

Salaries and the “Valuing the teaching profession – an independent inquiry”

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A major Federation campaign for 2020 concerns teacher salaries.

It has been 16 years since the NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) arbitrated a work value case for public school teachers. Since that time there have been significant changes in schools including changes to curriculum, technology, student needs, school complexity and parental and community expectations.

Given the profession can no longer access the IRC to pursue salary increases based on changes in work value (the law changed in 2011), Federation commissioned an independent inquiry that to review the changing complexity of teachers’ and principals’ work since 2004.

The inquiry is chaired by Professor Emeritus, University of Sydney and former Western Australia Premier, the Hon Dr Geoff Gallop AC. He is joined by former Justice of the NSW Industrial Court and Deputy President of the NSW IRC, the Hon Dr Tricia Kavanagh and the former head of the NSW Institute of Teachers, Patrick Lee.



During term 2, members were encouraged to write submissions to the inquiry, recounting the intensification and changing nature of their work. Each member of the Small Schools Committee wrote a submission, highlighting the changing nature work in small schools.

Common themes across their submissions included:

- increasing pressure on school leaders, whereby the teaching principal is often expected to be a Swiss army knife and have the tools to deal with the myriad of issues affecting a school without having the opportunity to seek assistance or support from other executive teacher. For example, not only have teaching principals had to oversee implementation of continuous policy changes including *Local Schools, Local Decisions*, but, at the same time, been required to develop expertise in all the new syllabuses that have been introduced
- deterioration of Department support.

The inquiry panel has already held some public hearings and more will be conducted in term 4. The inquiry's findings will be release in early 2021.