

## Protect professional status



Amber Flohm  
Senior Vice President  
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Over the past six weeks, Federation has intervened in, and responded to, a multitude of impending policy changes directly affecting the work of our teachers and principals in schools and in TAFE.

These include, but are not limited to:

- the NSW Education Standards Authority's Draft K-2 English and Mathematics syllabuses
- NSW Parliament's Inquiry into Education Legislation Amendment (Parental Rights) Bill 2020
- the Legislative Council Committee Review of the NSW School Curriculum
- NSW and Commonwealth legislation on automatic mutual recognition of teachers' occupational registrations across Australia
- the Gonski and Shergold Review of the vocational education and training sector
- the Tudge Review into initial teacher education
- the Draft National Curriculum Review and NAPLAN.



Such potential changes underpin what is at the heart of the teaching and learning of our students: the curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting practices, standards and qualifications.

Many of these agendas undermine the professional judgement, autonomy, qualifications, expertise and experience of our teachers and principals.

Short sighted and ill-conceived announcements and policy positions by the government and the Department of Education continuously fail to illustrate the professional respect and trust that governments must have for the teaching profession to grow and thrive. Ultimately, the government and the Department have a significant effect on the intensity of Federation members' work, the complexity of that work, the lack of systemic support to undertake that work, the failure of provision of time to do that work, while simultaneously failing to address the structural and systemic matters contributing to the staffing crisis currently unfolding across the state. As always Federation members' working conditions are inextricably linked to their students learning conditions.

These legislative and policy positions represent the very antithesis of the evidence, findings and recommendations of the Gallop Report, *Valuing the Teaching Profession — an independent inquiry*.

Federation members have a long and proud history of protecting and enhancing the status of the teaching

profession. Remaining vigilant and responsive to current agendas and policy settings in NSW and the Commonwealth, which continue to seek to undermine our professional standing, will require us all to recommit to act against both the incremental and widescale changes that are imminent.

Such protections must commence with the foundations, the entry into teaching through initial teacher education courses. Further entry processes, procedures and system requirements for graduates into public education, the maintenance, support and enhancement of teaching qualifications and standards, a broad, inclusive and critical curriculum, ongoing career progression and professional development also remain core to the heart of teaching and learning for our students and the enhancement of public education.

Thwarting further attempts to undermine our status, as well as advancing our professional standing, will be central to this pursuit, as Federation members continue to unite and campaign throughout 2021 and beyond.

Federation's Annual Conference in June will provide further opportunities for broad membership engagement to address both state and national agendas affecting the professional standing of teachers in both schools and TAFE.