

NSW Government fails to solve school staffing crisis

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NSW Teachers Federation members at Lake Macquarie High School walked off the job today over the NSW Government's failure to properly staff schools in rural and remote parts of the state.

NSW Teachers Federation Deputy President Henry Rajendra said teachers were angry because many schools across the state had begun the school year with insufficient teachers to cover every class because of the state-wide teacher shortage.

"The crisis in school staffing is a scandal that won't go away, no matter how hard the Department tries to spin this story," Mr Rajendra said.

"It is unacceptable for any public school to have teaching positions unfilled for what is now almost an entire school term."

The staffing shortages are also impacting on the timetabled teaching load of teachers at Lake Macquarie. It is all too common for teachers to be teaching outside of their subject qualifications and expertise. Teachers are also taking on additional responsibilities to make up for the staffing shortfall.

"Staff at Lake Macquarie recognise that the NSW Government is responsible for the provision of teachers to public school and must also accept blame for the crisis in school staffing."

"Failure to adequately staff public schools leaves students unable to reach their full potential."

"Over the past decade the NSW Government and Department have weakened previously successful processes that ensured adequate staffing of all schools across the state."

Mr Rajendra said the teacher shortage was made worse by the fact that it has been nearly 20 years since the Department of Education conducted a comprehensive workforce analysis.

"The NSW public school system faces a massive boost in enrolments of over 200,000 additional students, a 25 per cent increase, over the next 20 years.

"It is vital that the Department begins planning to deal with issues of supply and demand in order to ensure there is an adequate number of teachers available."

"The NSW Government has let down students, parents and the wider community this year by failing to provide teachers for every student and every class."



"The Education Department have known of the dire teacher shortage for some time but failed to address the problem. It is grossly unfair for students, and in many cases, those with the most complex learning needs."