



**Government
of South Australia**

Department of Education
and Children's Services

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**Submission to the Productivity
Commission study on the
Schools Workforce**

Submission by the Department of Education and Children's Services of South Australia in response to the Productivity Commission issue paper: *Schools Workforce*

The Department of Education and Children's Services of South Australia welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Productivity Commission's issues paper on the Schools Workforce given the vital importance of the education workforce on student learning outcomes, the current and future demand for quality teachers and principals, and the move to the empowerment of local schools to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) submission is focused on the following key workforce issues:

- Workforce Planning
- Institutional Framework
- National Policy Developments
- School Leadership
- Performance Pay and Training and Professional Development.

DECS Organisational and Workforce Context

DECS is responsible for ensuring the provision of high quality children's services and public education throughout South Australia. Our schools and preschools provide services to more than 180,000 young people and their families and our key functions are to:

- Set the directions for education and care in South Australia
- Provide and regulate children's services
- Manage the State's education system.

DECS Workforce Overview

As at the last pay day in June 2010, the department had 25,674 employees or 20,402 full time equivalents (FTEs). The profile consists of employees employed under the Education Act, Children's Services Act, Public Sector Management Act, the South Australian Government Services Award, the South Australian Government Transport Workers' Award and Government Stores Employees Interim Award and includes hourly paid instructors, temporary relieving teachers, employees on extended paid leave or work cover, but excludes employees on leave without pay.

The average age of the workforce was forty-six years, and 60% of the workforce were aged forty-five years and over.

Of the total workforce, 13,652 or 53% worked full time and 12,022 or 47% were part time employees. Female employees made up 75% of employees and 25% were male.

Schools Workforce Overview

1. School Leaders and Teachers

This includes teachers and school leaders working in schools and in professional and administrative roles in regional and central offices – refer Appendices 1 and 2 for a more detailed profile.

There were 16,350 employees consisting of 10,823 full time and 5,527 part time employees. 70% were female and 30% were male.

2. School Services Officers

There were 5,511 employees employed under the School Services Officers Award, consisting of 1,186 full time and 4,325 part time employees. 88% were female and 12% were male.

3. Aboriginal Education Workers

There were 259 employees employed under the Aboriginal Education Workers Award, consisting of 74 full time and 185 part time employees. 81% were female and 19% were male.

Workforce Planning

DECS has an older workforce than the overall South Australian workforce. As of June 2010, the average age of teachers in preschools and schools within DECS was 46, with 50% of teachers aged 50 years or older. Retirements are forecast to increase in the period to 2015.

DECS workforce planning incorporates a range of partnerships, strategies, programs and initiatives aimed to address workforce issues.

Teacher Education Taskforce

In April 2009, the then Minister for Education established a Teacher Education Taskforce with responsibility to prepare recommendations for future actions to better manage teacher supply and demand and to contribute to improving teacher quality in South Australian schools.

Taskforce members include senior representatives from the three employing authorities; Government (DECS), Catholic, and Independent education sectors, as well as the Deans of Education from The University of Adelaide, Flinders University, and the University of South Australia.

Key work of the Taskforce has included responding to initiatives emerging from the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) national education reforms, particularly improving the quality of pre-service professional experience placements for pre-service teachers.

A report from the Taskforce is being prepared for the Minister for Education. The Report will be released initially as a series of monographs with the first of these expected to be available in late 2011. The report will detail:

- a whole-of-sector profile of the South Australian teacher workforce
- strategies to improve professional experience placements for pre-service teachers and attraction to hard to staff locations
- teacher registration
- accreditation of initial education programs
- alternative pathways for Aboriginal employees into teaching.

1. Supply of Teachers

One of the terms of reference of the Taskforce was to investigate the supply of teachers relative to future forecast demand. A key issue identified by all three sectors was the ageing teacher workforce and the capacity of the labour market to meet future needs.

A research report has been produced for the Taskforce by the Australian Institute of Social Research (AISR) of The University of Adelaide, and this work has been reviewed by The Centre for the Economics of Education and Training at Monash University. In addition, the Australian Bureau of Statistics was commissioned to

provide a report on a labour market analysis of both the teacher workforce and the early childhood workforce in South Australia.

The understanding of the teacher labour market has also been assisted by two specific investigations undertaken by the AISR on the DECS Workforce in 2009:

- Career Intentions Survey of DECS Teaching Staff over 45+
- Survey of Teachers on the DECS Employable Teacher Register (note - the register includes a large proportion of the active teacher workforce seeking employment across all three sectors).

There are a number of data limitations to the statewide modelling reports and the Monash University has made some criticisms of the methodology used. Notwithstanding these limitations, the series of reports provide very valuable information for workforce planning at the state level and for DECS as the largest employer in the state.

The key findings of the reports are:

- In aggregate terms, the labour market is currently oversupplied with both primary and secondary teachers.
- The primary school labour market will tighten between now and 2015, but overall aggregate supply will be strong and sufficient to meet demand across the state.
- The secondary school labour market will tighten between now and 2015 on the strength of strong demand for secondary teachers across all three sectors. Some shortfalls are forecast in traditionally hard to fill areas including maths, sciences, information technology and technical studies, and shortages may arise in other specific subject areas

2. Trends and risks

Based on the research findings presented to the Taskforce, further analysis undertaken of DECS data, and published national research, the following trends and associated risks are evident in the South Australian teaching workforce:

- Strong supply in both primary and secondary workforces in recent years has ensured the department has been able to supply quality staff in most instances and has met broader system requirements. The tightening labour market will put pressure on filling hard to staff locations that are predominately of low socioeconomic status (SES) schools. In South Australia there already exists a high concentration of experienced staff, predominately in high SES schools, with younger less experienced staff employed in low SES metropolitan and rural and remote schools. Maintaining a balance of quality experienced teachers and new graduates will require an increased focus on targeted attraction, recruitment and retention strategies across the schooling system, with emphasis on traditionally hard to staff locations.
- Teaching is a demanding profession and initial teacher education is the foundation on which quality teaching is built. Full implementation of the recently endorsed *Accreditation of Initial Education Programs in Australia: Programs and Standards*, which includes the assessment of graduates meeting the new graduate level of the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*, is likely to begin in the 2013 academic year. It will be some years before the impacts of these reforms on elevating the status of teaching, on lifting the quality of teacher graduates and maintaining sufficient graduate supply to meet the workforce needs of all sectors and systems can be evaluated.
- The trend towards feminisation of the workforce across Australia is well established and is forecast to continue. In DECS, female teachers make up 70%

and 30% are males. The impact of this trend on deployment and retention, and the ratio of part time employees to full time employees, are areas requiring further research. Preliminary evidence in South Australia shows that female teachers are less likely to apply for school leadership positions than men and that the rates of part time employment among female teachers are increasing. Further trends are identified under DECS Leadership Overview on page 13.

Key Policy Responses by the South Australian Government

The South Australian government has implemented a range of policy and workforce initiatives in recent years related to workforce challenges. These include:

1. Lifting the status of the profession

It was recognised that in order to both attract and retain quality teaching staff, the profession of teaching needed to be promoted across the community in South Australia as an attractive and viable career for high school students looking to decide on a career and for current teachers looking to upskill, as well as those people who may be considering a career change.

A marketing and communication campaign including television, radio and print was developed and implemented in early 2011, and also a shorter campaign in August 2011, at the time when senior students select their subjects and/or enrol in universities for the following year – website: <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/inspire/>.

Another initiative, the new South Australian Public Teaching Awards, was launched in March 2011 to recognise and raise the profile of teachers in the community (refer to Recognition and professional development on page16).

2. Recruitment and selection of teachers

The South Australian Government has opted for an open labour market approach to teacher recruitment with guaranteed placement rights for the small number of teachers who return from the country each year. The new Teacher Recruitment Policy, developed and agreed with the South Australian Branch of the Australian Education Union (AEU) in the first half of 2011, replaces an existing ‘hybrid’ policy that included a mixture of central placement with some open selection.

Evaluation of the old policy showed serious problems with the incentive structure for schools to displace poorer performing teachers and rely on contract staff to avoid placement of permanent teachers that they did not see as a good fit with their school. The new policy will give schools greater capacity to select staff but will restrict their capacity to displace staff.

This policy is being implemented in the latter half of 2011 and will be fully operational in 2012. The policy will be supported by market based incentives and special programs to attract and retain quality teachers and leaders to hard to staff locations.

The Teacher Renewal program was conducted in the first half of 2011 to help rejuvenate the teaching workforce and provide an opportunity to advertise permanent teaching positions in the open market. Eligible DECS teachers could apply for a grant of \$50,000 to assist them pursue other career options. The positions vacated created opportunities for early career teachers to apply for the 102 positions available on the DECSjobs website. Preliminary analysis indicates a high success rate of applicants in metropolitan schools, with one primary school receiving 500 applications for a position as opposed to 7 applications for a rural secondary school position. This is a strong indicator of the current status of the teacher labour market in South Australia.

3. Market incentives

In order to attract and retain high quality leaders to country and low SES schools, a range of incentives are applied where the following criteria are met:

- where the area of recruitment is an identified skill shortage area
- special factors within the school e.g. a major school improvement initiative
- matching the salary and/or conditions of other school sectors.

Market incentives are paid in addition to any award based locality allowances that may apply. The incentives are negotiated with individual employees and are tailored to individual needs. Market incentives can include additional remuneration, accommodation, travel or professional development.

4. Specialist recruitment policy initiatives

DECS has had a range of successful programs in operation for several years, which covers graduate recruitment, upskilling and leadership. These initiatives provide financial incentives and support for potential and existing teachers in areas of workforce need and include:

- *C-Change*: provides incentives for experienced science and mathematics teachers to provide curriculum leadership in remote and rural areas and low socioeconomic status (SES) metropolitan schools
- *New Beginnings*: provides incentives including financial support and permanent employment for practising professionals, paraprofessionals and tradespersons in the areas of maths, science, design and technology seeking a career change to gain a teaching qualification
- *Country Teaching Scholarship Scheme*: provides incentives including financial support and permanent employment to attract, recruit, and retain pre service teacher education students to remote and rural regions
- *Aboriginal Teaching scholarships*: similar to country scholarships, however location is not restricted to the country
- *Country Practicum Scholarships*: provide financial support for eligible third and final year students undertaking a country practicum that may be used at the student's discretion to support their placement/s
- *Country incentives*: additional payments for practising teachers in rural and remote areas
- *Targeted graduate recruitment scheme*: targets design and technology graduates for metropolitan schools.

Recent initiatives include:

- *Teach SA*: a 4 year Specialist Maths and Science Teachers initiative of the South Australian Government, which will target up to 155 teachers in a 3-point strategy to recruit, reskill and retrain teachers of mathematics and science. This program will aim to recruit 40 new recruits in maths and science, reskill 100 existing middle school teachers in maths and science, and retrain 15 existing secondary teachers in maths and science.

The 'recruit' initiative of this program is using a first time assessment centre approach to identify and recruit maths and science career changers with high potential to be quality teachers.

- *Low SES Recruitment and Selection Project*: this includes three key initiatives to support the attraction and retention of quality teachers and school leaders to Low SES school communities. These include School Centres for Excellence (pre-service focus), Customised Attraction and Retention (school leader focus) and Local Innovation (teacher and school leader focus). These are funded under the COAG National Partnerships of Improving Teacher Quality and Low SES Communities.

5. Job Design: Part-Time School Principal Trial

From 2006, trials of school principal job sharing experiences of 12 months duration have occurred and outcomes have been closely monitored by a Reference Group to identify what constitutes successful and effective models of school leadership, and to test shared leadership in a wide range of settings. There was a mix of gender pairings and diversity of sites in the trials. The main reasons for requesting a reduction in time were caring responsibilities for children and parents, and opportunities to develop their career off site. Reductions in time varied from 0.1 FTE to 0.5 FTE.

Current and aspirant school principals have also expressed interest in job sharing for the length of a full tenure i.e. 5-7 years, rather than make yearly arrangements.

The benefits of co-school leadership from the trials were identified as:

- allowing principals to achieve a better work life balance
- reducing feelings of loneliness and role conflict associated with the position
- modelling collaborative decision making and shared leadership for teachers and students
- substantive leader mentoring and the key role in the new leader's learning
- providing a viable succession planning strategy, especially for aspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island teachers
- providing job satisfaction and improving wellbeing
- good preparation for retirement.

Legal and industrial issues were identified during these job sharing arrangements which are being addressed. Draft guidelines are being developed for final consultation with stakeholders and human resources policy changes are being analysed to formalise such arrangements.

Future Areas of Workforce Planning Reform

Future areas of reform that are being considered include:

- further development of workforce planning models with analysis of subject qualifications, locations and distributional characteristics of the workforce.
- evaluation of recruitment and selection policies to determine the effectiveness of the open labour market in metropolitan schools and the impact on country and hard to staff schools across the South Australian public education system.
- evaluation of the effectiveness of specialist recruitment programs used to attract and retain staff in skill shortage areas, particularly the assessment centre approach being used in the Teach SA program to identify high potential to be a quality teacher and its broader applicability across the system.

Institutional Framework

Of significant influence in achieving improved productivity in the education sector are the frameworks that regulate the education workforce, principally the relevant statutes, industrial instruments and teacher registration.

The education workforce is currently regulated through a combination of Statutes *Public Sector Act 2009*, *Education Act, 1972* and the *Children's Services Act 1985*, industrial awards and policy.

South Australian Government Legislative Reform

The South Australian government sector is currently undertaking legislative reform of the *Education Act, 1972* and the *Children's Services Act 1985*. One objective is to modernise the employment framework and to provide greater flexibility in employing staff in schools, preschools and other education settings necessary to realise the South Australian Government's vision for education and early childhood services and to make DECS an employer of choice. In particular the proposed legislation looks to:

- integrate and streamline provisions for the employment of government education and early childhood services staff
- contain appropriate employment provisions and authorisations for regulations, policies and instructions and orders necessary for its implementation and operation
- include appropriate authorities to devolve relevant employment responsibilities to principals, directors and other education leaders
- contain modern and flexible workforce deployment provisions which also safeguard employment arrangements
- provide for the employment of staff to specific duties and classification level rather than a fixed position
- provide for flexibility in appointing to promotion positions
- enable the Director-General to set terms and conditions in leadership and non leadership employment contracts in order to attract, recruit and retain specific staff
- enable the recognition of service excellence
- improve probation and other provisions.

Awards and Enterprise Agreements

The industrial instruments which regulate the government education workforce in South Australia, in particular the awards and enterprise agreements are critical to achieving workforce flexibility required for a contemporary education department. Changes to education service delivery need a much greater focus on the development of new models of workforce regulation.

Primary schools are likely to remain a physical face to face delivery model because of the pastoral care role and socialisation skill development provided in the primary school environment. In addition, primary schools provide a sense of community engagement and social connections for both children and their parents/guardians.

However secondary schools may need to consider radically different models. Young people are more able to move in and out of school through the increasing availability of innovative vocational pathways. A majority of young people have the skills and infrastructure to access an ever expanding range of high quality digital educational content. In areas of Australia, young people can travel significant distances to physically attend and learn at their local secondary school during a traditional school day/term. A

number of Australian universities now offer alternative pathways and models for Year 11 and 12, similar to their undergraduate university delivery models.

Historically the level of award based regulation in the schooling sector has been an influencing factor on flexibility of the education labour market. A key challenge in all jurisdictions is striking the balance between regulation and appropriate employment conditions, with the necessary flexibility to respond to the rapidly changing 21st century educational context.

The following observations are noted in relation to recent industrial events:

1. Award 2010

The *South Australian Education Staff (Government Preschools and Schools) Arbitrated Enterprise Bargaining Award 2010* was achieved through an arbitration process, after unsuccessful negotiations with the AEU for a new enterprise agreement in 2008. This was a complex matter involving 40 days of hearing, 134 witness statements, cross examination of 30 witnesses, lengthy submissions and 2,400 pages of transcript. The resulting award decision was handed down in two stages and specifies salary increases, changes to classification structures, determination of workload protections, permanency conversion criteria and overtime provisions for support staff.

The new Award removed references to the *Staffing Allocation Document* which linked funding arrangements for schools to a specified staffing formula. This reference had been part of various industrial instruments since 2000. By removing this reference, a new Student Centred Funding Model was able to be introduced in 2011 which has ensured a simpler, fairer and more equitable funding system for all public schools where schools have more flexibility in their staffing arrangements and are better able to manage and control local budgeting. This has resulted in a smoother start to the school year with less disruption to students and parents, and greater certainty in class structures and the courses which can be offered.

The Industrial Relations Commission of South Australia's (IRCSA) decision and the current award are available at:

<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/hrstaff/pages/employmentconditions/educationstaffaward/>

2. Teachers and Leaders Work (Stage 2)

The IRCSA found, on the evidence before it, that teachers and leaders were working unreasonable hours. IRCSA directed DECS and the two unions; the AEU and the Public Service Association (PSA), to establish a joint working party to review the work of teachers and leaders during the life of this award.

In its decision, the IRCSA made the following points:

- "817 For too long the resourcing/staffing paradigm has driven the parties' positions, as reflected in the AEU's claims for workload protection. The Government's decision to now move away from this approach with its student-centred funding model has consequently left, if not a vacuum, then a significant hole in the means of regulating workload. The AEU's response is to seek to maintain the status quo by importing the staffing formula that underpin the allocation of resources, into the award as industrial entitlements. The problems of such an approach have been discussed earlier.*
- 818 More generally, the historical approach to workload has obscured meaningful areas of examination and investigation such as how much time teachers spend on "core" and "non-core" work and alternative means of providing support to teachers and alleviating workload.*

- 819 *Workload has been a constant issue for teachers and leaders for many years, not only in South Australia but interstate and overseas. It is instructive and opportune for the parties to examine alternative approaches to addressing workload. For example, a central theme of some of the measures undertaken in the British education system is relieving teachers of the significant amount of work spent on tasks not directly related to classroom teaching, including through the appointment of additional support staff and specialists.*⁴⁵⁵
- 820 *On the basis that “teachers should be teaching” and that those in leadership positions should be providing educational leadership and undertaking management tasks, the parties should establish a joint working party during the life of this award to:*
- *Analyse what teachers and leaders do in each educational setting and identify which of those tasks are properly within the responsibility and role of a teacher and the appropriate leadership position. Those tasks which are not within the respective roles should be identified and a determination made as to the designation of the appropriate staff for those tasks within the school or at a regional level.*
 - *Review all central and regional administrative policies and processes which are required to be implemented at a local school level with a view to simplifying, reducing, or better managing the administrative load on teachers and leaders.*
 - *Review the allocation of SSO support to schools with significant levels of individual student plans.*

A preliminary report is to be provided to the IRCSA by the end of the year. The outcomes will inform enterprise bargaining negotiations for the next enterprise agreement beginning in June 2012.

Future Areas of Institutional Reform

Areas of reform that will require changes to regulation currently under investigation are:

1. Greater capacity of schools to employ different discipline specialists
The “Scope and Persons Bound” clauses of the safety net award for school support staff has resulted in a very narrow range of employees, and subsequently services, in school sites. For example, schools are currently unable to employ social workers, psychologists or nurses as members of staff to provide direct services to students. Such employees must be employed centrally or through a regional office, and provide services to the school rather than be an integral part of that school’s staffing.
2. Integration of the national teacher standards into human resource systems
DECS strongly supports the work of Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to achieve a nationally consistent approach to teacher registration. This will ensure teachers are appropriately qualified, of suitable character, are competent upon entry to the profession, and maintain contemporary professional practice while members of the profession. There can be public confidence in the quality of teachers and in the mobility of quality teachers across Australia. Registration will be linked to the National Professional Standards for Teachers upon entry to the profession, in achieving full registration and in identifying appropriate professional learning to maintain registration. The national system for the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education in Australia will further a consistent and high standard of teacher education and graduate teachers across Australia.

3. Alternative pathways into teaching

In order to maximise recruitment opportunities to the teaching workforce, particularly in relation to targeted areas of need, new pathways into teaching are being considered as an alternative strategy to mainstream pre-service teacher programs. DECS has identified that new pathways have the potential to attract cohorts of people with considerable skills and experience who may be excluded via more traditional programs due to the significant financial implications of participation.

DECS has been investigating employment based models through the Australian Government's Teach For Australia and Teach Next programs whereby training is undertaken on the job in a paid capacity. In addition, the development of a specific course is being undertaken to support Aboriginal Community Education Officers into teaching and significant scholarships are available through the Teach SA program (referred to on page 6) to support to the completion of a mainstream post graduate education degree in maths, physics or chemistry.

National Policy Developments

The Productivity Commission's Issues Paper summarises the COAG education reform agenda and the establishment of the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to provide national leadership and lead key national reforms under the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership.

National and International Evidence

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians commits Australian Governments to supporting quality teaching as both national and international evidence (Hattie 2003; OECD 2005) has demonstrated that teacher quality is the single most important in-school factor impacting on improving learning outcomes for all Australian students. 'Excellent teachers have the capacity to transform the lives of students and to inspire and nurture their development as learners, individuals and citizens.' (Melbourne Declaration 2008:1)

An education system that strives to deliver equity and excellence must have a threefold purpose. It must operate in a manner that supports students to become active and responsible citizens who can readily participate in our democratic society. It must also support students to achieve individually and prepare them to be competent economic contributors (Reid 2010).

Australian governments (and other international education systems) have committed to working with all school sectors to *attract, develop, support and retain* a high-quality teaching workforce as a key area of reform. Jensen (2010) asserts that teachers have the greatest impact on student learning and that *their impact is more significant than any other education program or policy*.

Key Policy Responses by the Australian, State and Territory Governments

All governments have committed to national teacher quality reforms. Whilst some of the national reforms are a little behind schedule, the majority are complex and with multiple stakeholders. The AITSL is to be commended for their ongoing engagement with jurisdictions and stakeholders in their development and implementation.

1. National Professional Standards for Teachers

The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST) was the first key reform to be endorsed by the Australian Ministers of Education in February 2011. The NPST make explicit what teachers are expected to know, do and understand if they are to deliver contemporary quality teaching and, as a consequence, improve learning outcomes for students as they progress across four key career stages; Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead. Significant gains should be possible if

teachers take on responsibilities for their own learning and the learning of peers as part of NPST expectations.

One national framework helps to demystify the education jargon that previously dominated the various stages of career development, year level and discipline specialisations. It could be argued that teacher accreditation and registration authorities, employers and professional associations have promoted their own parochial interests to the detriment of the profession by investing in specialised, aspirational standards that are not easily expressed as performance expectations. A specialised and disjointed set of standards has not supported teachers to clearly identify how to focus their professional learning across teachers' career pathways, and has also inhibited school leaders' efforts in clarifying and making explicit performance expectations.

Further to the role that the National Professional Standards for Teachers will play in clarifying the performance expectations for teachers themselves, they also have the potential to enhance the reputation of the profession. Recognition of teaching as high status profession is a critical component in relation to engendering community support for the important role that education needs to play in a prosperous Australia.

2. NPST as an underpinning framework

The NPST will also be extensively used by universities, teacher accreditation and registration authorities, employers and professional associations, as the underpinning framework in other key reforms including National Accreditation of Pre-service Education Programs, Nationally Consistent Registration of Teachers, and National Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers.

A nationally consistent approach is being utilised for these reforms where a consistent set of national principles, standards, protocols and processes is applied by the appropriate bodies in each jurisdiction. This is likely to be a cost effective approach in the Australian context as it will enable:

- alignment with established systems and processes in jurisdictions and sectors
- recognition and ease of mobility of quality teachers across Australian education sectors and systems.

Monitoring and evaluation of national reforms will be important as they are progressively implemented.

Overall, the development of the NPST has brought together national expertise and provided a unique opportunity for cross collaboration between jurisdictions and education sectors. The potential to harness the learning from multiple systems to support improvement in quality teaching is significant and an opportunity that should not be missed. In addition, the development of shared frameworks has allowed the smaller jurisdictions to focus their resources on those areas that have been demonstrated to value add to student learning outcomes, i.e. teachers building their capacity through working together to moderate their practice as part of a learning community.

School Leadership

Recent developments in educational policy have focused on the critical relationship between the role of school leaders and improved student learning outcomes. Educational researchers (Robinson, Leithwood, Thomson, Fullan, Hargreaves, Reid) have argued that the role of the school principal is unique and requires a distinctive set of leadership skills. School principals, these researchers argue, should have a set of capabilities that include aspects of generic leadership/management skills (resource/personnel/financial/change management) however the dominant leadership skills

required for successful/effective school leadership are those capabilities that support school leaders to integrate instructional/educational knowledge with generic management capabilities.

Additionally, there is a perception that the demands on the role of the school principal have significantly increased in recent years. Further to the particularly unique set of leadership skills that researchers argue are prerequisites for effective school leadership, there are also issues relating to the attraction and retention of school leaders and the common contributors to the supply problem which have been identified as:

- unrealistic expectations and increasing responsibilities
- unrelenting change
- remuneration
- effects on family and lifestyle caused by the time dedicated to work (Thomson 2009).

There is a strong demand for new school leaders and there is also a need to improve the profile of the job, to make it more attractive to emerging leaders. Fullan has argued that there has been a lack of attention in recent years to the critical aspects of leadership development. This lack of attention extends to issues related to attraction, retention and development of school leaders.

The international calls (Pont, Nusche, Moorman 2008) for renewed investment and interest in the importance of quality leadership within schools asks systems to rethink 'what type of leadership' is best suited to the new demands placed on schools i.e. what leadership qualities are required to successfully deliver on current educational priorities.

Defining what counts as educational leadership is the key to how systems encapsulate their understanding of the 'purpose(s)' of education. The knowledge, skills, understanding and experience that are embedded in concepts like political acumen, worldliness and/or practical wisdom are often neglected within educational leadership frameworks. If education is understood as having a 'moral/democratic/ethical purpose' or social justice purpose, then it is critical that these concepts are at the core of the many definitions that describe the competencies or capabilities that are essential for principals as educational leaders.

The research indicates that leadership development initiatives need to:

- identify short and long range responses
- speak to a disinclined employment pool
- respond to changing understanding of leadership identity
- maximise the available resources through the development and delivery of a coordinated approach.

DECS Leadership Overview

The trend in South Australia indicates a small reduction in the number of applicants per vacancy applying for school leadership positions. This is in line with national research data that indicates that only 10% of teachers intend to apply for a deputy principal or principal position within the next three years, with males much more likely to apply than females. The most important factor for such teachers was confidence in their ability to do the job, with less emphasis on salary and financial benefits (Owen S et al, 2008). Notwithstanding this research, and as a result of industrial settlements since 2000, the salary relativity between a teacher on the highest step and a middle ranked teacher has reduced by approximately 5% in South Australia. Pay relativity is cited by staff and Principal Associations as a disincentive to take up the highly demanding role of school principal.

Further to this, recent South Australian aspiring principal programs have been over subscribed and it would appear that confidence about ability to do the job may have as much to do with clarity about what is expected in relation to the role, as it is to do with individuals assessment of their own capabilities. The recently endorsed National Professional Standard for Principals (July 2011 Ministerial Council) offers a clear statement about the leadership requirement and professional practices that effective principals require and may ameliorate teachers lack of confidence as an inhibitor.

Key Policy Responses by the South Australian Government

1. Opening up of leadership positions

The department's Merit policy was updated in 2010 and implemented in 2011 following significant consultation with stakeholders. A key change was the move to open advertisement of school leadership vacancies to any suitability qualified and registered person from other state education sectors as well as national and international systems.

2. Market incentives

The department uses a range of incentives to attract and retain high quality leaders to country and low SES schools (refer to page 5).

3. Award implementation

In its Stage 1 Decision, the IRCSA determined that a new principal classification level (PCO9) would be created above the current PCO1-PCO8 structure. The IRCSA ordered DECS and the AEU to undertake a joint review of the School Size and Complexity Score. Following the review by DECS/AEU, the Arbitrated Enterprise Bargaining Award 2010 handed down by the IRCSA on 2 September 2010 incorporated a revised method of determining Principal classification levels known as the School Size and Complexity Rating (SSACR). Approximately 130 school principal classifications were increased.

4. Leadership development

The average age of school principals in South Australian public schools is 53 and up to 50% are expected to retire in the next 5 years. With the ageing of the school leadership cohort, the department has had a recent and targeted focus on identifying and developing teachers who aspire to school leadership positions. A combination of central and regionally funded aspiring leadership programs have been implemented. The career paths of participants in the aspiring leaders programs are being tracked for five years post program completion. Funded opportunities have also been provided to aspiring school leaders to work shadow experienced leaders in hard to staff schools as at this point in time, leadership vacancies tend to arise more frequently in hard to staff schools.

The role of first time school principal is complex and challenging, and much learning still occurs 'on the job'. Online and telephone coaching has been made available to all newly appointed principals to support and sustain them in their new roles.

The department is currently running a range of forums and symposiums to introduce and explore the National Professional Standard for Principals (NPSP) as a framework for professional learning and a guide for individuals to manage themselves as well as others as a basis for attracting, preparing, developing and supporting principals to lead learning. The NPSP will underpin a range of future leadership initiatives and strategies.

5. Part- time school leadership

Refer to Job Design: Part-Time School Principal Trial on page 6.

Future Areas of Leadership Reform

Areas of reform that are under consideration include:

- a review of the department's classification structure and remuneration for school leadership positions so that it more accurately reflects the work value and market conditions of each particular school.
- aligning HR policies and systems with the move to the national initiative to locally empowered schools.
- identifying initiatives and strategies to enhance the attractiveness of school leadership roles to increase the quantity and quality of applicants.
- adopting a more flexible and tailored approach to sustaining ongoing leadership development for aspiring, newly appointed and experienced school principals.

Performance Pay and Training and Professional Development

Linking performance with the national professional standards, salary increments and training and professional development is a strong policy lever available to assure quality individual teaching practice.

The Australian Government has recently announced¹ intentions to assess teachers' performance against evidence collected from:

- lesson observations
- student performance data (including NAPLAN and school based-information that can show the value added by particular teachers)
- parental feedback
- teacher qualifications and professional development undertaken.

The recognition for achievement has been discussed as a bonus payment for the top 10% of teachers. While recognition and monetary reward for highly quality teaching is desirable, a one off payment would be counter productive to the long term aims of building capacity of the teaching workforce across the career pathways of all teachers.

In particular measuring individual teacher's performance against NAPLAN would only be possible for those teachers who work with students in Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 and consequently not all teachers would be eligible. Further to this the controversial nature of these 'moment-in-time' assessments of students as valid indicators of teacher effectiveness have been shown to be highly unreliable (Cobbold, 2010). In contrast to simplistic one off measurements of student achievement, a more robust form of performance appraisal should underpin performance pay for teachers.

The National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST), articulate what teachers are expected to know, do and understand across the domains of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement, and are now an agreed common Australian framework for determining teacher quality. The NPST provide a framework that has the potential to more accurately evaluate the value that individual teachers have added to students' learning over time.

Additionally, the NPST for teachers provides a framework for teachers to identify areas for further development and consequently provide a much needed framework to guide and target their ongoing professional development needs.

¹ 1 As detailed in the 9 August 2010 and 2 May and 2011 Commonwealth Government media releases

Key Policy Responses by the South Australian Government

1. Quality teacher career and pay structure

High quality classroom based teaching in DECS has been recognised and rewarded through the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) 1 and 2 classifications since 1995. Specific criteria were established for each classification and assessment panels verified the evidence provided against the criteria. After 5 years, re-assessment is required to maintain the classification. From October 2010, the AST1 classification was replaced by Step 9. The AST2 classification has continued and is under review.

Step 9 (Stage 1 IRSCA Decision) is a new competency classification level for classroom based teachers. Agreed guidelines were negotiated between DECS and the AEU and were ratified by the IRCSA in May 2010 and form part of the Award. The Guidelines have left room for the criteria to be refined in the future. Subject to the agreement of DECS and the AEU, these criteria may be further refined to reflect the NPST.

Step 9 is currently available to permanent and contract step 8 teachers who have completed 207 duty days of service and a Professional Development Plan that is agreed with their school leader and approved by DECS State Office. Monitoring the performance of Step 9 teachers against the outcomes outlined in the Performance Development Plan will be via an annual review.

With the review of the AST2 classification, monitoring of the Step 9 implementation, the implementation of the NPST, and the soon to be released proposal for National Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers, the department will be well positioned to develop a more cogent quality teacher career and pay structure proposal underpinned by the NPST.

2. Professional development review

In April 2011, the South Australian Government announced a comprehensive review of the way professional development is provided to teachers in DECS. The aim is to ensure that the professional development system provides effective and efficient quality professional development for teachers, addresses the learning needs of teachers and their schools, and leads to better results for students.

3. Recognition and professional development

The South Australian Public Teaching Awards, a suite of new prestigious awards for professionals and teams working in South Australian public schools and preschools was launched on 11 March 2011.

Professional development grants of up to \$20,000 will be distributed to award winners once a professional development plan has been determined and agreed with their line manager. This may include international travel or new resources to support professional learning in a specific area.

The 2011 DECS state winners will be the nominees for the 2012 award categories under the new Australian Awards for Outstanding Teaching and Leadership being conducted by AITSL. The National Professional Standards for Teachers and the National Professional Standard for Principals are being used as the basis for the Australian awards.

4. Performance and development

Performance and development policies are key levers for engaging all employees in planning, learning and accountability activities throughout their employment.

The department's current Performance Management policy and the Managing Significant Underperformance procedures do not meet the current needs of schools, preschools or corporate DECS staff. Particular criticism has been directed at the Managing Significant Underperformance procedures. Feedback from schools and

preschools and key stakeholders indicated that the processes took too long and required too much documentation. There was also a perception that the removal of significantly underperforming teachers from the system was not achieved.

A new Performance and Development Policy, a Performance and Development Guideline, and a Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Guideline have been drafted following consultation with all DECS employees. Final consultation is now occurring with the AEU. The proposed Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Guideline shifts from a prescriptive step by step procedure to a high level, principle based guideline, focusing strongly on legal concepts of Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness.

Future Areas of Training and Development Reform

Areas of reform include:

- implementing the recommendations of the Professional Development Review.
- integrating the national professional standards for teachers and principals into development and career strategies and initiatives.
- assessing the proposal for National Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers and aligning it with current or new departmental approaches to rewarding teacher quality.

Concluding Comments

The South Australian Government is committed to improving public education services and outcomes for every child and young person, and has recognised that the quality of the schools workforce is essential to the achievements of this objective.

The South Australian Government will continue to focus on the key areas of school workforce reform in relation to:

- **Workforce planning** – ongoing development of workforce planning models and data to ensure appropriate strategies and policies are in place to meet workforce requirements now and in the future
- **Attraction** – identifying ways to attract high quality candidates to the teaching profession through traditional university pathways and through alternative career pathways
- **Deployment** – evaluating the open market approach to the recruitment and selection of teachers and leaders, and identifying ways to ensure the deployment of quality teachers and leaders to the schools of greatest need through appropriate incentive structures
- **Development** – developing school leaders with the capabilities to lead education improvement, and providing efficient and effective professional development for teachers to apply contemporary approaches to teaching and learning
- **National Workforce Standards** – integrating the national professional standards for teachers and school principals within human resources policies and programs to support both state and national workforce planning, workforce mobility and workforce development.

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APPENDIX 1 - DECS WORKFORCE - EDUCATION ACT WORKFORCE

Employment Statistics

The following table shows the classification, appointment type and gender of employees employed under the Education Act, as at the last pay day in June 2010. In reading this table it should be noted that the terms ongoing, contract and casual relate to the appointment that the employee is holding a particular date in time and is not a reflection of whether an employee is permanent or temporary. Ongoing = appointment does not have an end date; contract short term = appointment is for a period up to and including one year; contract long term = appointment is for a period that extends beyond one year; casual = appointment includes claim paid and other appointments which are not ongoing, contract short term or contract long term.

EDUCATION ACT EMPLOYEES AS AT THE LAST PAY DAY IN JUNE 2010

Profile includes employees who were actively employed or on paid leave

source: DPC Workforce Information Collection June 2010

CLASSIFICATION	APPOINTMENT TYPE														
	Ongoing			Contract longer term			Contract shorter term			Casual			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Principals															
PCO1	2	2	4	29	42	71	3	10	13	0	0	0	34	54	88
PCO2	2	2	4	31	33	64	1	4	5	0	0	0	34	39	73
PCO3	0	1	1	64	87	151	10	14	24	0	0	0	74	102	176
PCO4	2	0	2	34	56	90	7	11	18	0	0	0	43	67	110
PCO5	0	0	0	40	48	88	6	8	14	0	0	0	46	56	102
PCO6	0	0	0	18	11	29	4	1	5	0	0	0	22	12	34
PCO7	0	0	0	11	16	27	1	1	2	0	0	0	12	17	29
PCO8	0	0	0	13	9	22	1	3	4	0	0	0	14	12	26
PCO9	0	0	0	2	5	7	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	6	8
Total Principals	6	5	11	242	307	549	33	53	86	0	0	0	281	365	646
Deputy Principals															
PCO1	2	5	7	39	65	104	12	23	35	0	0	0	53	93	146
PCO2	1	0	1	22	45	67	6	10	16	0	0	0	29	55	84
PCO3	1	1	2	26	18	44	2	9	11	0	0	0	29	28	57
PCO4	0	0	0	12	17	29	3	4	7	0	0	0	15	21	36
Total Deputy Principals	4	6	10	99	145	244	23	46	69	0	0	0	126	197	323
Assistant Principals															
Assistant Principal - Level 1	0	0	0	29	93	122	5	23	28	0	0	0	34	116	150
Assistant Principal - Level 2	0	0	0	99	110	209	21	31	52	0	0	0	120	141	261
Total Assistant Principals	0	0	0	128	203	331	26	54	80	0	0	0	154	257	411
Coordinators															
Coordinator - Level 1 (includes ke	125	155	280	45	82	127	16	49	65	0	0	0	186	286	472
Coordinator - Level 2	1	1	2	64	257	321	11	82	93	0	0	0	76	340	416
Coordinator - Level 3 (includes se	54	42	96	422	525	947	88	138	226	0	0	0	564	705	1269
Total Coordinators	180	198	378	531	864	1395	115	269	384	0	0	0	826	1331	2157
Teachers															
Advanced Skills Teacher Level 1	173	520	693	10	55	65	3	11	14	0	0	0	186	586	772
Advanced Skills Teacher Level 2	26	70	96	2	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	75	103
Itinerant Teacher	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
Permanent Relieving Teacher	23	20	43	16	8	24	7	2	9	0	0	0	46	30	76
Teacher	1532	3960	5492	530	1665	2195	379	1093	1472	0	0	0	2441	6718	9159
Temporary Relieving Teacher	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	490	1326	1816	490	1326	1816
Total Teachers	1754	4571	6325	559	1735	2294	389	1106	1495	490	1326	1816	3192	8738	11930
Seconded Teachers															
Seconded Teacher Level 1	0	0	0	1	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	9
Seconded Teacher Level 2	0	0	0	25	67	92	3	18	21	0	0	0	28	85	113
Seconded Teacher Level 3	0	0	0	33	60	93	8	24	32	0	0	0	41	84	125
Total Seconded Teachers	0	0	0	59	135	194	11	42	53	0	0	0	70	177	247
School Services Officers															
SSO1	20	769	789	9	63	72	237	2199	2436	0	4	4	266	3035	3301
SSO2	73	983	1056	23	53	76	167	390	557	1	3	4	264	1429	1693
SSO3	50	227	277	7	21	28	19	64	83	0	0	0	76	312	388
SSO4	12	39	51	2	3	5	3	9	12	0	0	0	17	51	68
SSO5	8	19	27	1	3	4	0	5	5	0	0	0	9	27	36
SSO - trainee	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	13	25	0	0	0	12	13	25
Total School Services Officers	163	2037	2200	42	143	185	438	2680	3118	1	7	8	644	4867	5511
Aboriginal Education Workers															
AEW1	5	32	37	2	13	15	5	23	28	8	40	48	20	108	128
AEW2	10	26	36	1	6	7	0	7	7	0	0	0	11	39	50
AEW3	7	15	22	3	6	9	2	9	11	1	4	5	13	34	47
AEW4	0	0	0	5	8	13	0	7	7	1	2	3	6	17	23
AEW5	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	11	11
Total Aboriginal Education Wo	22	73	95	11	41	52	7	49	56	10	46	56	50	209	259
Other															
Education Act negotiated conditions (101B positions)	5	2	7	66	127	193	13	25	38	0	0	0	84	154	238
Hourly Paid Instructors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	120	278	398	120	278	398
Total Other Employees	5	2	7	66	127	193	13	25	38	120	278	398	204	432	636
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	2134	6892	9026	1737	3700	5437	1055	4324	5379	621	1657	2278	5547	16573	22120

APPENDIX 2 – DECS WORKFORCE PROFILE: SCHOOL TEACHER NUMBERS

The total number of school teachers employed in DECS as at August 2010 was 12,797:

<i>Level</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Females (per cent)</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Males (per cent)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Primary	5,988	79%	1,588	21%	7,576
Secondary	2,945	56%	2,276	44%	5,221
Total	8,933	70%	3,864	30%	12,797

Source: ABS Schools Australia 2010, catalogue 4221.0

Teaching staff are those who spend the majority of their time in contact with children/students and have teaching duties (excludes temporary relief teachers and student counsellors).