

SUBMISSION TO THE NATIONAL REVIEW OF TEACHER REGISTRATION

TO THE PANEL

With regard to the implementation of frameworks and processes for teacher registration, accreditation and maintenance, it seems to me that those responsible for the Education of our children have become very one-eyed and focus on only one of the many components that comprise to produce an educated society, that is teachers.

To that end, we are constantly having to produce paperwork and "evidence" of our professionalism to prove that we are doing what many of us have chosen, as a career and not just a job, but as a vocation. It is our love of children that has caused us to enter the profession and the Department's love of paperwork that is causing many teachers to leave or become increasingly disengaged from the profession.

Every teacher I know works more than the 7.5 hours per day. Aside from a half hour recess or lunch duty every day which impacts heavily on our work day, there is the endless paperwork, in-servicing (very often now on-line and done in our own time), writing/speaking with parents and/or other stakeholders, planning, Reporting and marking assessment tasks, thinking, strategising, reflecting, collegial discussions, behavioural charts/programming, IEP's, PLP's, Risk Assessments, etc. etc. etc. This list is endless. This does not include the copious hours spent trying to record hours for accreditation and maintenance on a system that has changed, is not ready for us to use, records on to MyPI and NESAs but these programs do not always talk to each other and so the simple act of recording is now having to be tracked and monitored. The Standards are not now listed (they used to be) and it is necessary to sit with either a hard copy or electronic copy open so that the Standards can be identified, chosen or not chosen. This wastes even more of the time we do not have. The time we used to have to willingly sit down and "play", to research a matter, willingly investigate different teacher techniques, look at resources is exhausted, as are we by the time we have finished jumping through hoops that seem to suggest that we are not skilled teachers and need to constantly "prove" ourselves and improve our teaching because student results/outcomes are not being addressed because we are not doing our job.

This brings me to my next point - teachers are NOT the only ones responsible for a child's education. What about the parents or caregivers? How do they contribute to their own children's education and well-being? They have them for the other two-thirds of the day. We are constantly being compared to other nations and our results are declining. If compared to many of the Asian nations, has the fact that children in these countries often receive many hours of homework each week, also engage in after hours tutoring either subject orientated or extra curricula such as piano, violin, English lessons, ballet, etc. Many parents in our society balk at any homework being given to our children. In many of these countries, schooling is not only compulsory but is also strictly enforced. How many children do we have whose attendance is poor and our efforts to improve attendance fails to produce any meaningful change?

Pressuring teachers and making teachers feel responsible and inadequate for declining student performance is totally inappropriate and no doubt leads to decreased morale, feelings of being unable to cope and being overwhelmed with the complexities of our vocation. This is all before the limited funding for special needs children (particularly those who manifest significant behavioural difficulties and challenges) is considered. This is another massive discussion. Perhaps some of the monies used to monitor teachers and develop computer programs and in-servicing programs could be redirected to the provision of teacher aides to help those children who require some sort of additional help and support.

It needs to be recognised that teachers are only just one stakeholder in the lives of our children. Every teacher I know is working beyond capacity. Somewhere in amongst all the paperwork, we have children we want to care for and help achieve their best learning outcomes. This is often amidst enormous challenges that are very often beyond the control of teachers.