

It's up to all of us

October 29, 2021

The road to winning this campaign lies ahead of us.

It's a road that's going to take me and your elected officers to the far reaches of the state, because we have an important message: teachers deserve [More Than Thanks](#).

While the normal walk of life may have been put on hold through the pandemic, the salaries and conditions award timetable stops for nothing and no one.

That is why Federation, in the interests of creating better working conditions to attract high-quality teachers to the profession, is taking the message of the More Than Thanks campaign — backed by the findings and recommendations of the independent [Gallop Inquiry](#) — to members across the state.

The message is: To best serve our students, and the prosperity of this nation, the profession needs competitive salaries and the time to do what is expected of it.

Simply put, a reset of pay and conditions .

That message has to be heard by the NSW Government, and it is up to all of us to make sure it is loud and clear.

This week we began bringing delegates together in their regions to hear how Federation plans to do this.

Starting in the Sydney basin, your Presidential Officers have been meeting delegates to outline our plans for the More Than Thanks campaign.

The regions will be next, with myself, Henry Rajendra and Amber Flohm and our organisers hitting the road to thank you for your support and discuss this critical phase of our campaign.

It's important because what we have heard from this Government and its Education Minister is a total confection of the truth. They have said the teacher shortage is a "beat-up", while you, on the ground, know the truth.

Publicly, the NSW Government has been adamant there is no [staffing crisis](#). Privately they have known the full extent of the shortages.

On 7 October, [The Sydney Morning Herald](#) revealed a series of departmental reports and briefings that exposed a staffing crisis, of which, the Government has been fully aware.



The briefings reveal chronic teacher shortages, an ageing workforce, rapidly rising enrolments and plummeting initial teacher education graduate numbers are creating a perfect storm.

The documents revealed for the first time the true extent of the staffing crisis with this warning in June last year: "If we don't address supply gaps now, we will run out of teachers in the next five years."

The briefings also make clear that the "salary ceiling and perceptions regarding career trajectory may be impeding choices to become a teacher" and "the demands and expectations on teachers are increasing, while the current rewards, pathways, and learning opportunities are not providing enough incentive".

Further, the briefings to the Minister state: "On average, teacher pay has been falling relative to pay in other professions since the late 1980s and this makes it a less attractive profession for high-achieving students."

This is entirely consistent with the findings of the 12-month long Gallop Inquiry, which made clear that the salary levels in place are "dangerous for the public standing of the profession" and the quality of education available to NSW students.

Your wages do not reflect your skills and responsibilities nor the complexity of the work you are required to undertake. The Gallop Inquiry also warned that without a substantial salary increase, there was no way to recruit the additional teachers required over the next decade.

Yet the Government has resorted to hiding behind its legislated public-service wage cap.

The 2.5 per cent wages cap is an insult to the teaching profession and is rejected. It will exacerbate the state-wide teacher shortage and negatively affect student outcomes.

An investment in teachers through higher salaries has been shown in national and international research to improve the attraction and retention of teachers and draw into the profession people with higher levels of academic attainment.

It is clear; teachers and principals need the time, resources and support necessary to do the increasingly complex and challenging work required of them.

They also need a salary that reflects the changed nature and value of their work along with their skills and responsibilities.

This is also necessary to ensure the recruitment and retention of teachers for the realisation of the right of every child, regardless of their circumstances, to be taught by an appropriately qualified teacher.

Yet this Government resorts to gimmicks, lies and spin.

There has never been a time in the union's history like this.

This is crunch time and together we can win for the profession and our students.

To support our campaign, sign up to the [More Than Thanks campaign](#).