

NSW Business Chamber submission

Great Teaching, Inspired Learning Discussion Paper

November 2012



NSW Business Chamber

NSW Business Chamber is one of Australia's largest business support groups, helping around 30,000 businesses each year. Founded in 1885, the NSW Business Chamber works with thousands of businesses, from sole traders to large corporates. The Chamber is a leading business solution provider and lobbying group with strengths in workplace management, occupational health and safety, industrial relations, human resources, international trade, and improving business performance. NSW Business Chamber has over 11,000 members in NSW across all major industry sectors.

Independent and non-government, NSW Business Chamber represents the needs of business at a local, state and federal level, lobbying governments and authorities to create a better environment in which to do business.

NSW Business Chamber is consistently engaged in policy interaction with government regarding employment, education and training issues, providing high level input and recommendations to support employers' engagement in a range of workforce skill development programs.

NSW Business Chamber also owns and operates Australian Business Apprenticeship Centre (ABAC). ABAC is NSW's most experienced provider of Australian Apprenticeship services. ABAC has specialist knowledge, expertise and over ten years' experience in the signup processes and ongoing management of apprenticeships and traineeships. ABLAC works under a contract funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

In addition, NSW Business Chamber's Business Solutions Group provides a range of services to businesses in NSW. The Business Solutions Group provides the following services:

- **Extrastaff Apprenticeships** is our Group Training Company, responsible for on-hiring of apprentices and trainees.
- **Talent Options** is a specialist business support and professional recruitment division, providing temporary and permanent staffing solutions for our clients.
- **One People HR** provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing solutions to our clients.
- **Extrastaff** provides permanent, temporary and contract recruitment in the Industrial and Healthcare sectors.

NSW Business Chamber's views in relation to employment, education and training reflect both our commitment to represent members' concerns and develop policy positions to promote positive and pragmatic change across these policy areas. Our views also reflect ABAC's broad experience as a service provider to the State and Commonwealth, Extrastaff Apprenticeships' expertise, and the expertise present throughout our Business Solutions Group.

NSW Business Chamber's employment, education and training policy development is supported by our Workforce Skills Policy Committee, which includes employer representatives from regional and metropolitan areas. This submission has been approved by the NSW Business Chamber Workforce Skills Committee.

Introduction

In recent years, NSW Business Chamber has sought to drive significant public policy debates in NSW. Our goal has been to help create an economic environment that is supportive of productivity, growth, investment and jobs.

NSW industry needs a skilled, flexible and motivated workforce that contributes to productivity gains and drives economic development. Ensuring that the available workforce has the skills and knowledge required to meet the needs of industry and employers is a significant issue for NSW.

NSW Business Chamber believes that addressing high levels of youth unemployment through more effective school to work transitional arrangements, increasing employment participation and driving productivity growth need to be a central focus of the NSW Government and the business community.

If the training standard is not maintained or increased, there is a danger that NSW could find itself with further skills shortage constraints. This could prolong the economic recovery rather than provide a way for the NSW business community to expand activities to return to economic prosperity.

Employers expect better outcomes and continually look for products tailored to their needs. Knowledge-based industries continue to grow which is placing greater emphasis on the importance of higher education and the acquisition of higher level skills.

Just like other service industries predominantly funded by government, there is ongoing pressure to improve cost effectiveness, efficiency and desired performance levels in the education sector. Increasingly, students and employers are requiring a mix of vocational and academic skills development options.

NSW Business Chamber welcomes the NSW Government's *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning Discussion Paper* and recognises that teaching is the single largest in-school determinant of success at school. NSW Business Chamber supports a strong commitment to teacher quality, including developing strong processes for selecting and training teachers, paying good starting compensation, and carefully managing the status of the teaching profession. NSW Business Chamber recognises research shows reducing class sizes and increasing the overall level of investment in the education system does not result in improved outcomes.

The 2011 International Summit on the Teaching Profession focused on improving teacher quality around the world. Key actions identified for participating countries included:

- Raising the quality and rigor of teacher-training programs, linked to professional standards;
- Attracting high quality and motivated teachers, especially from underrepresented groups or geographic regions;
- Creating a more robust evidence base for teaching and learning, including preparing teachers to participate in research on best practices and student outcomes;

- Designing a comprehensive but cost-effective professional-development system, with input from teachers;
- Redesigning training for school leaders and school boards to support teaching and learning;
- Creating a teacher-appraisal system to promote professional improvement and student learning; and
- Making policy development in partnership between government and teachers' organisations, and including a broad range of stakeholders in the process of improving the system.¹

Spending, reforms and outcomes

Using international comparisons, research by McKinsey & Company has identified what high-performing and rapidly improving school systems have in common. One of the central findings is that despite substantial increases in spending and many well-intentioned reform efforts, performance in a large number of school systems has barely improved in decades. There has also been significant effort to reduce class sizes in an attempt to lift student performance. The evidence, however, suggests that, except at the very early grades, class size reduction does not have much impact on student outcomes. Figure 1 shows the relationship between spending and outcomes in OECD countries. Figure 2 shows changes in spending, student-to-teacher ratio and literacy levels from 1970 to 2005.

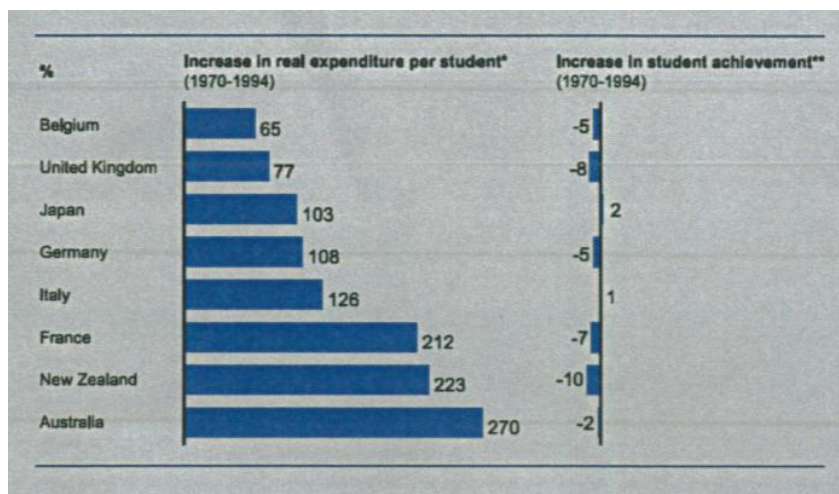


Figure 1: Spending and outcomes in the OECD

Source: McKinsey & Company (2007) How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top

¹ Improving teacher quality around the world: The 2011 international summit on the teaching profession, Asia Society

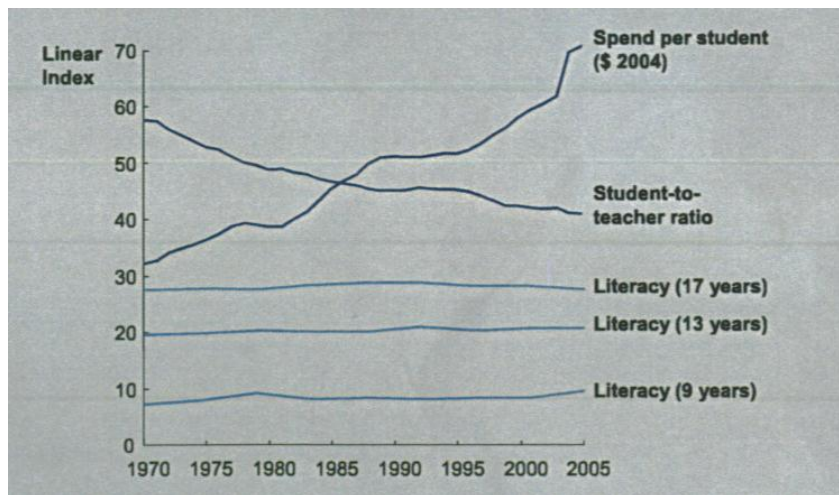


Figure 2: Teachers, spending and performance

Source: McKinsey & Company (2007) How the world’s best-performing school systems come out on top.

Inspired learning

NSW Business Chamber recognises that learning in the 21st century presents new challenges and opportunities. The education system will need to respond to demand in a rapidly changing economic environment and deliver innovative and flexible teaching practices to meet the skill needs of the future.

The Productivity Commission has identified many issues and challenges that bear on the capacity of the school workforce to contribute to high quality learning outcomes. These include:

- an expected strong growth in student numbers
- a more complex and demanding teaching environment increased competition for teaching resources
- an expected upsurge in age-related retirements
- evidence that suggests a lowering of the average literacy and numeracy skills of those entering teacher training courses
- ongoing imbalances in workforce demand and supply
- limited workforce mobility, especially between urban and rural/remote areas
- the educational disadvantage experienced by some students.²

Proceedings of the 2012 International Summit on the Teaching Profession show contemporary research on learning identifies that effective 21st century learning environments must:

- make learning central and focus on student engagement
- ensure a balance between individually focused learning and collaborative, social learning
- be relevant and highly attuned to students’ motivations

² Australian Government Productivity Commission (2012) *Schools Workforce*, Productivity Commission Research Report, April 2012

- be acutely sensitive to individual differences and provide formative feedback
- promote connections across activities and subjects both in and out of school
- challenge students without overloading them.³

While there may be some debate about the knowledge and skills that young people will require to thrive in the 21st century, it is clear that adequate literacy, numeracy, generic skills and employability skills will be critical regardless of the future structure of the labour market. Innovative teaching practices and effective curriculum development will be needed to address low levels of language, literacy and numeracy in the Australian population.

In its development of future scenarios for the Australian economy, the Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency has found that a number of skills issues are likely to be cross-cutting regardless of which future scenarios eventuate. Generic skills such as problem-solving for complex issues, innovation, teamwork and communication will be required across scenarios.⁴

The Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency has also identified scope for improving leadership and management skills to bolster Australia's innovative capacity.⁵ Leadership and management skills can be effectively taught at secondary school level and NSW Business Chamber believes that teachers should be equipped with the relevant tools and skills to teach leadership at secondary school.

"We have to develop teachers in the future that can engage students in their studies in a more diverse way that will better prepare them for not only for future study but also a future in the workforce. These are the teachers of the future that will assist Australian businesses compete successfully with the rest of the world, as one of businesses biggest hurdles at the moment is the lack of quality middle-managers, which has the potential to stall our business growth in the future. It all begins with quality education." – NSW Business Chamber Workforce Skills Committee member

Finally, young people need to be provided with a broad range of options and choices at school (including academic and vocational options). Young people benefit from exposure to teachers who have a deep understanding of subject matter and understanding of effective pedagogies for the transfer of knowledge and skills.

Delivering schooling more effectively

Research shows that structural and institutional barriers to more effective delivery include:

- A shortage of appropriately trained teachers, and costs associated with training teachers;
- Inadequate vocational education facilities within schools and the cost of purchasing access to alternative facilities;

³ Teaching and leadership for the twenty-first century: The 2012 international summit on the teaching profession. Asia Society

⁴ Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (2012) *Australia's skills and workforce development needs discussion paper*, July 2012

⁵ Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (2012) *Australia's skills and workforce development needs discussion paper*, July 2012

- Lack of administrative flexibility;
- Small school size reducing the range of students' choices, with only a limited range of vocational subjects able to be offered;
- Timetable inflexibility; and
- Lack of teacher time to monitor and support work placements.⁶

Over the past 20 years the demand for teenagers in the full time labour market has fallen substantially. The post-compulsory education and training system has failed to respond to this change, so there has been no significant increase in high school completion rates since 1992.⁷ In addition, NSW is lagging on key upper secondary level education and training indicators, including Year 12 retention, total education participation, VET participation and school-based apprentices and trainees.⁸ This has a material impact on tertiary level VET participation and engagement with the training system.

During the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), the proportion of young people neither in education, employment nor training (NEET) in Australia rose sharply. The impact of the GFC in increasing the size of the 15-19 year-old NEET group was well above the OECD average and among the largest in the OECD, despite the fact that the impact of the GFC itself upon the overall labour market was relatively mild. Most of the other countries that recorded large and negative increases in the size of the 15-19 year-old NEET group were countries where the overall impact of the GFC upon the labour market was severe. In other words the GFC had a disproportionately large and negative impact upon Australian 15-19 year-olds compared to other OECD countries. The impact of the GFC upon 20-24 year-olds was well below the OECD average, and towards the lower end of the OECD range.⁹

This indicates that the transition problem is much greater for 15-19 year-old Australians than it is for 20-24 year-olds, and that the focus of transition policies needs to be larger and more sustained for the younger age group. Australian data on changes in educational participation over the period suggest that the basic cause of the problem is the relatively weak responsiveness and inelasticity of Australia's school system during the GFC. In turn this is largely because our secondary school participation and completion rates are at best average when compared to the OECD as a whole, and have failed to improve over an extended period, despite improvements elsewhere in the OECD.

Youth disengagement from education, training and employment has significant economic and social costs, including a reduced capacity to meet the labour and skill needs of industry as well as marginal economic participation for individuals. Youth unemployment remains too high and more targeted interventions are required. To succeed, reform efforts cannot tackle just one piece of the puzzle but must instead be part of a comprehensive approach. Improvements to teacher quality need to be linked to curriculum reform and school management reform.

In order to improve labour market outcomes and educational participation and attainment for young people, NSW Business Chamber believes that senior secondary schooling provision can be improved to better meet the needs of young people who enter the labour market or vocational

⁶ NSW Business Chamber (2010). *Could do Better: a blueprint for a review of post-year 10 education and training in NSW*

⁷ *Ibid*

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ Sweet, R. (2011). *The impact of the GFC on the Australian youth labour market: OECD comparisons*

education and training after they leave school. Improvements to teacher quality arrangements should be coupled with a broad ranging review of post-Year 10 education and training in NSW. Such a review should include consideration of the following:

- Strategies to expand the number and capacity of senior colleges
- Establishing a better balance between general education and VET
- Create clearer pathways from upper secondary-level vocational education to the VET sector's diploma and degree level courses
- Minimum requirements for the achievement of minimum standards in literacy and numeracy
- Balance between compulsory and optional studies
- Requirements for career planning and personal development
- Development of an alternative certificate for those students that do not intend to enter university
- Adequacy of existing career information, advice and guidance for students
- Adequacy of funding arrangements across schools, TAFE and other VET providers and removal of disincentives for schools to provide VET options
- Implications for post-Year 10 education and training of future national school funding arrangements and of arrangements that may be put in place to replace the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions after 2013

The NSW Auditor General has raised concerns about the capacity of existing school arrangement to support the increase of the school leaving age.¹⁰ The Auditor General pointed out that there is evidence that more students who remain at school until 17 years of age are disengaged.¹¹ NSW Business Chamber identified this risk in 2010 and argued that broader reform of the system was required to implement changes to support student engagement. Improving teacher quality is critically important but alone will not be sufficient to address these concerns. This highlights the need for a broader review of senior secondary school arrangements.

NSW Business Chamber's full proposal for a review of post-Year 10 education and training can be found here:

<http://www.nswbusinesschamber.com.au/NSWBC/media/Misc/Lobbying/10BigIdeas/Reforming-the-HSC-Jun-2011.pdf>

Initial teacher education

Research shows that simple indicators, such as years of experience or level of qualifications are not adequate measures of teacher competence or quality. The introduction of blunt policy responses such as minimum ATAR requirements for entry to initial teacher education programs may not result in improvements to teacher quality or enhanced performance outcomes. Aside from ATAR scores in excess of 90, ATAR is not generally an accurate prediction of success at university. Raising entry level requirements may act to reduce the number of suitable candidates enrolling in teacher

¹⁰ On 1 January 2010, the minimum school leaving age in NSW was raised from 15 to 17 years of age.

¹¹ NSW Auditor General's Report to Parliament, November 2012

training and could undermine attempts to encourage more diversity in the teaching workforce. The Australian Catholic University vice chancellor, Professor Greg Craven, has argued that what really matters is the quality of a student once they have completed their university degree, not when they enter it. The NSW Government will need to consider a broader range of measures to attract the most suitable candidates for teacher education.

“Most students excel under the teachers at our local schools who have the ability to engage the students in their lessons, because they look forward to going to those lessons. We need teachers who are better able to present and work with students rather than be ‘Oxford Scholars’ and only cater to the minority of students rather than the majority” - NSW Business Chamber Workforce Skills Committee member.

Notwithstanding issues relating to the reliability of ATAR scores in predicting future success, it is still important to attract high performing students to the profession. For example, it is critical that students have adequate literacy and numeracy skills, prior to undertaking teacher education programs. Studies in the United States show that a teacher’s level of literacy, as measured by vocabulary and other standardised tests, affects student achievement more than any other measureable teacher attribute.¹²

One effective way of attracting motivated and high achieving students to the teaching profession is to introduce measures that raise the status of the profession. One of the biggest challenges is attracting the highest performing and motivated school leavers to study teaching. University offers to year 12 students show that education is the least popular course for school leavers with the highest university entrance scores. High performing education systems build their human resource systems by putting the energy up front in attracting, training and supporting good teachers rather than on the back end of reducing attrition and firing weak teachers.¹³ Establishing an effective system of both financial and non-financial incentives will be important in attracting high performers and subsequently raising the status of the profession.

It is important to note that other qualities— such as passion and commitment to students – may be equally if not more important than academic achievement alone. Some systems, like Hong Kong’s, have articulated these criteria in a “teacher-competency framework,” which helps to clarify the cognitive skills, intellectual aptitude, and disposition that should be required of individuals entering teacher education programs.¹⁴

One approach that has been successful in recognising qualities other than academic achievement in other disciplines has been the use of interviews in the selection process for undergraduate courses. For example, dissatisfaction with the traditional methods of selecting Australian medical students, which use only secondary school achievement, led to an innovative alternative method at the Newcastle Medical School. This multistage approach uses tests of problem-solving ability, empathy, creativity and moral dilemmas to screen applicants otherwise suitable on academic achievement. The NSW Government should consider whether universities can introduce similar measures, such as

¹² National Council on Teacher Quality (2004) *Increasing the odds: how good policies can yield better teachers*

¹³ Improving teacher quality around the world: The 2011 international summit on the teaching profession, Asia Society

¹⁴ Improving teacher quality around the world: The 2011 international summit on the teaching profession, Asia Society

structured interviews, for entry into teaching programs. It is important that entry into teaching courses be more selective and identify those individuals with a genuine passion for teaching.

CASE STUDY

Undergraduate selection for medicine at University of Newcastle

The recognition that medical practitioners require more than simply a high level of academic ability to function successfully in their profession led the University of Newcastle to introduce tests of cognitive skills and an interview for undergraduate selection in the early 1990s.

The University recognised that problem-solving, communication and interpersonal skills, in addition to the requisite intellectual capacity, would enhance performance as medical practitioners. This reinforced the need for students to be selected on a different set of attributes from those used previously.

The criteria assessed in the 2005 round of interviews, for entry in 2006 were:

- Commitment
- Ability to see from the perspective of others
- Emotional intelligence
- Ability to work with others
- Diversity and health
- Social responsibility
- Communication skills

Sources: Mercer, A. (2007) *Selecting medical students: an Australian case study*. PhD thesis, Murdoch University

Top performing school systems recognise that for a person to become an effective teacher they need to possess a certain set of characteristics that can be identified before they enter teaching, including a high level of literacy and numeracy, strong interpersonal and communication skills, a willingness to learn, and the motivation to teach. Top performing systems use selection procedures designed to test for these skills and attributes.¹⁵ Figure 3 shows the selection process used for teachers in Singapore.

¹⁵ McKinsey & Company (2007) *How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top*.

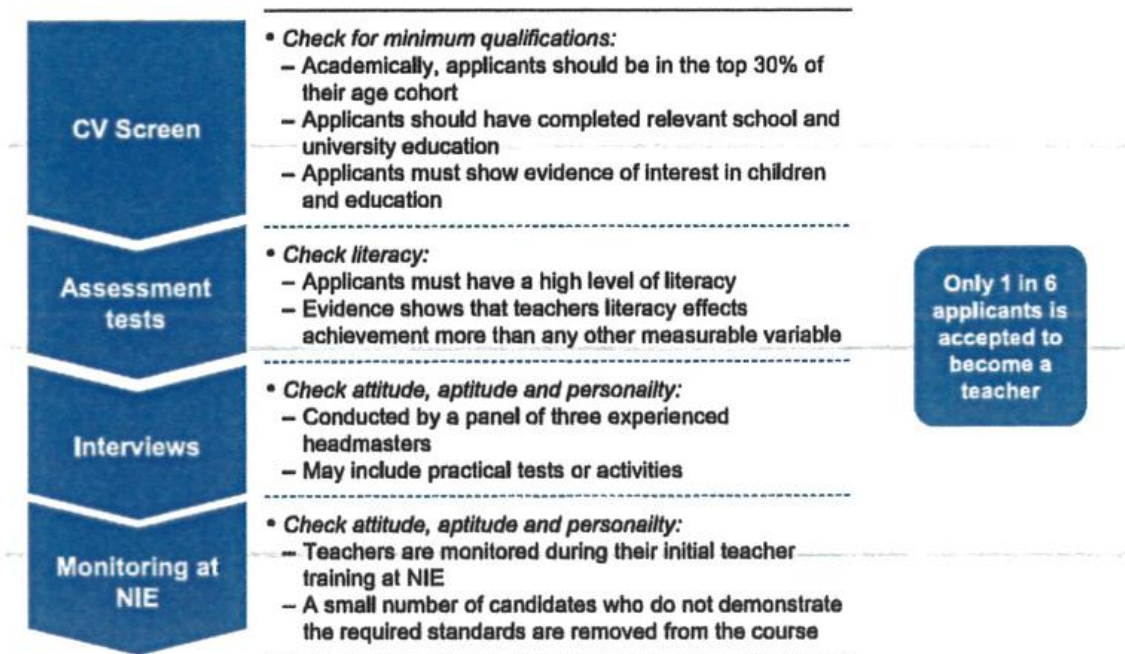


Figure 3: Singapore: selection of teachers

McKinsey & Company (2007) How the world’s best-performing school systems come out on top.

Industry knowledge and employability skills

Traditionally, many teachers have had little or no experience of industry or employment outside of the education sector. Therefore, their understanding of the importance of education and training for future employment is more academic in nature.

It is important that teacher education programs include a broad range of opportunities to learn about enterprise education, employability skills and career pathways. While many teachers will be familiar with progression through to the higher education system, it is important that teachers are also aware of vocational pathways and other options for students.

From a business and industry perspective, it is important that teachers are familiar with broad employability skills that provide young people with the best chance of making successful transitions to work and further learning. Employability skills can be effectively embedded into school curriculum. Teacher training programs and ongoing professional development exercises need to ensure an understanding and practical application of employability skills within curriculum delivery. Key employability skills include:

- Managing career and work life
- Working with roles, rights and protocols
- Communicating for work – teamwork, verbal and written communication
- Planning and organising

- Self-management
- Initiative and enterprise
- Identifying and solving problems
- Recognising and utilising diverse perspectives
- Decision making
- Creativity and innovation
- Working in a digital world

There is scope to provide industry placements for teachers which help address gaps in their knowledge and understanding of workforce requirements, labour market requirements and industry trends.

NSW Business Chamber believes that there is a need for trainee teachers to gain extensive practical skills in teaching methodologies and behavioural management before entering the classroom as a graduate teacher. The literature suggests that the best way to improve skills in teaching and learning is through more extensive professional experience in schools.

Research also shows that key indicators of teacher quality include expertise in relevant subject content studies coupled with skills in teaching and learning. Thus, any effort to raise the standard of teacher preparation in these areas is likely to have an impact on the capacities that teachers bring to their work, and the quality of teaching in schools.

The introduction of demand-driven uncapped funding for universities introduced in 2012 may have an impact on teacher training provision, as this new system provides greater scope to increase the number of teachers that universities train. The NSW Government will need to monitor these impacts, particularly in relation to the potential surplus of teachers coming through the system.

McKinsey & Company shows that the top-performing school systems consistently attract more able people into the teaching profession, leading to better student outcomes. They do this by making entry to teacher training highly selective, developing effective processes for selecting the right applicants to become teachers, and paying good (but not great) starting compensation. Getting these essentials right drives up the status of the profession, enabling it to attract even better candidates.¹⁶

Entry into the profession

NSW Business Chamber believes that new teachers need support and mentoring in their first year or two of teaching. The literature on mentoring provides strong support for the importance of mentoring in retaining good teachers and in invigorating the teaching workforce.¹⁷ Teachers develop the bulk of their instructional capability during their first years of training and practice.

¹⁶ McKinsey & Company (2007) *How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top.*

¹⁷ Martinez, K. (2004) Mentoring new teachers: Promise and problems in times of teacher shortage. *Australian Journal of Education*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 2004, 95–108

The OECD has pointed out that a structured and systematic induction process is central to support and retain beginning teachers. Very often the problems of teacher supply relate less to the recruitment of new graduates and more to the high turnover of new teachers.

CASE STUDY

Boston graduate teacher training program

Boston has introduced a graduate teacher training program based on a medical-residency model, combining a large amount of practical experience, a strong theoretical background, and a higher-level (masters) degree qualification. After an initial six-week summer school, trainee teachers spend one year on an apprenticeship in schools. During this year they spend four days each week working with an experienced teacher, and one day a week doing coursework. During their second year, each new teacher is allocated a mentor who provides two-and-a-half hours of in class coaching each week. Mentors model, co-teach, observe and help with classroom management, lesson planning and instructional strategies. In order to improve the quality of mentoring on the program, Boston now employs a number of full-time specialist mentors, each of whom supports 14 new teachers.

Source: McKinsey & Company (2007) *How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top.*

Develop and maintain professional practice

According to the Progressive Policy Institute, teachers' knowledge and skills are the most vital in-school factors influencing children's learning. And, for children from disadvantaged backgrounds or troubled home environments, quality teaching is even more important.¹⁸

NSW Business Chamber supports measures to enhance ongoing professional development of teachers in NSW schools. According to the Productivity Commission, factors that could enhance the contribution of professional development to increases in teacher quality include: improved school leadership (with those leaders having a commitment to professional development); better performance appraisal; the linkage of appraisals to development activities; and the reasonable prospect of remuneration or other rewards and recognition where professional development results in substantially enhanced skills and teacher quality.¹⁹

High performing school systems help teachers improve instruction by creating awareness of weakness in their practice, provide them with a precise knowledge of best practice, and motivate

¹⁸ Leigh, A. & Mead, S. (2005) *Lifting teacher performance*. Policy report. Progressive Policy Institute.

¹⁹ Australian Government Productivity Commission (2012) *Schools Workforce*, Productivity Commission Research Report, April 2012

them to make the necessary improvements. These systems build practical skills during initial teacher training, place coaches in schools to support teachers, select and develop effective instructional leaders and enable teachers to learn from each other.²⁰

Recognise and share outstanding practice

NSW Business Chamber believes that teachers need to have their work recognised and rewarded as a result of an assessment process.

Implementing a system of performance based remuneration, in which teachers are rewarded for better performance, could be an effective means of raising teacher quality. NSW Business Chamber believes that a well-designed system of teacher performance-based pay will serve students better than remuneration based on time served. Some research has shown that teacher performance-based pay can result in positive outcomes for students. Improved outcomes resulting from performance-based pay can be attributed to changes in teaching methods, after-school teaching, and increased responsiveness to students' needs.²¹ There has been considerable interest internationally in exploring alternative remuneration systems to more closely connect teacher rewards to performance. However, there has been little use of performance-based remuneration in Australian schools.²² NSW Business Chamber believes that those teachers who are working in disadvantaged schools that are hard to staff should be rewarded for their efforts. The research shows that an important method of getting the right people to become teachers is to provide good starting pay.

Higher salaries and bonuses are not however the only way to reward high performing teachers. Professional recognition, investment in ongoing training and professional development, greater responsibilities, and official acknowledgement by the Department are all important incentives to encourage the best teachers to remain in the profession.

The *Local Schools, Local Decisions* policy should provide schools with the flexibility to craft financial and non-financial incentives that focus closely on attracting the right kinds of teachers to the schools and positions where they are most needed. Other benefits of greater school autonomy include control of pedagogical direction and support to school staff; efficient resource management; and positive relationships with students, parents, the local community and education authorities.

As pointed out by the Productivity Commission it is crucial that there are robust processes in place to identify and foster leadership ability and to ensure that school leaders are involved in continuous and relevant professional development.²³

²⁰ Source: McKinsey & Company (2007) *How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top*.

²¹ Lavy, L. (2004) *Performance Pay and Teachers' Effort, Productivity and Grading Ethics*, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 10622

²² Australian Government Productivity Commission (2012) *Schools Workforce*, Productivity Commission Research Report, April 2012

²³ Australian Government Productivity Commission (2012) *Schools Workforce*, Productivity Commission Research Report, April 2012

Research evidence suggests the following three findings about school leadership:

- the total (direct and indirect) effects of leadership on student learning accounts for about a quarter of total school effects;
- leadership effects are second only to teacher effects on student outcomes; and
- leadership effects are usually greater in underperforming schools.²⁴

CASE STUDY

Building school leadership

Greater school autonomy brings greater demands for school leadership. A review of the international literature on school leadership by McKinsey and Company argued that, in England, 93% of schools with good leadership had good educational achievement. Strong leadership is also key to turning around underperforming schools. In England, there is a large performance gap between the affluent and the poorest 20% of students. With this in mind, a new program called *Future Leaders* seeks to identify outstanding teachers – teachers who believe that all students can learn and who have the leadership capacity to move schools to higher performance levels. The program, which admits one out of ten applicants, looks for cognitive skills, interpersonal skills, resilience, integrity, and humility. The focus is on teacher development and institutional leadership. The three-year programme provides talented potential head teachers with:

- 14 days of residential training and a series of seminars with leading educational experts
- A year of residency in a challenging school under the guidance of a mentor head teacher and dedicated Leadership Development Adviser
- Support to secure a senior leadership post following the residency year
- Continued off-site training and coaching to meet identified development needs
- Access to peer-reviewed best practice and advice and support from the Future Leaders alumni network

Independent research has found that schools with senior leaders who have been trained on the Future Leaders programme are, on average, improving GCSE performance faster, and have significantly smaller attainment gaps, than comparable schools.

²⁴ Watson, L. (2005) *Quality Teaching and School Leadership A scan of research findings*, Final Report. Lifelong Learning Network, Division of Communication and Education, University of Canberra.

Recommendations

NSW Business Chamber recommends that the NSW Government:

- introduce a range of measures to raise the status of the teaching profession. This should include making entry to teacher training highly selective, developing effective processes for selecting the right applicants, and paying good starting compensation.
- work with universities to develop more effective mechanisms for selecting people for teacher training, including the use of structured interviews. Entry into teaching programs should become more selective. Selection criteria should recognise a broad range of characteristics that are necessary for producing high performing teachers and should not be limited to academic achievement alone. Criteria should include:
 - high overall level of literacy and numeracy
 - strong interpersonal and communication skills
 - a willingness to learn
 - the motivation to teach.
- introduce more effective support and mentoring for teachers in the first year or two of teaching.
- design a comprehensive but cost-effective professional development system for teachers that builds leadership capacity within schools.
- ensure that trainee teachers are provided with extensive practical experience before entering the classroom as fully qualified teachers. The use of apprenticeship type models, as seen in other countries, may be appropriate.
- ensure that teacher training programs incorporate training covering the practical application of employability skills; adequate knowledge of vocational pathways and knowledge of what industry expects from school leavers; presentation and communication skills; and leadership skills.
- include a broad range of stakeholders in the teacher quality reform process, including industry associations.
- monitor the impacts on provision of teacher training resulting from new demand-driven uncapped university funding arrangements.

NSW Business Chamber recommends that improvements to teacher quality should be coupled with a broad ranging review of post-Year 10 education and training in NSW.

If you have any questions in relation to the content of this submission, please contact Nick Minto, NSW Business Chamber's Senior Policy Adviser, Nick.Minto@nswbc.com.au, (02) 9458 7267.