

Twomey Recommendations

Recommendation 1: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

1.1 Implements an immediate and significant investment in public teacher and lecturer remuneration that will:

- improve the relative position of teaching in relation to other professions
- recognise the value of the education workforce within the community
- provide an adequate return on investment (i.e. four-year tertiary qualified).

1.2 Ensures equity in relation to incentives and allowances in regional and remote areas of the State (e.g. housing, location, cost of living, utilities – electricity, rates, water, air-conditioning – and travel), as is provided to other Western Australian State Government employees (e.g. police, nurses, etc).

1.3 Commences negotiations with the Federal Government to expand salary sacrifice provision to mirror public hospital and public benevolent institutions for teachers and lecturers, given their vital role in the development of Australian children, particularly in rural and remote regions.

1.4 Reviews salaries and allowances for public school and college support staff in line with the above recommendations for teaching staff.

1.5 Develops and implements a system of differentiated salaries and conditions to attract and retain high quality teachers in difficult-to-staff schools and subject areas in public schools.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that, in the public school sector, the Minister for Education and Training:

2.1 Enables more high-performing and achieving teachers (recognising particularly those who cater for special needs – Indigenous, diversity, inclusivity, etc) to be provided with opportunities to seek promotion to the higher salary level equivalent to that of the DET's current L3CT by following a well developed and articulated, transparent and equitable policy pathway, as described in the chapter above.

2.2 Provides for the development of two further promotional levels beyond L3CT, with the top level attracting a salary comparable to that available in other professions. The development of initial quotas for promotion to these positions will ensure an orderly and manageable promotions process in the early years of implementation.

2.3 Offers principals salaries which are comparable to their equivalents in the non-Government sector with similar accountability, duties, responsibilities and allowances, including four-six weeks of annual leave.

2.4 Reviews the ways in which inexperienced principals in the public sector are supported and consider alternative, innovative approaches such as having a high achieving,

experienced principal take a mentoring, overseeing role for 3-4 other schools in a regional cluster.

2.5 Considers the way in which public sector schools are currently categorised and how this impacts on what a principal is paid. Principals' pay should be based on work value. A rational base for differentiation in the salary of principals needs to be established.

2.6 Formulates expanded career progression pathways for school support staff and para-professionals so as to support development and retention, thereby facilitating their development and increasing the likelihood that they will remain in the system. It is also important to address their nomenclature to reflect the increasing importance of this cohort within schools.

2.7 Supports the continued development of appropriate training programs at the universities and TAFE for education para-professionals and other assistants leading to higher qualifications which, together with classroom experience, could, as appropriate, provide a level of advanced standing into teacher education conversion courses at university.

2.8 Introduces an expanded school structure which will raise (a) the numbers and (b) the status of support staff and provide a satisfying and worthwhile career path, freeing principals and teachers to focus on pedagogy.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

3.1 Works within Government to provide substantial funding to address the shortage and quality of housing provided to teachers and lecturers in schools and TAFE colleges in regional and remote areas, ensuring that all avenues of funding are being fully utilised including funds from Federal programs, industry and business sponsorship and partnerships, local Governments and Regional Development Councils.

3.2 Works within Government to:

- reconsider the support provided to regional teachers who own or are acquiring their own homes in that location to encourage local retention
- review GROH's Tenant Purchase Program
- review the Department of Housing and Works' Home Ownership Subsidy Scheme for Government Employees in Regional Western Australia.

It is further recommended that the Minister works with the Department of Education and Training so as to:

3.3 Review current policies concerning housing with a view to:

- achieving equity with the other State Government employees
- considering the housing needs of AIEOs and support staff in schools and TAFE colleges in rural and remote areas

- extending the time period of financial support currently provided for home air-conditioning in rural and remote Western Australia, and paying for the costs direct to the provider.

3.4 Ensure the safety and security of students, staff and buildings so that schools meet the present expectations of the community; ensures adequate minimum standards of working conditions in classrooms (such as the provision of air conditioning and heating); and accelerates the renewal, replacement and refurbishment of public schools.

3.5 Investigate and encourage partnerships with local communities and businesses, and public-private partnerships which may lead to the provision of better school and community amenities, equipment and services such as childcare.

3.6 Review the level of technical support provided to schools and TAFE colleges, especially in relation to the technical support of ICT.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that, in the public education sector, the Minister for Education and Training:

4.1 Mandates an education and training program for aspiring principals, elements of which must be completed before the appointment of new principals is confirmed.

4.2 Provides appropriate professional development for newly-appointed principals (i.e. those appointed within the last three years) and encourages all principals to undertake appropriate ongoing, extended professional development.

Recommendation 5: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

5.1 Takes every opportunity to enunciate support for teachers and lecturers and their value to the Western Australian community.

5.2 Identifies a body such as WACOT, or a select group of senior classroom teachers, to provide practical and informed comment on educational and classroom matters.

5.3 Provides financial support for an ongoing marketing campaign to emphasise:

- the importance of well-trained, respected teachers to the wellbeing of the wider community
- the influence which good teachers and learning processes have on the life and career of individuals
- the role which parents should play in supporting their schools and teachers, and in their responsibility to adequately prepare their children for education
- the professional attributes which teacher education courses provide
- the job satisfaction that teaching engenders
- the range of wonderful environments in which a teacher may work in Western Australia.

5.4 Notes that no one recommendation by itself will improve the status of teaching but it is the implementation of a number of recommendations (as expressed in this document) which will progressively raise the status of teaching within the general community and within the profession.

5.5 Ensures that principals in public schools are provided with and are responsible for a staffing budget which will enable them to appoint a mix of teaching and other staff at different levels.

5.6 Provides a set of delegations and appropriate accountability procedures in the public sector which will increase principal autonomy, including a greater responsibility for teacher performance management.

5.7 Ensures a budget structure for public schools which provides realistic discretionary spending in agreed areas which, while having a common core, will vary from school to school.

5.8 Recognises the importance of mentoring to the profession by establishing promotional opportunities for teacher mentors with appropriate salary and time allowances in public sector schools and colleges.

Recommendation 6: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

6.1 Provides financial scholarships to graduating school students based on merit, with those students with a high TER ranking being provided with greater incentive. Scholarships should not be provided to applicants – other than those from the country – with an entry rank of less than 80. Additional scholarships should also be made available to the following categories of graduating school students who will be able to complete at least part of their education process in one of eight country locations:

- those from regional and remote Western Australia
- those of Indigenous heritage.

6.2 Regularly reviews the scholarships provided to open pathways for para-professionals and education assistants, including AIEOs, to complete their pre-service education and qualify as teachers.

6.3 Encourages WACOT to establish and promote the category of ‘adjunct educator’ within the public and non-Government school sectors.

6.4 Supports the development of the ‘Study of Teaching’ as a TEE subject, continues financial support of those schools currently involved in the project and extends the initiative to other secondary schools across Western Australia. These “lighthouse” schools would need to be clearly identified, advertised, promoted and financially resourced.

6.5 Works with the public, Catholic and independent school sectors, WACOT, SSTUWA, the Independent Education Union and the professional associations to support an extensive marketing campaign, attractive to young adults and aimed at favourably presenting teaching as an exciting, worthwhile and rewarding profession of great value to the community.

6.6 Facilitates the movement of teachers between the public and non-Government school sectors by:

- a) recognising and rewarding years of service in the system as a whole; and
- b) allowing the portability of long service leave.

6.7 Ensures that relevant experiences in other countries and Australian States are taken into account in DET employment processing.

Recommendation 7: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

7.1 Considers increasing the employment numbers of school support staff in public schools to relieve classroom teachers of much of the burden of dealing with routine clerical, administrative and supervisory tasks which could be effectively managed by others in line with the Director General's "Classroom First" strategy.

7.2 Examines the capacity to alter the current structure of a working year to allow for effective planning and assessment of student learning, before and after student arrival at school each term and year.

7.3 Encourages the appointment in public schools of:

- personal assistants to principals
- school administrators to relieve school principals of the burden of many non-teaching related duties, thus allowing principals to concentrate on educational leadership.

7.4 Given 7.3, enables principals to routinely include a period or periods of classroom teaching on a regular basis into their schedule.

7.5 Supports a considerable increase in the number of education assistants in public schools to:

- ensure literacy and numeracy at primary school levels
- help manage difficult students, students with behavioural problems and inclusive education students within classrooms
- assist individual students with particular learning problems.

7.6 Takes a strong stand against physical violence and personal verbal abuse directed toward any staff within a school environment. Such abuse must not be tolerated under any circumstances and teachers should not have to face violent or potentially violent students, parents or individuals.

7.7 Supports teachers by revising the existing ratio in public schools of educational psychologists to students, and examine the role of social workers as additional support.

7.8 Ensures that TAFE develops appropriate training programs for education assistants leading to formal qualifications which, together with classroom experience, could, as

appropriate, provide advanced standing into teacher training conversion courses at university level.

7.9 Reviews the progress and outcomes to-date of the Schools Plus program in public schools in relation to inclusive education for (a) students with intellectual disabilities, (b) students at educational risk, (c) those other students in the classrooms and (d) the workload of teaching staff. This data should be used to help determine whether or not the present approach to inclusive education is appropriate or if alternative arrangements would be more advantageous.

7.10 Continues to support the development of the DET Teacher Flying Squad as a group of high-calibre classroom teachers by offering generous levels of remuneration and providing flexibility to cover replacements of less than four weeks in rural and remote Western Australia.

Recommendation 8: It is recommended to the Minister for Education and Training that:

8.1 Teachers in the public education sector at promotional levels L3CT and above are directly involved in practicum supervision and mentoring. In addition, the willingness and history of teachers below the L3CT level to be involved in practicum supervision and mentoring is regarded as a positive factor when they seek promotion to higher levels.

8.2 Every effort is made to ensure that most pre-service teachers gain practicum experiences in regional Western Australia.

8.3 Pre-service teachers be financially assisted in relation to the costs of travel, reasonable accommodation and expenses, and are paid a stipend to (a) compensate for the dislocation of their domestic arrangements and (b) to help compensate for their inability to continue with part-time employment (in which many university students have to participate in order to complete their studies).

8.4 The Minister negotiates with his Federal counterpart to ensure (a) that participating schools are provided with funding sufficient to support the numbers of their pre-service teacher practicums and enable appropriate recompense for teacher mentors and (b) the incorporation of practicum standards in a system of national accreditation for teacher education programs.

8.5 Select primary and secondary schools, in partnership with a university, be given a larger role in the final year education/training process for some pre-service teachers, allowing them much greater, direct exposure and experience in the classroom (closely monitored by appropriate staff) as a major component of the fourth year of their teacher training course.

8.6 The DET and private education providers be encouraged to enter into partnerships with entities such as RREAC, country shires, business and industry to facilitate the housing, social integration and networking experiences of pre-service teachers in rural locations.

Recommendation 9: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

9.1 Implements a significant increase in lecturer remuneration as expressed in Recommendation 1.1.

9.2 Ensures that TAFE is provided with the necessary flexibilities in relation to appointments and operations to enable it to compete on a level playing field with private vocational providers and universities.

9.3 Allows TAFE colleges which demonstrate in the range and excellence of their programs, particularly in the skills and capabilities of their senior managers, the autonomy necessary to enable them to become more responsive and flexible in their everyday activities and more responsible and accountable for their programs and outcomes.

9.4 Encourages individual TAFE colleges to enter into partnerships and arrangements with industry and universities which will generate additional funding for the TAFE colleges concerned, under guidelines and accountabilities similar to those for universities.

9.5 Facilitates the joint employment of individuals by TAFE and industry and allows an alternative training delivery model wherein TAFE training specialists would support the work of skills specialists within industry.

9.6 Continues the Indigenous Cadet Lecturers Program initiative and facilitates permanency for Indigenous lecturers at TAFE who successfully complete their cadetships.

9.7 Considers conducting an interstate and international recruitment campaign for TAFE lecturers, focusing on the migration into Western Australia of individuals with appropriate training, skills and backgrounds.

9.8 Develops a marketing campaign raising public awareness of workplace delivery, flexible and online learning as essential contemporary methodologies available in TAFE.

9.9 Reconsiders the TAFE teaching year and holiday periods so as to enable TAFE to provide a year round service for industry and commerce and to better compete with private vocational providers.

Recommendation 10: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

10.1 Encourages the DET to, as soon as possible, determine the optimal management framework necessary to bring together SIDE, WestOne and OTLS into a single structure and under a new title which better reflects the contemporary requirements of flexible and distance learning.

10.2 Establishes the annual financial requirements necessary so as to provide resources for the development of learning packages incorporating contemporary technologies and methods; for the training of appropriate teachers and TAFE lecturers to implement installation and uptake; and the technologies necessary for each participating school and TAFE college.

10.3 Directs SIDE and WestOne, as a first priority during the time period of such a review to:

- target specific subject disciplines and TAFE programs identified as necessary to meet the educational needs of students in the State

- initiate the preparation of those packages.

10.4 Provides sufficient additional funding to enable the work listed under 10.3 to proceed.

10.5 Establishes targets to accelerate the take-up of online and mixed modal learning in schools and TAFE colleges.

10.6 Makes available at reasonable cost the current and future flexible learning resources to enable non-Government schools ready access.

Recommendation 11: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

11.1 Urgently addresses the culture of the DET central office so as to reinforce the “Classroom First” approach of the Director General, since the prime educational purpose for central office’s existence is the provision of service and support to Western Australian public schools.

11.2 Delegates autonomy and responsibility to public school principals and schools that are able to demonstrate, through the appropriateness and consistency of their performance and decisionmaking, that they are capable of so managing.

11.3 Reviews the role and necessity of district education offices in the public sector as they are currently organised and considers how else schools may be appropriately grouped.

11.4 Establishes advisory or governance boards, and provides guidelines to define the extent of their obligations and powers, for a school or cluster of schools.

11.5 Reviews the schools under his control to look for and achieve size and staff efficiencies via appropriate amalgamations and/or closure.

Recommendation 12: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

12.1 Establishes an Education and Training Workforce Advisory Committee consisting of an independent Chairperson and membership invited from appropriate education and community groups.

12.2 Facilitates education workforce planning for Western Australia by enabling the DET workforce planning group to work in close collaboration with Western Australian private education providers, universities, TAFE and other Government agencies to ensure the collection of meaningful data so as to guide future action.

Recommendation 13: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

13.1 Institutes a thorough review of the policies, procedures and practices involved in the public education sector concerning:

- the recruitment, selection and appointment of teachers and lecturers

- the concurrent employment of TAFE lecturers with other organisations and industries
- entrepreneurial initiatives and activities.

13.2 Ensures that the DET works with the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner to simplify DET public sector requirements and responsibilities to achieve:

- maximum flexibility under the present Public Sector Standards, ensuring transparent, reasonable and efficient application
- more flexibility and autonomy, especially for TAFE.

13.3 Reviews its current ICT systems to ensure a rapid central response to employment and other human resource related issues, including synchronising with WACOT the electronic transfer of information to facilitate the speedy recruitment of teachers.

Recommendation 14: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

14.1 Negotiates with the Federal Government to ensure that financial investment in the literacy of Indigenous students at least is equal to that provided to migrant children.

14.2 Encourages WACOT to engage in dialogue with the Western Australian universities and other providers of pre-service teacher education to ensure:

- they have strategies in place to provide substantial acknowledgement of prior learning to better enable Indigenous and minority cultural groups to gain appropriate entry into a pre-service education courses
- that substantial studies in Indigenous culture, values and knowledge systems are an integral part of all pre-service teaching courses.

14.3 Funds appropriate market research to identify barriers concerning the recruitment of culturally diverse peoples into the education workforce.

Recommendation 15: It is recommended that the Minister for Education and Training:

15.1 In collaboration with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, develops a comprehensive agenda of the education and training issues that will lead to a more collaborative relationship with the Federal Government in regard to the vocational education sector so as to reduce waste and duplication, and to ensure that resources (including workforce) are used to maximise the delivery of services and training outcomes across Australia.

15.2 Maintains and progresses a centrally coordinated agenda, addressing key workforce issues, as an important part of the overall coordination of Federal/State interests and in concert with the non- Government education sector. The following areas are viewed as requiring priority attention:

- Together with the Federal Government, the education system undertakes workforce planning, both on a local and national basis, to ensure the future sustainability of the teacher and vocational education and training workforces. A further priority consideration

is to review the adequacy of the current number of pre-service teacher education courses in Western Australian universities.

- Federal taxation arrangements should be reviewed, with particular emphasis on supporting education and training staff in rural and remote locations.
- The State Government should negotiate with the Federal Government to remove the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) differentiation for teachers who train in areas of need, particularly the science, mathematics and technology-based courses, and develop a debt forgiveness regime for teachers in priority subject areas or who undertake teaching in rural and remote locations.
- The State Government negotiates with the Federal Government to increase the level of funding for practicums, with a major emphasis on supporting rural and remote placements.
- The State Government negotiates with the Federal Government to increase funding for English as a second language (ESL) programs for the children of 457 Visa holders and Indigenous students.

15.3 Pursues potential areas of collaborative State and Federal action to assist in the provision of the following:

- more and better housing for education and training staff in rural and remote locations
- up-to-date technology in schools (with appropriate broadband and technology infrastructure)
- a national marketing campaign to raise the status of teaching.