

## INQUIRY INTO TEACHER SHORTAGES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

Hello,

I'm a relatively new graduate secondary mathematics teacher (2020). There were many reasons I chose to go into teaching, employment opportunities being a major one, to teach mathematics to students that did not understand it another. A complete misjudgment of the impossibly elastic expectations placed on teachers did not make that list. Since graduating, I have spent 2 terms filling temporary blocks and I now have no desire to remain in teaching in a permanent capacity whatsoever. As stated, I joined the career to teach maths, but have found that 95% of the job is classroom and social management. Being maths trained, I feel immensely guilty in leaving those positions to unqualified teachers that are already overworked, either flattened and stretched by the expectations of creating happy, healthy, socially capable students that also achieve academically beyond their own expectations, or succumbed to the crush and effectively have to sever one of their limbs to be able to stretch further in just one of those directions.

Throughout all my education and professional work life, I have aimed to achieve perfection, without killing myself for it. But I am just not capable holding myself up to those expectations that teaching apparently requires. I'm not sure anyone is. I think I could quite comfortably say that the only teachers that are somehow holding it together or even excelling in this industry are doing so in schools with an abundance of staff and paid resources, meaning less time preparing lessons, less time filling out bureaucratic paperwork, less time filling in for other teachers, less time on playground duties and less time on classroom management. I am a product of the NSW Private education system that benefitted from that very model, but I really should not have needed to be. Any teacher I have worked with would excel in that environment, though most feel a stronger pull to that responsibility that I am feeling the need to turn my back on.

The most pressing matter in changing this teacher shortage crisis is to effect the shortage. Attracting more teachers to the profession and maintaining its attractiveness is paramount to saving our education system. As more and more teachers leave the profession and expectations remain high, more and more will burn out and leave, exacerbating this issue as I feel I am with my own burn out. More teachers to share the overwhelming burden will go an extremely long way to both attracting and maintaining attraction to teaching. Smaller class sizes for management and one on one time per student will dramatically change the way schools are having to function. Quality and results will come from this as well. But that ball needs to get rolling last year. This is an industry at tipping point and I fear for the future of any country that does not value its education system.