

Crucial collaboration pushed to weekends

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There's a lot of activity on Teacher Google Classrooms on the weekends and after work hours, because there's just no time in the school day to collaborate with colleagues on data, the first teacher witness before the work value inquiry said.

"We all want to do the best for our students," head teacher Alice Leung told the inquiry panellists on 26 October. "We know that the data helps us to teach them better and we know that data helps the students learn better, but we just fit that in."

"I know that when I was repackaging the Best Start Year 7 data that was done on the weekend because you do need a quite continuous block of time to be able to do that sort of work and doing that in your non-teaching period...you can't do it. You can't give it justice..."

"It's one thing to analyse the data. I would also emphasise that you need to discuss what your findings are," she added.

"Collaboration time is really needed and at the moment it's just done after school."

Face-to-face hours have remained the same despite increased requirements for data collection and analysis.

Ms Leung said when she graduated the roll was marked in a book and teachers just dealt with classroom management issues; now there's a whole lot of online reporting systems.

The Bring Your Own Device policy has made teaching "definitely more complicated than when students just had an exercise book", Ms Leung commented.

"You need to be able to design your activities so that regardless of what [device] the student comes with, it will work on their device."

"Teachers work immensely hard," she said, "to make sure they are up with technology so that they'll be able to provide all those benefits to the students."

"However complex technology might seem to them, [teachers] all want to do their absolute best for their students and they will learn in their own time. They do work their absolute hardest to learn and stay up to date so that they can offer those benefits for their students and do what they can to make sure that their learning experience is the best possible."

The profession has more contact with parents than in 2007, Ms Leung said.



“Parents want to know how their child is going, and that’s because with technology parents now have increased access to what their child is experiencing in the classroom,” she said.

“Parents opt into Google Classroom Guardian where they get a daily or weekly email summary of what their child has done. That’s really good because it allows the parent to have a conversation with their child about what they’ve been learning but it also increases the amount of inquiries and questions that the parent will have of the teacher.”