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National Professional Standards for Teachers

Chair of the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), Mr Anthony Mackay, welcomed the release by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs' (MCEECDYA) of the National Professional Standards for Teachers.

"Teaching is an exciting, dynamic and demanding profession."

"Research suggests that quality teachers are the single most important influence within school on the outcomes achieved by students, outside of family and background characteristics."

"Teachers have a vital role in shaping the future for all young Australians. They impart knowledge and skills; they act as leaders and models. They enjoy high levels of trust from parents and the community."

"We want the best teachers for all children."

"In return, teachers want clarity around our expectations of them, their professional knowledge and practice in the classroom and how we expect teachers to engage with their students and their families."

The National Professional Standards for Teachers, which were validated throughout 2010 by almost 6,000 teachers, school leaders and parents, make explicit what teachers should know and be able to do across 4 career stages: graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead.

"The Standards provide an ongoing basis for teacher reflection and development and they provide a guide to professional learning. Most importantly, for the first time in Australia we have nationally consistent benchmarks that will be the basis for the accreditation of initial teacher education, and registration and certification of teachers," Mr Mackay said.

"The Standards at Graduate and Proficient levels establish common criteria right across the country for people entering the profession, provide a uniform foundation on which careers are built and provide the basis on which teachers are registered to teach in every state and territory."

"The Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages will provide the capacity to recognise those teachers who have demonstrated exemplary practice, shown leadership capacity and a readiness to accept responsibility."

Mr Mackay acknowledged that, "there is still much work to do with jurisdictions, systems and sectors around the phasing in and application of the Standards. Throughout 2011 the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) will lead these discussions and work with teachers and school leaders, systems and sectors to develop support materials that will further elaborate on and exemplify the Standards."

"The AITSL Board, with representation from every jurisdiction, government, Catholic and independent schools, teachers, principals, teacher educators and teacher unions, is committed to supporting quality teaching because we know good teachers make a difference to our children and the country's future."

"The National Professional Standards for Teachers are the foundation in this endeavour."

More information about the National Professional Standards for Teachers can be found at www.aitsl.edu.au or by emailing teacherstandards@aitsl.edu.au

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