negative comments regarding the shift to online learning. When

your Prime Minister comments that online learning is babysitting – it shows how little respect teachers truly have. And it is a slap in the face after all the hours and hours of work we have been doing to support students and families at this time, let alone supporting our own families. Disappointing."

And:
"Even though there is an increased acknowledgement for the work of teachers, from my recent 'distant' interactions, parents want teachers back more so as babysitters so they can work from home ... not because parents are worried about their kids missing out on education. I am offended by the statement that teachers have a greater risk of catching COVID from fellow teachers, when we are crammed into rooms with snotty, coughing, sneezing students who CANNOT keep their distance. What about students who have disabilities or who are at risk? What about teachers who have kids of their own who are disabled or at risk?... What about teachers who care for others at risk?"

Many conveyed a sense of disillusionment, as teachers reflected on the poor status their profession now carried in society. Significantly, in the quantitative data, more than 67 per cent of teachers viewed the 'disruption to the current school system' wrought by COVID-19 as a positive outcome. This suggests that many teachers feel that change is needed – even if it may not be the particular changes wrought by COVID-19 in itself.

Teachers' welcoming of the 'disruption' of COVID-19, might well be interpreted as a symptom of the general unease that many felt with teaching in the pre-COVID world, in which they were subjected to increasing work hours, workload, and increases in administrivia, whilst experiencing a decreasing respect for the profession. Teachers' comments often suggest that, at the very least, the pandemic has shone a light on what they do; and they are hopeful that parents, communities and governments will develop greater respect for that. As one teacher put it,

"I do agree that there have been some positives. There has most definitely been a disruption to the current system – but not necessarily in a bad way. I think there have been some changes in people's ideas that will be a benefit in the future. I also think that many people have a new found respect for what teachers do and how they do it."

(i) The status of the teaching profession

The large 18,234-person survey from 2018 specifically included a question and thus provides data regarding the extent to which teachers' work is valued – by themselves, by the Department of Education and by society at large.

There is a stark contrast between the 75% of teachers who value their own work (agree/strongly agree response) and the high levels of disagreement in regard to the NSW Department of Education. Forty-four percent of classroom teachers disagree/strongly disagreed that the NSW Department of Education values their work with a very large 'neutral' response of 40%, leaving only 2% who strongly agreed with this (16% strongly/agree combined). That is, less than one in five (classroom and specialist) teachers think the Department values their work. (See Appendix below). This pattern of responses was similar for other roles (principals, specialist teachers, teaching consultants).

This distinctly contrasts with reports of how 'society' values teachers work with 30% of classroom teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing that 'the teaching profession is valued in society', with 45% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, and 25% 'neutral'. COVID-induced remote-learning/home-schooling

opened up to parents and families greater insight into teachers' work with many barely able to 'wait' till schools reopened.

It is an indictment that so few teachers perceive their work is valued by their employer and points to serious issues regarding matters of respect, communication and the employment relationship.

It may be noted that our research team made written submission and, upon request, provided in-person witness statements on the status of the teaching profession which was specifically the focus of a 2018 formal inquiry by the Commonwealth House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training into "the status of the teaching profession, considering opportunities to improve outcomes in a range of areas". These areas were nominated as:

> 1. Increasing the attractiveness of the profession for teachers and principals, including workplace conditions, and career and leadership structures.
> 2. Provision of appropriate support platforms for teachers, including human and IT resources.
> 3. Identifying ways in which the burden of out-of-hours, at-home work can be reduced.
> 4. Investigating ways to increase retention rates for the teaching profession, and avoid 'burn out' among early-career teachers.
> (https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Employment_Education_and_Training/TeachingProfession/Terms_of_Reference)

The Inquiry, unfortunately, lapsed when the Standing Committee ceased to exist at the dissolution of the House of Representatives on Thursday, 11 April 2019 ahead of the 2019 election. Many status issues for the teaching profession in NSW are consistent with those in the broader Australian teaching profession. A summary of issues arising from public hearings conducted by the Standing Committee is available at: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Employment_Education_and_Training/TeachingProfession

Teaching is one of the earliest respected and esteemed fields of work. Unfortunately, over time this status has dwindled as the profession due to a complex array of factors, one of which is its increasing subjection to the adversities of management approaches inspired by neo-liberalism and pressures of marketisation (see also (r) below).

(k) The administrative burden for principals associated with recruiting for and appointing roles

The shift to more devolved education systems in NSW, via the *Local Schools Local Decision* policy introduced in 2012, has led to a discernible reduction in the support provided by the NSW Education Department for human resource (HR) decisions related to staff recruitment, selection and transfer management (Gavin & McGrath-Champ 2017). Current NSW staffing arrangements allow 'local choice' for every second teacher appointment, and this is after incentive transfers and Aboriginal employment applicants have been placed.

These changes have increased the HR role of the principal in such schools. Principals often appreciated the ability to select the teaching staff in the schools they led; however, principals expressed concerns about the additional managerial workload this added to their role. As we report in Gavin and Stacey (2022), principal participants felt *"[I] spend half of my life on staffing at the moment, so I can have enough staff in the right areas to cover curriculum";* and how *"having to do the merit based selection instead of just getting appointments…who can start straight away [is] burdensome workload because you have to convene a panel to set job adverts to do the panel culling, [read] the CV and then [conduct] the actual interviews. And it drags out a process that was fixed in 24 hours before devolution. It can now turn a 24 hour appointment into…6-8 week[s of] prolonged extra workload."*

Not only is there an administrative burden on school principals from increased staffing responsibilities, our research (Gavin & Stacey 2022, see p23 below) shows that the 'merit selection' processes under devolution do not always ensure best fit for a school. Teachers and school leaders also, concerningly, report that the staffing system could be manipulated by principals to select particular staff they liked, rather than being legitimately merit-based. One teacher described how: *"Local Schools Local Decisions [leaves schools] wide open for nepotism. It's jobs for your pals and that definitely is evident in our school. Also you drive out people that you don't like…if you do like somebody you just engineer everything so that you give them all the opportunities…All the power is in one person's hands [who] can dispense favours and that's what happens – here is favouritism and somebody…is given all the opportunities and therefore they're able to move up the ladder."*

Moreover, our research indicated that few principals have a well-developed skill set with regards to specialised HR processes (Gavin & McGrath-Champ 2017). One apparent corollary of this was the preference for selecting fixed term contract or temporary teachers to address the recruitment needs of schools, rather than permanent appointments. The proportion of permanent teachers has been declining, at least in NSW. Teachers have raised concerns about the transparency and equity of this recruitment approach. In the words of one survey respondent: *"Temporary teachers are taken advantage of and loaded with an unreasonable amount of work by schools in their efforts to have the school consider them for a renewal of temporary contracts. The schools are happy to take advantage of these young teachers without having to commit to renewing their contracts."*

(p) *The impact of casualisation, temporary contracts and job insecurity*

The NSW survey and our related research also revealed concerns particular to the experiences of teachers in fixed-term, temporary contracts. The category of temporary employment, a version of fixed-term contract work, was introduced in 2001 in the NSW public education system. Since this time, the category has been steadily growing while the proportion of permanent positions has declined and casual positions have remained relatively stable. Today, about 20% of NSW public school teachers are in temporary positions, as shown in our graph below (McGrath-Champ, et al. 2022).

Permanent, Casual and Temporary employment among NSW teachers' Federation members 1970-2017
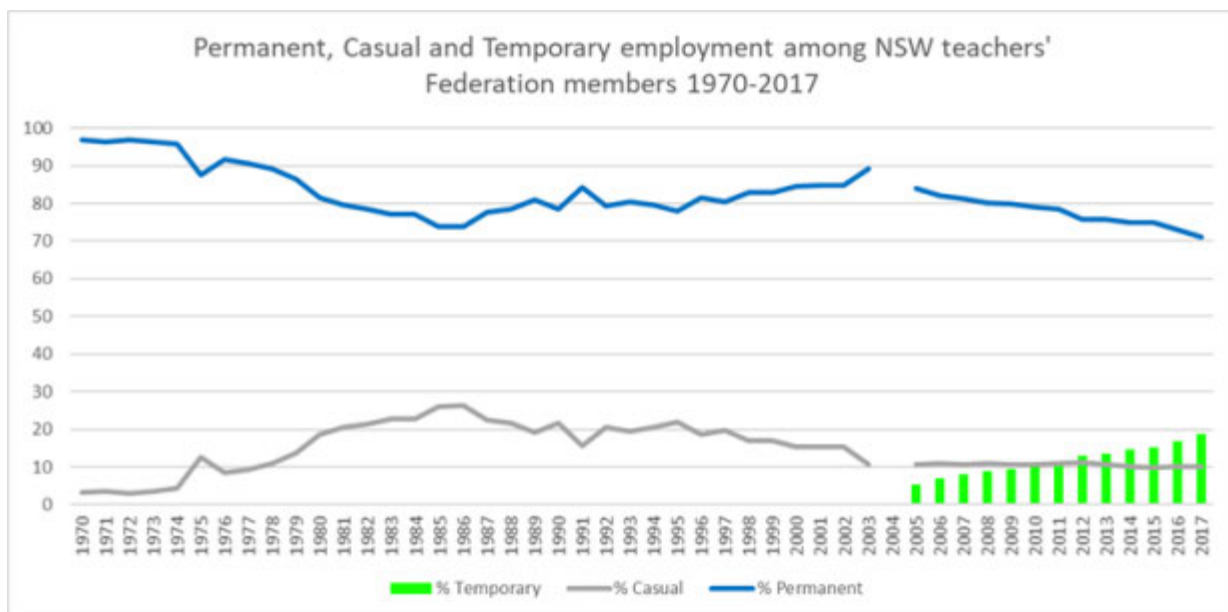
Early career teachers in our sample were more likely to work in temporary positions, a structure acknowledged by the NSW Department of Education itself, which notes that "the majority of teachers commence their careers in the NSW public education system as casual or temporary teachers" (NSW Department of Education, 2018). When one considers that such teachers have qualified via four or five years of study and hold multiple university degrees, this is a sad state in which they are expected to commence their professional lives and develop a love of, and vocation for, teaching.

When data were disaggregated for employment category, it became evident that temporary teachers are generally doing the same amount of work as their permanent counterparts. Some temporary teachers felt they worked even harder than their permanent counterparts, and that they were at times exploited by other staff who would "shift" work to them (Stacey et al., 2022).

Quantitatively, teachers in temporary roles – who very commonly work full-time – report similar levels of workload to their permanent counterparts, both of which are considerably higher than those in casual positions. Teachers in temporary roles estimated working an average of 56 hours per week during term time, compared to 57 hours for those in permanent positions and 40 hours for those employed as casuals. In addition, while 72% of permanent teachers and 70% of temporary teachers report that their job 'always' requires them to 'work very hard', this is only the case for 58% of casual staff members. Similarly, while 66% of permanent staff members and 62% of temporary staff members report never or rarely having enough time to complete work tasks, this is only the case for 40% of casuals. We note that in these figures, numbers are still high for casual staff – just not as high as they are temporary or permanent teachers.

Yet interestingly, teachers in temporary positions '*feel'* like they work harder than those in permanent ones. As one respondent put it, 'I work as hard if not harder than many permanent teachers'. This feeling of working harder may be due to the temporary, and more precarious, nature of their roles. These teachers know that their continued employment depends on 'impressing' those around them, particularly the school principal. There was a sense of an 'unspoken pressure for [temporary] teachers to "do more" in order to heighten their chances to get work for the next year'. This need to impress was not, however, felt by those in permanent positions. This appeared to be leading, for some teachers, to tension between staff in different employment categories. As one respondent recalled, *'two permanent teachers have even stated, "I don't have to do anything else, I am already permanent"'*; another described experiences of permanent teachers 'prey[ing]' on temporary teachers by 'shift[ing] work' to them.

Temporary teachers also experience significant and particular precarity, with qualitative responses indicating a perceived need to 'prove themselves' and take on additional roles within the school so as to be in a better position for gaining permanent employment. To give one example: *"Temporary and casual teachers are in an awfully precarious position, their careers at the whim of principals who pick and choose according to who toes the line. They take on all roles, jumping through hoops to retain their position and add to their CV in order to gain permanency."*

An additional dimension of our investigation arose when we looked at the differences between men and women teachers in temporary, permanent and casual roles. More men are in permanent employment than women, with women being much more likely to be temporary than men. With the tendency of teachers to be predominately women, we found that, in fact, there are more temporary teachers than there are the total number of men teaching in NSW public schools. Our data also indicate that women also stay longer as temporary teachers than men do: it appears men move up and out of temporary positions, and potentially on to leadership positions more quickly, with potential implications for future career opportunities, leadership positions and gender equity in school employment. It is sobering that, in our data, only 27% of those in temporary employment were working in that capacity by choice.

Temporary teachers, although provided with leave entitlements unavailable to casual employees, remain precarious workers experiencing labour insecurity related to crucial skill development which is particularly disadvantageous at the outset of their careers. These teachers feel they must give of themselves in a manner that is unduly weighted towards the employer. Their employment remains precarious, intensified by needing to make themselves attractive as candidates for permanency. While temporary employment has some protections, these same protections appear to have unwittingly facilitated a situation where principals and the Department of Education have achieved better wage-effort outcomes to the detriment of the individual teacher, the quantum of available teachers, and longer-term, the teaching profession. In managing the new accountability and responsibility requirements associated with devolved school performance measures, risk is being transferred to temporary teachers via principals' attainment of staffing flexibility to safeguard school budgetary uncertainty.

A miniscule proportion -- only 2% -- of public school teachers are employed in permanent part-time positions. This severely limits the ability of teachers to balance non-work commitments, including unpaid care-work for children and/or elders, forcing many into precarious temporary or casual positions. From the 2018 survey respondents, and through our wider qualitative research, it is widely indicated – with accompanying frustration by teachers – that 'permanent part-time is just not available' – arguably causing some teachers to leave the teaching workforce. Though care-work is not confined to women, it is still women who provide the majority of care-work in the NSW economy. The minimal availability of permanent part-time positions is even more dire given the highly female-dominated character of the NSW teaching workforce (70% are women) and can be understood as another factor contributing to teacher shortages. Increasing the number of permanent part-time positions would enhance job security for those seeking to balance work and family commitments at a particular life-stage, keep teacher-workers 'job-attached' and more likely to subsequently return full-time to teaching.

(r) any other related matter.

The issues covered above, including the change in the teaching workforce's employment security, working conditions and status, need to be contextualised within wider processes of change associated with expanding marketization and managerialism with the education sector. Within the public sector in Australia, the former process has been advanced through devolutionary policies, such *as Local Schools, Local Decisions*. These devolutionary policies combine the systematic removal of central structures and processes that supported teachers' work, with an increased degree of internal competition within and between public schools. Such competition undermines the vision and commitment to a public education *system* and is supported by reporting processes that too easily decontextualise 'school performance' from factors such social, economic, and educational advantage and disadvantage. While there is little evidence that such governance changes improve overall student learning outcomes, such devolutionary policies support processes of residualisation, student segregation and increasing inequality between schools.

At the same time, by making teaching staff responsible for 'school performance', these policies contribute to the increased workloads and occupational stress of teachers and negatively affect the status of the teaching profession. The logic underpinning such changes was captured in the remarks of the then acting federal Education Minister, Stuart Robert, who in March 2022 publicly opined that while private schools do not accept "dud teachers", the "bottom 10% of teachers dragging the chain" in the public system could be blamed for the decline in the academic results of Australian students.

The status of the teaching profession is also affected by increased levels of 'accountability' that accompanies devolution and increased school competition. Professional autonomy, trust and scope for democratic decision making in schools is stripped away by external and hierarchical emphasis on managing teachers; these accountability measures significantly increase the workloads of teachers and are

commonly viewed by teaching staff as an impediment to them achieving their primary role of educating students. It also introduces a greater level of mangerialism into the education sector. The policy ensemble of devolution and accountability serves to promote versions of leadership in schools that intensify the workload of principals, taking them away from educational issues, and separating them from teachers through intensifying and deepening the nature of hierarchy. Through increased budget and human resource discretion, principals are (implicitly) encouraged to manage their teaching workforce in a manner that aims to improve 'school performance' but which often increases teachers' employment insecurity, through the use of casual employment and short-term contracts.

While teacher accountability is an important aspect of any system, our research analysis has uncovered system-wide flaws, which should be considered in relation to system accountability. The rising workload and precarity of teaching, declines in relative pay and working conditions, and inadequate monitoring of the workforce reflect on major system-level challenges that must be addressed to remediate current shortages and strengthen NSW's teaching profession, and school education, in the future.

The rise of managerialism, and specifically performance management, is epitomized by the re-emergence of the issue of performance pay for teachers.

Performance-based pay proposals

Recent policy proposals by the NSW Premier to introduce 'performance-based pay' into NSW classrooms are also likely to worsen the current working environment for teachers and students. The NSW Premier's comments around the "need to modernise the [teaching] profession" calls for the introduction of a performance pay scheme to reward "those teachers who excel and drive better results for our kids".

The concept of performance pay, however, is based on a business model which links increased worker productivity to higher rewards. Despite rhetoric of its purported benefits, there is a lack of clear evidence that such performance schemes improve teacher performance or student outcomes (Gavin 2022). Indeed, there may be unintended consequences from such approach, including teachers focusing only on tested outcomes, or practices of 'teaching to the test'. A competitive environment may also negatively impact teacher morale, trust and collegiality, and contribute to stress. It is also not clear how to measure teachers' productivity; the learning environments that teachers work in are highly complex with students' having different learning needs and abilities and different levels of privilege.

Reference Works

Below, we provide **details of relevant publications documenting the recent intensification of teachers' work, their current workload and the working condition of teachers.** Publications are grouped according to the following five themes:

1. teachers' work and workload;
2. precarity and job insecurity in the teaching profession;
3. principals' work and workload;
4. implications of school choice for teachers and principals; and
5. union campaigns to improve teachers' salaries, status and working conditions.

This is accompanied by **samples of media and engagement** at the end of the submission.

1. Teachers' Work and Workload

Reports (with hyperlinks to web versions)

- Wilson, R., Stacey, M., & McGrath-Champ, S. (2020). *Teachers' work during the COVID-19 pandemic: Shifts, challenges, and opportunities.* Centre for Strategic Education, Occasional Papers, Volume 169. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346670576_Teachers'_work_during_the_COVID-19_pandemic_Shifts_challenges_and_opportunities

- McGrath-Champ, S., Wilson, R., Stacey, M. & Fitzgerald, S. (2018). *Understanding work in schools: The foundation for teaching and learning.* https://www.nswtf.org.au/files/18438_uwis_digital.pdf

- Fitzgerald, S., McGrath-Champ, S., Wilson, R. & Stacey, M. (2019). *Understanding work in WA public schools: 2019 report to the State School Teachers Union of WA.* Perth, Australia: SSTUWA. https://www.sstuwa.org.au/news-home/2019/jul/wa-teachers-seek-pay-rise-and-support-workload-pressure-soars

- McGrath-Champ, S., Wilson, R., Stacey, M. (2017). *Teaching and learning: Review of workload.* NSW Teachers Federation: Surry Hills. https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/21927

Academic journal articles and chapters

- Gavin, M., McGrath-Champ, S., Wilson, R., Fitzgerald, S., & Stacey, M., (2022) National reports of intensification and its threats to democracy. In Riddle S, Heffernan A, and Bright, D. (Eds.) *New perspectives on Education for Democracy: Creative Responses to Local and Global Challenges*, pp. 110-123. Routledge.

  The notion of the de-democratisation of education—or injection of neoliberal imperatives in education—has fundamentally transformed teachers' pedagogy and working conditions over the last 40 years. This chapter synthesises recent large-scale surveys (N=48,000) reporting on the contemporary condition of teacher workload across five Australian states. The most prominent finding emerging from these surveys is the **documentation of the near-universal intensification of teachers' work** (perceived to be driven by the "heavy hand" of compliance reporting and datafication), with a correspondingly **reduced time to focus on matters seen as more directly related to classroom teaching**. We articulate the complex work activities and workload of teachers, reflecting upon how **intensification (that is, working harder and longer) may threaten the democratic purposes of schooling**.

- Stacey, M., Wilson, R. & McGrath-Champ, S. (2020). Triage in teaching: the nature and impact of workload in schools. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, online first. doi: 10.1080/02188791.2020.1777938

  This article draws on data from the 2017 'Review of Workload' union study listed above. The article argues that changes to teachers' work and workload in NSW has led to a **process of triage occurring in**

schools, with teachers being forced to decide "what was most pressing and acting accordingly, knowing that some tasks may ultimately never be completed". The article also expands further on the findings of the original report to suggest that increased accountability via paperwork and reporting requirements may be operating to re-shape and re-define what it means to be a teacher, and just what a teacher 'does', with some participants experiencing ambivalence about what work was or should be considered most important. The sustainability of this settlement for teachers is thereby brought into question.

- Fitzgerald, S., McGrath-Champ, S., Stacey, M., Wilson, R. & Gavin, M. (2019). Intensification of Teachers' Work under Devolution: A 'Tsunami' of Paperwork. *Journal of Industrial Relations 61*(5), 613-636. doi: 10.1177/0022185618801396

This article explores changes in work demands experienced by NSW teachers and provides **evidence of devolution-driven work intensification**. The paper examined teaching professionals' views through interviews with teacher union representatives from significant, qualitative investigation. The research was undertaken in 2014-2015 prior to the 2018 Major Study commissioned by the Teachers' Federation. It provides documentation of the very long working hours of teachers. Consistent with a model of work intensification, the **'tsunami' of workload increases were almost universally reported primarily in relation to 'paper work'** requirements. Founded in a smaller sample than the Major Study, this research initially discerned differences in the nature of intensification according to socio-educational advantage, level of schooling (primary or secondary), and location which were less evident from the subsequent, large-scale study.

- Stacey, M. (2017). The teacher 'problem': An analysis of the NSW education policy Great Teaching, Inspired Learning. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education 38*(5), 782-793. doi: 10.1080/01596306.2016.1168778

This article discursively examines a policy introduced at state level in NSW in 2013. The policy reflects concern with teacher quality, both within schools and at the level of initial teacher education and flags a range of measures to be put in place to improve this perceived situation, including such policy technologies as the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE), as well as processes for ongoing professional development and the linking of the teaching award to level of accreditation. Using Carol Bacchi's 'What's the problem represented to be?' approach to policy analysis, the article argues that this policy is an example of 'neoliberalisation' in education, with **teachers being largely, although not entirely, 'responsibilised' for schooling** (which are discursively linked to national economic) outcomes. Meanwhile, there are **considerable 'silences' within the policy around broader systemic issues** such as funding, student segregation and cohort effects.

- Parding, K., McGrath-Champ, S. and Stacey, M. (2020) Governance reform in context: Welfare sector professionals' working and employment conditions, *Current Sociology 69*(1), 119-139. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120909859.

This article addresses the relationship between profession, organisation and spatial (geographical) setting, more specifically the relationship between welfare sector professionals' conditions for work amidst governance change. In previous research, the conditions for welfare sector professionals' work have largely been studied without taking the employing organisations or the local and regional situation into consideration. This article seeks to counteract this de-contextualised approach. The authors show that the circumstances of the specific workplace context are essential in understanding welfare sector professionals' working conditions, especially so in current governance contexts characterised to varying degrees by marketisation, via processes and structures which facilitate choice, competition,

privatisation and devolution. This line of argument is illustrated in relation to how upper secondary teachers in Sweden experience their conditions for work and employment in eight schools across three different 'market types'. The authors contend that **whilst different conditions in different workplaces can to some extent always be expected, current governance agendas in the welfare sector seem to exacerbate these differences.** The article's theoretical contribution, therefore, is in the privileging of local contextual dynamics. The authors suggest a stronger emphasis on spatially-informed frames of reference in future studies of conditions for welfare sector professionals.

- Gavin M, McGrath-Champ S, Stacey M and Wilson R (2022). Women's participation in teacher unions: implications of a 'triple burden' for union gender equality strategies. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 43(2): 830-852.

    Teaching is a gendered profession, yet **women are particularly burdened by the demands of 'work' and 'life', which can stifle union participation.** The intensification of teachers' work has distinct implications for the capacity of women to effectively engage in, and balance, various areas of their lives - their teaching (professional work), participation in their trade union, and (often) carrying out unpaid caring and domestic responsibilities. This phenomenon is known as **the 'triple burden'**. With the 'union heartland' shifting to more female-dominated professions (such as teaching), it is timely to consider strategies that teacher unions can use to support women's participation and representation in their union particularly in a time of work intensification.

- McGrath-Champ, S., Gavin, M. & Stacey, M. (2020). Strategy and policy: The case of an Australian teachers' union. In Lansbury, R., Johnson, A. and Van den Broek, D. (Eds.) *Contemporary Issues in Work and Organisations: Actors and Institutions,* pp. 110-126. Abingdon, England: Routledge. (ISBN 9781138341937)

    This book chapter highlights the challenges facing unions, in particular the NSW Teachers' Federation, in finding new ways of working within a neoliberal context and the difficulties of policy implementation in a pluralist framework of industrial relations. In particular, it highlights a key tension of **teacher unions pursuing skill formation**, in this instance, via accreditation requirements as a form of occupational professionalisation. **In the context of work intensification and high workload, such new requirements can be perceived by teachers as yet another demand in a context of on-going reform to teachers' work**. Despite the best intentions of the union to promote and strengthen the standing of teachers through professionalisation processes, it appears that accreditation, in a neo-liberal political environment, can be perceived as exacting more intense work from teachers, greater 'value for money', and increased audit requirements.

- Wilson, R. (2020). *The Profession at Risk: Trends in standards for Admission to Teaching.* Retrieved from: https://www.nswtf.org.au/files/20042_theprofessionatrisk_digital.pdf

    This report, commissioned by the NSW Teachers Federation, provides an analysis of trends in entry and completion rates into Initial Teacher Education programs across Australia. It shows a lack of transparency in standards for admission, large and concerning declines in ATAR performance where data is available, and low and declining completion rates among students in teacher education. The report **argues that low standards at admission contribute to the current low status of the profession, and calls for the development of national teacher recruitment strategy.**

2. *Precarity and Job Insecurity in the Teaching Profession*

- McGrath-Champ, S., Fitzgerald, S., Gavin, M., Stacey, M., & Wilson, R. (2022). Labour Commodification processes in the Employment Heartland: Union Responses to Teachers' Temporary Work. *Work, Employment and Society*. https://doi.org/10.1177/09500170211069854

  This article draws on data from the 2018 Major Study and detailed historical case study analysis to explore the emergence of the fixed-contract or 'temporary' teaching position in New South Wales public education. These positions were established in 2001 to address the growing labour market insecurity experienced by 'casual' teachers. However, the devolution of staffing authority in schools, coupled with an **escalation of temporary teacher numbers, has created greater overall precariousness within the teacher workforce.** Temporary teachers report similar workload pressures to permanent teachers, while experiencing significant dissatisfaction with their precarious employment status. This employment category, ostensibly aimed at limiting 'non-standard' employment among teaching professionals, has allowed employing organisations to expect a **high level of work and organisational commitment without providing a corresponding level of employment security**.

- Stacey, M., Fitzgerald, S., Wilson, R., McGrath-Champ, S., & Gavin., M. (2022). Teachers, fixed-term contracts and school leadership: Toeing the line and jumping through hoops, *Journal of Educational Administration and History 54*(1), 54-68. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2021.1906633

  This article finds that **temporary teachers** (those employed on fixed-term contracts) **report similar levels of workload to teachers employed on a permanent basis**. The experiences of work, however, are qualitatively different between teachers employed on a permanent and temporary basis. Many **teachers in the temporary category feel they must work harder than permanent teachers in order to 'prove themselves' to school executive**. The authors argue that such experiences of precariousness may have particular **'scarring' effects** for teachers in temporary employment, including gendered patterns of career progression.

- Stacey, M. (2022). Pre-service teachers' views of schools as workplaces in a system of social, cultural and religious division: to be "selfish" or to be a "hero"? *Educational Review* (online first). doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2022.2027347

  While not directly about precarity, this article explored **the views of pre-service teachers on where they would like to work and why**. Key considerations of pre-service teachers are analysed as falling into two broad categories: feeling like a "professional", and considerations of equity. Unfortunately, **participants often felt that the private sector would offer greater likelihood of feeling like a "professional", and that it was likely to be better resourced and therefore a more enjoyable teaching experience**, indicating deficit perceptions of what the public system had to offer as an employer.

3. *Principals' Work and Workload*

- McGrath-Champ, S., Stacey, M., Wilson, R., Fitzgerald, S., Rainnie, A. & Parding, K. (2019). Principals' support for teachers' working conditions in devolved school settings: Insights from two Australian states. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership 47*(4), 590-605. doi: 10.1177/1741143217745879

This paper examines principals' actions in creating and supporting teachers' working conditions in two devolved Australian state settings, NSW and WA. The paper reports on the initiatives 30 principals in a diverse range of devolved Australian government schools adopt to shape and support the local, school-level working conditions of teachers. Surprisingly, principals were commonly unable to articulate – or even respond to – this matter. Of those who could respond regarding working conditions, dispositions of paternalistic 'care', basic distributive actions or even a lack of influence or control were reported. Principals' responses in metropolitan, regional and rural settings varied indicating that the spatially-differentiated nature of Australian schooling creates major openings for analysis of the inequitable layout of devolutionary school policies. Despite new leadership profiles tied to the leadership standard for principals (AITSL, 2014), an **understanding of principals in relation to teachers as workers, rather than as producers of ever-improving student outcomes, remains conspicuous in its absence.** The possibility of a causal relationship between principals' own role change and conditions, and their ability, inclination or opportunity to support their staff – a question we raise throughout this paper – is identified as a matter requiring further investigation. This paper is based on a significant interview study with principals conducted in 2014/15.

- Gavin, M. & McGrath-Champ, S. (2017). Devolving authority: the impact of giving public schools power to hire staff. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources* 55(2), 255-74. doi:10.1111/1744-7941.12110

This study on the piloting of the NSW education policy 'Local Schools, Local Decisions' on 47 schools reveals early understandings of the impact of devolution in NSW public schools. The reforms, progressively implemented from 2012, increased principals' capacity for the selection of teaching staff, among other initiatives. This policy shift enabled principals to make merit-based selection of staff and enhanced 'local' choice of school staff. Findings revealed that **while some principals responded positively to greater local decision-making and were able to cater to local student needs, there was undermining of trust and confidence in the merit selection process, increased managerialisation of the principals' role and problems for remote schools in attracting and retaining quality teachers.**

4. *Implications of School Choice for Teachers and Principals*

- Gavin, M., & Stacey, M. (2022). Enacting autonomy reform in schools: the re-shaping of roles and relationships under *Local Schools, Local Decisions*. *Journal of Educational Change* DOI: 10.1007/s10833-022-09455-5

This article provides a review on *Local Schools, Local Decisions* at the conclusion of this policy (2012-2020) using the lens of 'policy enactment'. *LSLD* aimed to devolve additional powers and responsibilities to school principals, namely enhanced capacity to manage staffing and financial functions in schools. Through interviews with 31 teachers and school leaders in NSW, we highlight **tensions in enacting devolutionary reforms in schools**. While school principals had increased discretion and decision-making power, this creates tensions within schools, notably **fracturing of staff relationships, particularly between principals and teaching staff**. This finding is understood within a **context of heightened workload and unclear expectations which attended the policy's introduction.**

- Stacey, M. (2020). *The business of teaching: becoming a teacher in a market of schools*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

This book documents the **impacts of school choice policy approaches of the past forty years on teachers and their work.** Taking a multiple case approach, the book explores nine early career teacher

cases working across highly diverse school sites, including public, Catholic and independent. **Teachers in schools enrolling students experiencing significant educational disadvantage described extensive socio-cultural, creative and relational demands, working with students marginalized within wider society and who experienced multiple and sustained challenges both within and beyond the school.** Teachers working in schools with more average levels of advantage were kept busy with various extra-curricular demands, part of marketing and promoting their school, yet shared with those working in elite settings a generally easy relational dynamic with largely compliant student cohorts, the latter also with considerable material and human resources at their disposal. **Workload across most contexts, however, was described as a concern.** Further explanation of these findings can be found in this 2019 blog post: https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=4224

- Fitzgerald, S., Stacey, M., McGrath-Champ, S., Parding, K. & Rainnie, A. (2018). Devolution, market dynamics and the Independent Public School initiative in Western Australia: 'Winning back' what has been lost? *Journal of Education Policy 33*(5), 662-681. doi: 10.1080/02680939.2017.1412502

  This article examines school devolution policies in Western Australia as exemplified by the expansion of the Independent Public School (IPS) program. Drawing on extensive interview data from two schools – one IPS and one non-IPS – we examined the ways in which the IPS initiative is contributing to the operation of new market dynamics within the public school sector in WA. We note that competition and choice associated with the **IPS program has created new mechanisms for the residualisation of particular, and specifically non-IP, schools and new pressures on teachers** such as that staff at both schools reported work intensification and significant dissatisfaction in their work.

- Parding, K., McGrath-Champ, S. & Stacey, M. (2017). Teachers, school choice and competition: Lock-in effects within and between sectors. *Policy Futures in Education 15*(1), 113-128. doi: 10.1177/1478210316688355

  In the context of considerable diversification of schools across and within both private and public contexts, this article draws on preliminary data within the state of NSW to argue that school segmentation and segregation can create **'lock-in' effects for teachers** through the development of context-specific skill sets. In addition, work arrangements including hiring practices and systems make **movement between sectors difficult for teachers**, indicating that once teachers are within a particular sector, they will tend to stay within that sector. Given the ongoing popularity of private sector schooling in Australia, politically and otherwise, this has implications for the public sector as potentially needing to compete for staff, not only at the point of employment but also subsequently.

5. *Valuing the Teaching Profession – Union Campaigns*

- Gavin, M., Fitzgerald, S., & McGrath-Champ, S. (2022). From marketising to empowering: Evaluating union responses to devolutionary policies in education, *Economic and Labour Relations Review 33*(1), 80-99. https://doi.org/10.1177/10353046221077276

  This article focuses on how teacher unions have responded to devolutionary reform in schools. It sheds light on the way that teacher unions can use sources of power to resist decentralising, neoliberal policy agendas. Drawing on two cases of devolutionary reform in NSW public education – the *Schools Renewal* reforms (1989, 1990) and *LSLD* (2012), it reveals how the **NSW Teachers' Federation has attempted to use discursive and symbolic power to resist neoliberal policies in schools** that managerialise teachers' and principals' work.

- Gavin, M. (2021). Reframing the narrative: renewing power resources and capabilities in union campaigns for public education, *Journal of Industrial Relations 63*(5), 753-776.

  This article examines the strategy of the NSW Teachers' Federation in recent public education campaigns. It reveals how **the union has transformed the narrative around public education to resist a discourse of derision of public services** and the residualisation of public education advanced by neoliberal logics. Renewing framing capabilities is essential to put forward alternatives to neoliberal policies and in order to reimbue the teaching profession with a sense of status and respect.

- Gavin, M. (2019). Working industrially or professionally? What strategies should teacher unions use to improve teacher salaries in neoliberal times?' *Labour and Industry 29*(1), 19-33. doi:10.1080/10301763.2018.1548068

  Teachers' salaries have been subject to particular scrutiny by governments. Successive state governments have utilised adversarial tactics during salary negotiations with trade unions, placed legislative restrictions on wages growth and restricted union activity aimed at improving teachers' salaries. In this climate, a **shift in trade union strategy to improve teachers' salaries is needed, in addition to re-imagining the core function of teachers' work and value in society.** Such strategies include renewing key messages to parents and the community around teacher salaries and the value of teachers in communities, as well as advancing the professional interests of teachers.

Samples of Media and Engagement on Teachers' Work and Workload

- Gavin, M. & Stacey, M. (2022) Why we never want to be in Kansas *EduResearch Matters, AARE Blog*. 18 January. https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=11725

- Gavin, M. (2022) Misguided and damaging: performance-based pay for teachers won't fix the crisis. *EducationHQ*. 8 July. https://educationhq.com/news/misguided-and-damaging-performance-based-pay-for-teachers-wont-fix-the-crisis-123317/?fbclid=IwAR3lywmJ0gz21KaQ4TQ2BvcLrKoPDX9jaQxWt57uJ-vbqurcWo3fgefQOuI

- Gavin, M., & McGrath-Champ, S. (2022) Why performance pay will never fix the disastrous teaching crisis. *EduResearch Matters, AARE Blog*. 28 June. https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=13484

- Wilson R & Carabetta G (2022) COVID and schools: Australia is about to feel the full brunt of its teacher shortage. *The Conversation*, 19 January, https://theconversation.com/covid-and-schools-australia-is-about-to-feel-the-full-brunt-of-its-teacher-shortage-174885

- Gavin, M. (2022) 2SER Radio *Think: Business Futures* Podcast – "The Teacher Walk Off". 3 May https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/the-teacher-walk-off/id1377550490?i=1000559451715

- Duggan S (2022) Escalating number of temporary contracts 'scarring' NSW teachers: report. *Education HQ*. 7 June. *(reports on research about temporary teachers)* https://educationhq.com/news/escalating-number-of-temporary-contracts-scarring-nsw-teachers-report-121374/

- Baker J (2021) Teaching no longer a secure job, with one-fifth of the workforce temporary. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 17 May *(reports on research about temporary teachers)*

https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/teaching-no-longer-a-secure-job-with-one-fifth-of-the-workforce-temporary-20210512-p57rct.html

- Gavin, M. (2021) 'Public sector strikes are back, with a vengeance.' *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 December. https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/public-sector-strikes-are-back-with-a-vengeance-20211207-p59fh8.html

- Gavin, M. (2021) Radio interview for 'NSW public school teachers strike'. ABC (AM, ABC Radio Adelaide). 7 December. https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/am/nsw-public-school-teachers-strike/13665148

- Gavin, M., McGrath-Champ, S., Stacey, M., & Wilson, R. (2021) Teachers deserve more than love and praise. They deserve a raise. *EduResearch Matters, AARE Blog*. 7 December. https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=11466

- Rosanes M (2021) Temporary teachers feel 'unspoken pressure to do more', research finds. *The Educator Online*. 28 May. *(reports on research about temporary teachers)*

- Stacey, M., Fitzgerald, S., Gavin, M., McGrath-Champ, S., & Wilson, R. (2021) Will the Quality Time Action Plan reduce teacher workload? *EduResearch Matters, AARE Blog*. 23 September. https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=10768

- Stacey, M., Wilson, R., McGrath-Champ, S., Fitzgerald, S., & Gavin, M. (2021) The terrible trap of temporary teaching: I need to do more to get a job next year. *EduResearch Matters, AARE Blog*. 19 May. https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=9427

- Gavin, M., Stacey, M., Wilson, R., & McGrath-Champ, S. (2021) The government knows how to help teachers. And it's not more reform. *EduResearch Matters, AARE Blog*. 1 March. https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=8534

- Gavin, M. & McGrath-Champ, S. (2019) 'It's time to rethink our views of teachers to help them and students'. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 June, https://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace/it-s-time-to-rethink-our-views-of-teachers-to-help-them-and-students-20190606-p51v22.html
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  Wilson, R. & McGrath-Champ, S. (2018) 'New research shows NSW teachers working long hours to cope with administrative load'. *The Conversation*, 9 July, https://theconversation.com/new-research-shows-nsw-teachers-working-long-hours-to-cope-with-administrative-load-99453

- Wilson, R. (2020) 'Your country needs you!' It's high time for a drive to recruit better teachers. *Sydney Morning Herald,* 20 Feb, https://www.smh.com.au/national/your-country-needs-you-it-s-high-time-for-a-drive-to-recruit-better-teachers-20200219-p5429i.html

- **'We're not being trusted': Teachers drowning in paperwork at expense of teaching**
  Sydney Morning Herald (*Newspaper*), 8 July 2018 reported the study by University of Sydney researchers, commissioned by the NSW Teachers Federation, which found 97 percent of teachers reported an increase in administration duties since the Local Schools, Local Decision state education policy. The article was syndicated across Fairfax Media, including: *The Australian, Adelaide Now,*

Herald Sun, Brisbane-Courier Daily, Daily Telegraph, Cairns Post, Geelong Advertiser, Northern Territory News, Townsville Bulletin, Gold Coast Bulletin, Barrier Daily Truth, Weekly Times Now, Campus Morning Mail, Daily Advertiser, Illawarra Mercury, News Team. News.com.au, Yahoo! News Australia, Yahoo! New Zealand, News Team, News.com.au, EducationHQ News Team, and MSN, and *2SM Sydney, Classic Rock Radio and Power FM Illawarra* (*Radio*) on 9 July 2018.

- **Teachers' core job swamped by paperwork**
  The Age (*Newspaper*), 5 May 2018
  Weekend newspaper Feature article on preliminary findings from Major Report and sparked immediate response by Minister of Education: 5 May 2018, Sydney Morning Herald, *The Age*, (Syndicated across Fairfax Media). *2GB Sydney and 4BC Brisbane* (*Radio*), aired an interview on the above study on 9 May 2018 and *Education HQ*, 7 May 2018. (The 2GB interview was the morning after the 2018 Federal Budget was handed down, signaling the significance of this study as a news item).

- **Ross Gittins column endorsement of teachers' work major study**, 'What smart bosses do to get the best out of staff', Sydney Morning Herald, syndicated widely including: *The Age, Canberra Times, Brisbane Times, WA Today*.

- **ABC Radio 702 Sydney interview** with Wendy Harmer and Robbie Buck, and 2SM, 25/7/2018 on teachers work research

- Features in University of Sydney *News:* 'Teachers suffer from "unsustainable' administrative demands: survey' and University of Sydney Business School *News*.

Contact person

Dr Rachel Wilson
Associate Professor
Sydney School of Education & Social Work
University of Sydney
https://www.sydney.edu.au/arts/about/our-people/academic-staff/rachel-wilson.html
Phone: 02 93516390

Appendix

The diagrams show responses across four role categories (classroom & specialist teachers, assistant principals & head teachers, deputy principals & principals, and consultants) in NSW public schools
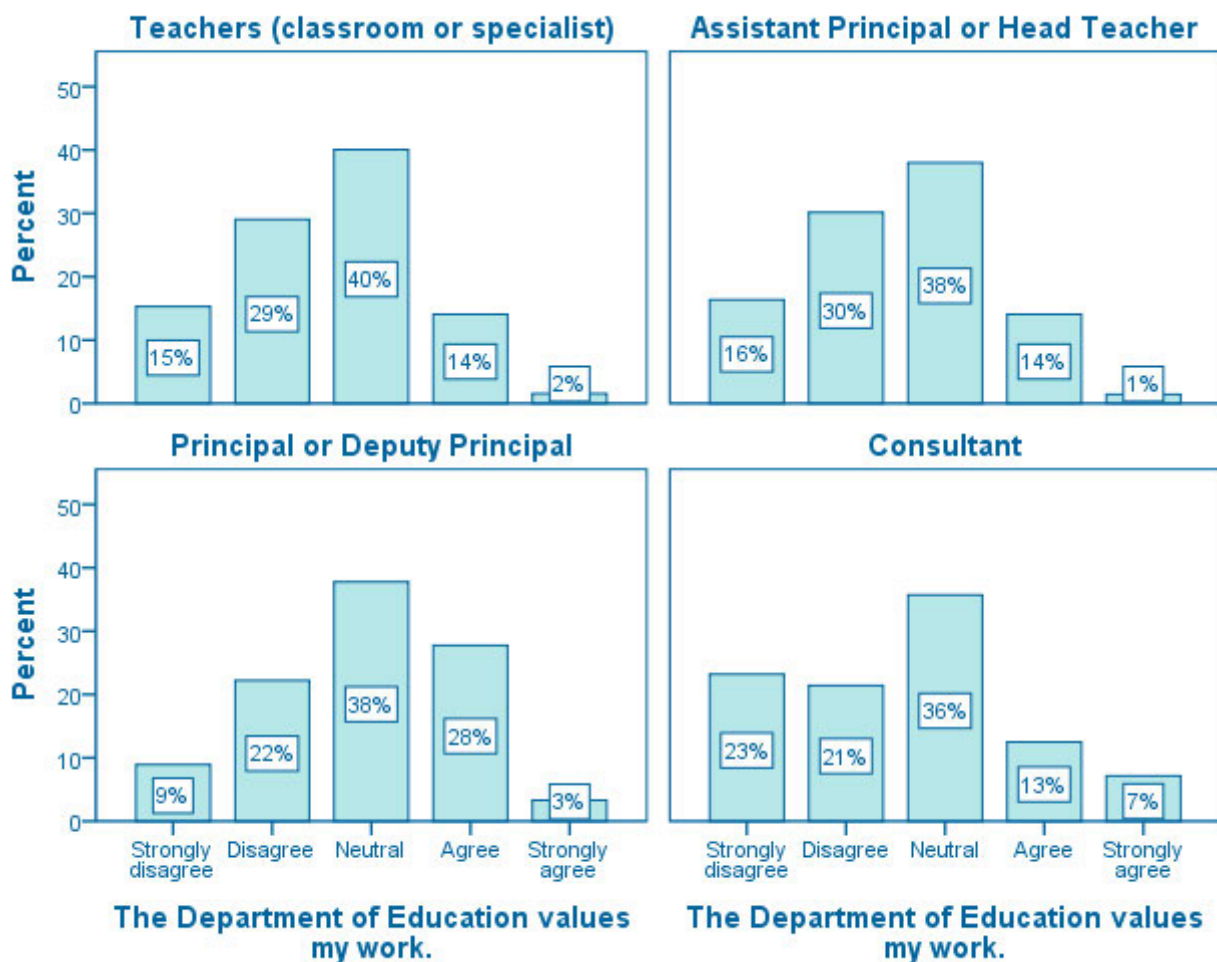
Survey Question:
To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Five response categories: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly agree)
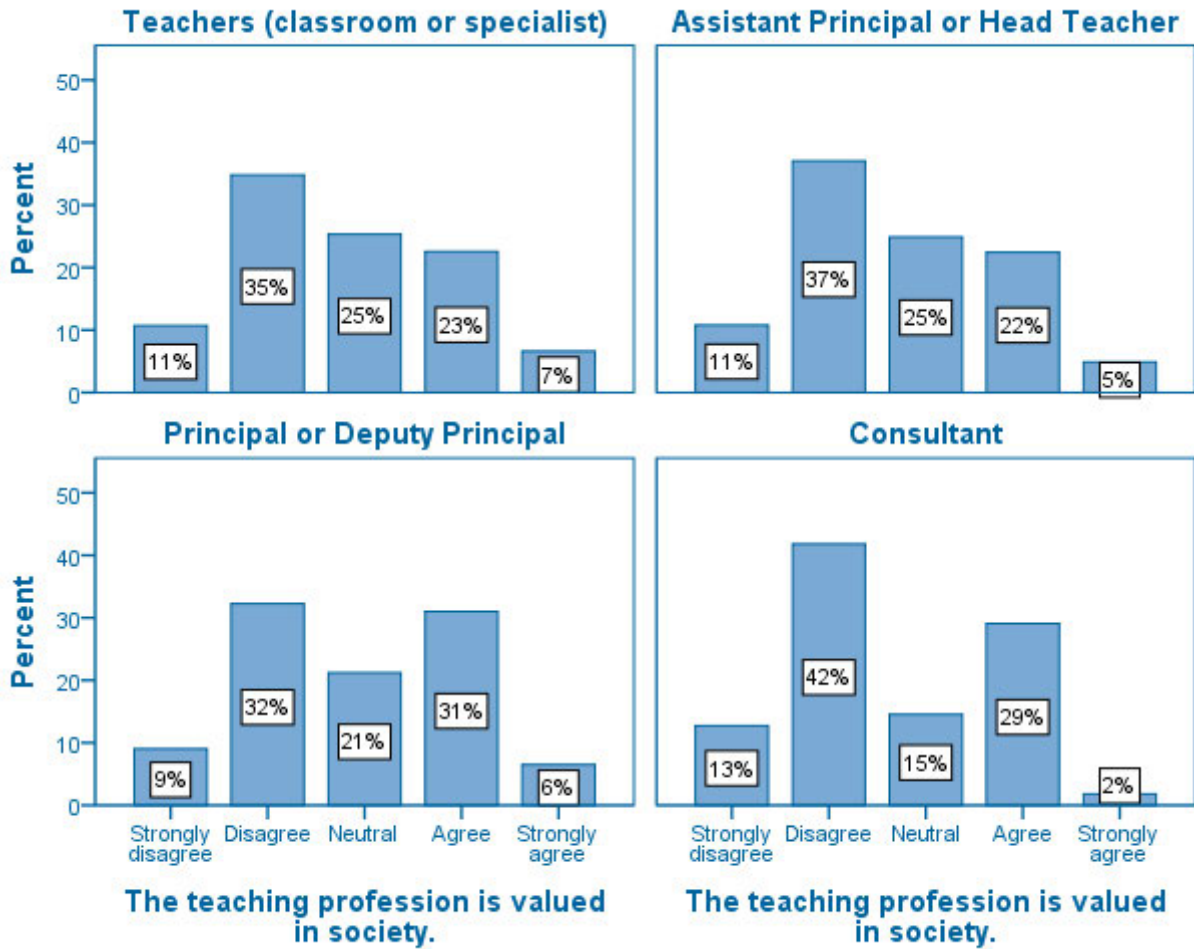a) I value the work I do
b) The Department of Education values my work
c) The teaching profession is valued in society

Responses to b) and c) (see over) are depicted below:

(b) Responses to: ***The Department of Education values my work***

(c) Responses to: ***The teaching profession is valued in society***

Teachers (classroom or specialist)
- 11%
- 35%
- 25%
- 23%
- 7%

Assistant Principal or Head Teacher
- 11%
- 37%
- 25%
- 22%
- 5%

Principal or Deputy Principal
- 9%
- 32%
- 21%
- 31%
- 6%

Consultant
- 13%
- 42%
- 15%
- 29%
- 2%

The teaching profession is valued in society.

Source: 2018 *Understanding work in schools survey*, unpublished data.