

Podcast interview raises key issues

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Federation President Maurie Mulheron used the platform of Department of Education Secretary Mark Scott's Every Student podcast to express the need for improvements in the areas of staffing and system-wide support for the work of teachers.

When Mr Scott asked Mr Mulheron about his country service (he taught at Finley early in his career), the exchange unfolded like this:

Mulheron: "I encourage young people to go to country schools if they can, west of the divide. We did have a transfer system back then and there was always that safety net that you weren't there forever."

Scott: "You could come back."

Mulheron: "Yes and that is why we are not getting as many."

Scott: "It is still an issue. I have been out talking to lots of principals in regional areas and I think the staffing issue is as big an issue now and one of the interesting things that we can see, we can talk about this later on, is that there's a real challenge around supply of casual teachers with all the teachers being recruited with Gonski funding out in schools now so we are dealing with all that."

Later in the interview Mr Scott acknowledged Mr Mulheron had been "a bit critical that the supporting infrastructure [for schools] hasn't been as strong as you feel that it needs to be".

During the discussion Mr Mulheron said: "We shouldn't be frightened of the word 'bureaucracy', Mark. We have got 2200 sites, we have got a workforce of about 45,000 or 40,000 full-time teachers.

"Then when we add all the other staff on over 100,000 people, we bring about 800,000 young people onto our sites each and every day. Why should we be apologising for saying we need a fairly large bureaucracy out there supporting [the public school system]? If it was a corporation it would be a very large corporation."

The full interview can be accessed below.

