

Auditor-General's Report: a lost opportunity if changes are imposed without negotiation with the teaching profession

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The NSW Teachers Federation has argued that rigorous and consistent professional teaching standards must be applied, met and monitored

- at entry into initial teacher education courses,
- to the granting of teaching qualifications,
- to induction into the teaching profession,
- through to ongoing practice throughout a teacher's career, as well as
- the seeking of promotion to an executive position.

Indeed, it is the union, on behalf of the teaching profession, that has argued that not every person who wants to be a teacher should be allowed to teach.



The findings of the NSW Auditor-General's Report [Ensuring teaching quality in NSW public schools](#), released on September 26, are an indictment of the controversial, ongoing *Local Schools, Local Decisions* policy. This policy, implemented as a cost-cutting measure in March 2012, resulted in a massive loss of personnel and functions from the NSW Department of Education that continue to this day. It is time for the NSW Government to provide sufficient resources to the Department so it can provide adequate support to the diverse needs of 60,000 teachers across more than 2200 schools.

The concern of the teaching profession is that the Auditor-General's Report displays all the hallmarks of a paper written by people without a teaching background. The Report reveals a lack of understanding of how the national Teaching Standards work, how teachers are currently assessed against them, the requirements that each teacher must meet and the application of the Performance and Development Framework. This has led to some recommendations that will fail to address the major concerns of the teaching profession.

The Federation is committed to working with government and the Department to ensure the consistent application of the professional Teaching Standards throughout the system, that teachers are well-supported in this process and that a new promotion system based on rigorous consistent standards is developed and resourced.

However, the release of the Auditor-General's Report will be a lost opportunity if changes are imposed without negotiation with the teaching profession. For too long, the noise from external agencies, private consultants,

as well as vested political and commercial interests, has been allowed to drown out the voice of the real experts: teachers.

Read Federation President Maurie Mulheron quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald's* [article about the Auditor-General's report](#).