



UNDERSTANDING WORK IN SCHOOLS

The foundation for teaching and learning

2018 REPORT TO THE NSW TEACHERS FEDERATION

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



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FOREWORD

Federation thanks the 18,234 NSW public school teachers, executives and principals who responded to the survey underpinning this report. The massive response provided a robust base for the research and for Federation to take action on the findings in the months following its release in July 2018.

It is clear that teachers identify their most important work as their work with, and for, students. Since the introduction of Local Schools, Local Decisions in 2012 this work has been hindered by increased demands associated with administration, compliance and data collection requirements and the loss of some 700 staff employed in the NSW Department of Education, who provided educational and administrative support to schools.

Federation actively pursued these issues with NSW Education Minister Rob Stokes, who wrote “I share your concerns that a teacher’s core role of educating children... can be adversely affected by their administrative burden” and “reducing this burden is one of my highest priorities”.

The Minister established a working party with Federation, the Public Service Association, principal groups and departmental officers to provide advice on reducing this burden. The working party met in November and December 2018 and has further meetings scheduled for 2019.

This report, and comments provided by members, identify a range of activities associated with data and evidence collection that is “too time consuming or cumbersome” and “focussed on compliance rather than teaching and learning”.

In negotiations with the Department since July 2018, Federation has worked to remove, reduce and/or clarify requirements around a range of activities including PLAN2, HSC monitoring, VET and the A-Z tool. The union also seeks the Department’s acknowledgement of teachers’ professional judgement regarding data and evidence collection and its use, through the development of protocols or general principles for data collection aimed at eliminating or minimising excessive work demands. At the same time, Federation has called for more effective system-level planning to prevent imposing competing workload demands on schools. In correspondence dated 30 November 2018, the Department advised that it is working towards this, stating, “by creating a central register of roll outs and time frames, we are better able to understand, prioritise and (in future), plan for the volume of change.” As a consequence, some planned roll outs have been rescheduled. A key aspect will be to ensure there is consultation around these changes so that they have educational value and are properly resourced.

Many of the priorities identified in the report as most helpful in supporting the work of teachers, executives and principals in schools require additional recurrent funding. The Fair Funding Now! campaign is aimed at ensuring the funding necessary to provide the additional support for schools at both a system and school level. This funding is essential in terms of providing additional release time, reducing class sizes, employing more specialist qualified teachers to support students with additional needs, more consultancy and school counsellor support and additional professional learning in school time.

In the lead-up to the NSW and federal elections, Federation will pursue the funding necessary for all public school teachers, executives and principals to focus on the work that they value most, supporting students and their learning.

Federation thanks researchers Susan McGrath-Champ, Rachel Wilson, Meghan Stacey and Scott Fitzgerald for this comprehensive and powerful report. It examines in detail the daily work of teachers in public schools and has ensured that their assessments about how teaching and learning must be supported is both heard and heeded.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY FINDINGS

1. Despite new and encroaching requirements relating to administration and accountability, teachers in schools retain their primary focus on matters directly related to working with students in teaching and learning. This accounts for the bulk of the daily work they do. Yet there is also evidence that many teachers are struggling to preserve this student focus in the face of the new work activities that impose additional hours, work demands and personal burdens upon them.
2. All teachers, head teachers, assistant principals, deputy principals, principals and consultants highly value tasks that are perceived to be directly related to their teaching and to students' learning, identifying planning and teaching lessons; meeting students' learning needs; and communicating with students about their learning, lives and wellbeing as some of their most important work. However, they do not value administrative work that is impinging on this core focus, and is experienced as time consuming, cumbersome and concerned with compliance. This includes work associated with accreditation requirements; the collection, analysis and reporting of data; and compliance with state policies.
3. There has been significant growth in overall hours, with 87 per cent of survey respondents reporting an increase over the past five years since the implementation of devolved schooling through the Local Schools, Local Decisions policy. Classroom teachers most commonly report working upwards of 50 hours per week, which places teachers' work in the category of "very long" working hours.
4. Teachers require more professional respect, time and support for their teaching and the facilitation of student learning. This is not evident in the recent additions to teachers' workload. Besides a general increase in hours, there has also been an expansion of the range of duties performed, particularly in relation to administrative tasks. More than 97 per cent report an increase in administrative requirements, while more than 96 per cent report an increase in the collection, analysis and reporting of data.
5. These increased demands are exerting severe impacts upon teachers. Teachers report a range of negative effects, including that their work always or often requires "too great an effort" (70 per cent), prevents them from having uninterrupted breaks (73 per cent), negatively impacts on their career aspirations (82 per cent) and conflicts with family commitments and work-life balance (86 per cent).
6. The increased demands are threatening teaching and student learning. While our findings are generally consistent with recent research regarding demands on teachers, our data is the first to make it clear that there is also another effect of changes to work in schools: the obstruction of teaching and students' learning. A very large majority of teachers now report that teaching and learning is hindered by their high workload (89 per cent), by having to provide evidence of compliance with policy requirements (86 per cent), and by new administrative demands introduced by the Department (91 per cent).
7. It is evident that vastly increased administrative tasks are having a "blanketing" effect across all types of schools, locations, levels of socio-economic advantage and staff teaching roles within schools, and severely threaten to overwhelm teachers' professional focus on teaching and student learning. The extent and magnitude of the reported effects indicate underlying systemwide causes, and teachers widely attribute these to government policies and ongoing change initiatives.
8. Survey respondents have also, however, indicated some possible positive ways forward. These include reducing face-to-face teaching time for increased collaboration on planning, programming, assessing and reporting; acknowledging professional judgement and eliminating processes that are unnecessary, cumbersome, extremely time consuming, or focused only on administrative demands associated with compliance; and providing more specialist teacher support.

LOOKING AHEAD

This large-scale survey confirms that teachers in NSW public schools undertake a wide range of complex and important professional work. However, it also confirms previous findings that demands upon teachers are very substantial, potentially debilitating, and growing — particularly in relation to administrative work. These issues are hindering the capacity of teachers to focus on matters directly related to their teaching and to students' learning. We suggest some strategies for redress within this report, and emphasise that given the almost universal reporting of the problems within our very large sample, any effective solution will need to be systemic. Immediate action is needed, as the weight of the evidence in this report makes it clear that negative impacts on students are likely to ensue if the current trends continue unabated.

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a statewide questionnaire survey of teachers in NSW public schools in Term 1, 2018. The project was undertaken to follow up on an earlier qualitative, interview-based survey, the *Teaching and Learning: Review of Workload* (McGrath-Champ, Wilson & Stacey, 2017), which examined work in schools for the NSW Teachers Federation in the first half of 2017. That small-scale, first-phase, qualitative study suggested an important, although tentative, finding: that a “blanketing” of administrative demands was encroaching on the work of teachers, impeding their capacity to focus on tasks directly related to their teaching and to students’ learning. This finding was consistent across a targeted sample design that included participants from a range of school types, locations and levels of advantage. Findings were reported in a Preliminary Report (June 2017) and Final Report (September 2017), and presented at the Annual Conference of the Teachers Federation in early July 2017.

The purpose of this second-phase, *Understanding work in schools: The foundation for teaching and learning*, research is to establish the extent of these prior findings across a much larger sample, through documenting: the nature and frequency of tasks undertaken by teachers, as well as their perceived value; recent changes to and effects of current workload demands; and strategies that might be employed to improve teachers’ experiences in schools. The research thereby contributes further knowledge about such matters as the volume, intensity, sources and effects of work demands on teachers. In addition, the research examines the impact of loss of systemwide support on the workload of teachers and whether schools’ capacity to provide teaching and learning is hindered by the nature or magnitude of workload of school staff. In doing so, this second phase of inquiry brings the findings from the first phase “to scale”, enabling robust interpretations to be drawn regarding the extent of the phase one findings.

THE CONTEXT: SITUATING THE STUDY WITHIN CURRENT POLICY, RESEARCH AND EMPLOYMENT LANDSCAPES

The results of the phase one research conducted for the NSW Teachers Federation in 2017 (McGrath-Champ, Wilson, et al, 2017) suggested that teachers across the board in NSW public schools were experiencing increased, and debilitating, administrative work demands. These demands were felt regardless of differences in school type, location and level of socio-educational¹ advantage — contextual factors that would usually be expected to mediate the impositions of policy change. In our research, however, increased demands related to the navigation, implementation and documentation of teachers’ work were reported to be impacting schools everywhere and having adverse effects on the scope and scale of teacher workload. In other words, the problem that was identified is clearly systemic.

These findings have broadly aligned with those of the state government itself. The NSW Public Service Commission’s annual *People Matter Employee Survey* shows a severe and seriously deteriorating situation regarding public school teachers’ workload and work stress. In 2017, almost 60 per cent of teachers reported that work stress was at unacceptable levels. This very large proportion is much worse than in the public sector overall, for which 41 per cent reported unacceptable levels of work stress (NSW Public Service Commission, 2017, p17). And for teachers this has deteriorated very fast, worsening 5 percentage points from the previous year and in the order of 20 percentage points over the three-year period from 2014 (NSW Public Service Commission, 2017, p17). Over a similar period (2014-2016) the number of teachers also reported deterioration in their workload with 61 per cent reporting in 2016 that this also was unacceptable

¹ In this report, sometimes we refer to “socio-educational” status, and at other times of “socio-economic” status. This is because, where available, we have used the more accurate measure of advantage in schools provided by the Index of Socio-Educational Advantage, or ICSEA, available on the My School website (myschool.edu.au). As this was not always possible within the scope of the study, however, at other times, estimates of socio-economic status have been used instead. We explain this as necessary throughout.

(NSW Public Service Commission, 2016, p24). Meanwhile, research specific to the Department of Education has also identified worrying findings. A study of principals' workload and time use commissioned by the Department of Education found that principals are spending "a large proportion" (Deloitte, 2017, p4) of their time on administrative duties, within what has become an "unreasonable" (Deloitte, 2017, p5) workload. Principals reported reduced departmental support and obfuscatory communication processes as contributing to this (Deloitte, 2017). Such findings have been further confirmed by the review of the newly established Educational Services Division, which again considered the views of principals and, among other things, identified a problematic focus on compliance and a need for greater departmental support, for instance in relation to curriculum change and student wellbeing (NSW Department of Education, 2017).

In the latter two reports just discussed, both of which were initiated by the Department of Education, the contribution of the Department's own devolutionary policy Local Schools, Local Decisions (NSW DEC, 2011) to workload increases was identified by principal participants (Deloitte, 2017; NSW Department of Education, 2017). This state policy, introduced in 2011, increased responsibility — although not necessarily control — at the school level (Gavin & McGrath-Champ, 2017), and also ushered in a series of cuts to centralised support services (Stevenson & Arlington, 2 June, 2012). For some, this and similar policy moves have been seen as part of a process of increasing the "responsibilisation" of school staff, wherein responsibility is lodged at the level of teachers, principals and schools for both educational success (Stacey, 2017) and their own wellbeing (Price, Mansfield, & McConney, 2012), while "leaving the state to remotely monitor and control" (Stacey, 2017, p790). Such a focus on individual quality, and related emphases on accountability, are what Fullan (2011) identifies as "wrong drivers" in education reform, which will have "little chance of achieving the desired result" (Fullan, 2011, p3) of enhanced educational outcomes for all.

Yet such moves have been evident worldwide, and are today a key point of concern for teachers and their unions. The effects of "accountability practices, standardised testing, new curricula, decentralisation, and privatisation" (Bascia & Stevenson, 2017, p1) on teachers and their unions have now been documented in countries as diverse as Chile, Kenya, New Zealand, Poland, Scotland, Turkey and the United States (Bascia & Stevenson, 2017). In Ireland, similar policy change has been linked to increased stress for primary teachers (Morgan & Craith, 2015), as teachers' hours around the world continue to grow (Bridges & Searle, 2011; Butt & Lance, 2005).

There is also evidence that teachers' face-to-face teaching hours are particularly high in Australia when compared internationally (OECD, 2014), making the current questionnaire survey both timely and necessary. In Australia, teacher workload has long been a point of concern, both in union-affiliated research (Gardner & Williamson, 2004; Howe, 2004; Weldon & Ingvarson, 2016) and otherwise (McKenzie, Weldon, Rowley, Murphy, & McMillan, 2014; Riley, 2015). Increases in both the scope and scale of teachers' work have been described as a process of "intensification", attributed at least in part to changes in administrative requirements (Easthope & Easthope, 2000); such demands are described in our earlier work as a "tsunami" of paperwork (Fitzgerald, McGrath-Champ, Stacey, Wilson, & Gavin, under review). The introduction of national standardised testing through the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy, or NAPLAN, has been argued to constrain teachers' curricular focus (Thompson, 2016), operating as a kind of standards-based accountability that requires teachers to complete additional mandated tasks while simultaneously maintaining their pedagogical values and aims (Kostogriz & Doecke, 2011). Part of this "performative" regime in teaching has been a focus on skills, narrow competencies, and a related emphasis on data, where teachers are required to comply with expectations to collect and/or respond to educational data, yet without any sense of purpose beyond proving oneself or one's school to have been successful in meeting particular targets (Ball, 2003; Hardy & Lewis, 2017). Such pressures have also changed relationships within schools, straining communication between over-worked principals and over-worked teachers (Keddie, Mills, & Pendergast, 2011; McGrath-Champ, Stacey, et al, 2017).

All of this research, however, focuses on particular aspects of changes to the work of teachers and school executives. What is missing is documentation of what it is that teachers actually *do* in their day-to-day work. This is the case, we would argue, both in relation to current policy and current research; indeed it is painfully evident in the Department's research on principals, which suggests increasing delegation to other school staff as a strategy to lighten principal workload (see e.g. Deloitte, 2017). This would suggest not only that the intensification of teachers' work is not being sufficiently acknowledged, but also that the research base

in general is lacking a comprehensive understanding of what it is that teachers are already doing — not to mention their lived experience, and what they think of it. While there has been some historical research exploring the dimensions of teachers' work (e.g. Connell, 1985; Connell, 1993), and a range of current analysis of teacher pedagogy (e.g. Comber, 2006), there is little that simply maps the nature and range of tasks currently involved in teachers' day-to-day work.

Having a detailed knowledge of what teachers do, and how they understand and value the multitude of daily, weekly and other ongoing tasks with which they engage, is important because, as we noted in our phase one report, there is no specified upper limit on teachers' total hours of work, nor specific arrangements regarding the monitoring and allocation of workloads. While there is general advice in the Department's hours of duty (NSW Department of Education, 2016), teachers also complete tasks outside of standard school hours, such as participating in staff meetings, being involved in professional development activities, or attending parent-teacher interviews, among many other things. The dimensions of this work as it is currently construed, and in relation to the demands of the current policy context, need mapping. Such is the purpose of the wide-ranging questionnaire survey that we report on in this document.

In phase one of this study, we found evidence indicating that teachers and school executives are undertaking a range of activities in their work that may be considered unproductive, and may be hampering their primary focus on matters related to their teaching and to students' learning. In what follows, we present evidence from our large-scale quantitative questionnaire survey of 18,234 teachers, and consider how this evidence confirms or differs from our prior findings. We first present our research approach and method, then a discussion of findings regarding the nature of, magnitude and changes to the work of teachers, as well as the effects of these dynamics and how they might be responded to.



APPROACH AND METHODS

RESEARCH STRATEGY

The study was designed to address five research questions pertaining to work in schools. In relation to teachers, principals and other school executive.

1. What teaching and learning and other activities are presently undertaken in schools?
2. How do teaching and learning staff in schools evaluate the activities that are presently undertaken in terms of:
 - the importance and necessity of the work
 - the time and resources required/not required
 - whether the work is managed in a time-consuming or cumbersome way
 - whether the work is focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning?
3. What changes have occurred to work in schools over the past five years?
4. What are the effects of these changes?
5. What actions or strategies support work in schools?

Consistent with key purposes of the study, an online questionnaire survey was designed and implemented. We adopted a predominantly quantitative approach to fulfil these needs, to complement and extend the phase one study (McGrath-Champ, Wilson and Stacey, 2017) and to provide an account of issues currently shaping work in NSW public schools across the state. The online questionnaire survey collected input via responses from all teachers, principals and school executives in all schools throughout the state during term 1 over a five-week period beginning 19 February, 2018.

In addition to questions designed to support quantitative data analysis, several open-ended questions gathered comments from respondents regarding changes, support and general responses. In this report we integrate this qualitative information (data) by including direct quotes from staff in schools to provide voice to their perspectives and a humanised illustration of the story seen in the large quantitative numbers.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The sample included all levels of school (primary, secondary, K-12), socio-economic and socio-educational setting (as measured by participant self-report and, where provided, school ICSEA), location (metropolitan, provincial and remote/very remote), and teaching and learning role (classroom teacher, specialist teacher, consultant, head teacher, assistant principal, deputy principal and principal).

Throughout this report, when we refer to the whole group of survey respondents the term “teacher” is used and includes all the above roles. “Classroom teacher” or “classroom/specialist teacher” (as appropriate) is used to distinguish that specific sub-group.

The survey was sent to all 54,202 members of the NSW Teachers Federation current at the time of the survey in all of the above employment roles. Retired, associate and TAFE members were excluded. A total of 18,234 responses were received comprising 33.6 per cent of Federation’s membership. This is a very high response rate by social research standards. Unusually high response rates and lengthy comments were also seen in the open-ended qualitative items where respondents were given the opportunity to express their personal views on work in schools. The survey took half an hour or more to complete. It is likely that the time involved, combined with the very large response rate, reflects the sense of importance that respondents attribute to the issues covered in the research.

Quantitative analysis

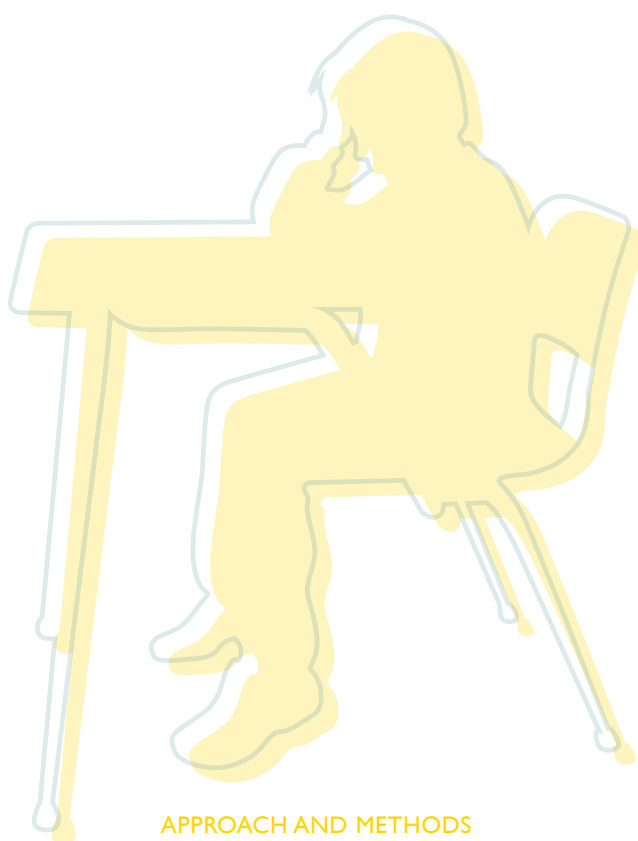
Descriptive analyses were performed to explore each of the questionnaire sections.

1. Demographic and employment profile on staff completing the survey questionnaire
2. Work hours
3. Detailed coverage of activities undertaken in respondents' work and the frequency with which these are carried out
4. Evaluation of importance and nature of activities
5. Changes to work in schools
6. Work demands
7. Effects of reported work and workload phenomena
8. Forms of preferred support for work.

Qualitative analysis

More than 48 per cent of respondents provided qualitative comment in the open-response items. This is a surprisingly high figure, above the expected norms for online questionnaire responses, which are often in the vicinity of 15-20 per cent even with a range of incentives (Pedersen & Nielsen, 2016); and this is indicative of the high level of engagement teachers felt with the topic of work in schools. Also notable is the extent of comments made, with some respondents providing very detailed and expressive personal views on the subject of workload.

To examine qualitative data from the three main open-response opportunities provided in the online questionnaire, a random sub-sample of 300 respondents was generated using the analytical software to render them to a manageable number. The sub-sample was checked and confirmed as having representative proportions of comments across each of the three open-ended questions as the full dataset. The analysis of qualitative data, which requires manual coding prior to analysis, is intensely time-consuming and with the massive number of responses, analysis of this material would otherwise be unmanageable. The full set of qualitative data was scrutinised alongside the sub-sample and it was determined that the nature of comments in the sub-set was soundly indicative of the full qualitative dataset. In addition, further qualitative evidence was sourced from the full data set as appropriate, to supplement this analysis and provide further illustrative commentary at key points within the report.



SURVEY FINDINGS

Analysis of the survey questionnaire was structured so as to directly answer the research questions and provide a comprehensive view of work in schools. Survey participants were asked background questions, which were used to analyse profiles of staff in schools across the state (demographic profile by employment status, demographic profile by geographical location, and self-reported hours of work in schools). Other questions and associated data analysis are provided in Table 1 (below).

Table 1: Research questions and data analysis

Research questions	Data analysis
1. What teaching and learning and other activities are presently undertaken in schools?	Lists and ranking of daily, weekly and other activities according to the frequency in which they are undertaken
2. How do teaching and learning staff in schools evaluate the activities that are presently undertaken?	Staff evaluation of the above activities in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> importance/necessity time and resources needed identifying time-consuming/cumbersome work identifying work focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning
3. What changes have occurred to work in schools over the past five years, in particular?	Reported change in work hours and work demands over the past five years (2013-2017)
4. What are the effects of these changes?	Reported impact of change on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff teaching and learning work
5. What actions or strategies support work in schools?	Tallying and ranking of suggested strategies

Qualitative data from the open-response sections of the questionnaire are integrated throughout the findings by highlighting the key themes emerging in that data and including quotes from respondents.

The key focus of the study is to examine the positioning of teaching and learning within the school context. However, in recognition of the enormous diversity of school contexts, we first explore demographic and employment conditions, including work hours, across the state. Subsequently we map the nature of work in schools and examine recent changes and effects of those changes. We conclude with a report on staff views of what actions should be taken to support work in schools so that teaching and student learning can be optimised.

TEACHERS AND THEIR WORK IN SCHOOLS

Of the 18,234 survey participants, 17,991 reported their employment role: 13,301 (73.9 per cent) are classroom or specialist teachers; 3182 (17.7 per cent) are head teachers and assistant principals; 1412 (7.8 per cent) principals and deputy principals; and 96 (0.5 per cent) are consultants.

Permanent, temporary and casual employment

Approximately 76.6 per cent of respondents were employed in a permanent role, with an additional 20.6 per cent employed on a temporary basis and 2.8 per cent being casual employees.

Permanent employees (1.0 full-time) are comprised of 86.5 per cent who work full-time, 11.2 per cent who work at least three days per week (0.6 fractional) but not full-time and 2.3 per cent who work less than three days per week. For temporary employees, survey representation is 79.6 per cent full-time, 14.8 per cent between three days per week and full-time, and 5.9 per cent less than three days per week. Employees engaged on a casual basis mostly worked 0-50 days per year (22.2 per cent) or more than 200 days per year (22.4 per cent) with 18 or 19 per cent working in each of the 51-100, 101-150 and 151-200 days per year categories.

This means that nearly one-third of classroom and specialist teachers who responded to the survey do not have permanent employment.

It is evident that among casual workers in schools very low levels of employment (between 0 and 50 days) and also very high levels of employment (more than 200 days) are the most commonly experienced.

Metropolitan, provincial and remote employment

The age of teachers in schools across geographical settings is similar, although provincial schools tend to have a slightly higher mean age, reflecting the fact that young teachers are more highly represented in metropolitan and remote schools (see Table 2, below).

Table 2: Staff: age, gender and employment status by geographical setting

		Metropolitan	Provincial	Remote	Total
Age	Number	11,560	5,196	958	17,714
	Minimum-maximum	21-80	20-76	21-73	20-80
	Mean	42.97	44.56	42.66	43.42
	Standard deviation	11.584	11.382	11.754	11.558
	Standard error of mean	0.1077	0.1579	0.3798	0.0868
Gender	Number	11,604	5,206	960	17,770
	Female	9,217	3,905	741	13,863
	Male	2,356	1,291	218	3865
	Non binary or different identity	31	10	1	42
Employment status	Number	11,640	5,225	961	17,826
	Permanent	9,024	3,969	700	13,693
	Temporary	2,320	1,104	239	3,663
	Casual	296	152	22	470

While approximately 22 per cent of the respondents are male teachers, this varies slightly with geographical location. In metropolitan schools, males comprise one in five staff (20 per cent), whereas in provincial schools this is more like one in four (25 per cent) and remote sits in between (23 per cent).

Similarly there is little variation in relation to employment status, with permanent employment only slightly more common in metropolitan schools (77.5 per cent) than provincial (76 per cent) and remote schools (73 per cent). While casual employment shows little difference, at around 2 per cent, temporary employment shows a relationship inverse to that of permanent employment with lower levels in metropolitan schools (19.9 per cent) than in provincial (21.1 per cent) and remote (25 per cent). Remote schools also show slightly younger and less experienced staff — both in terms of years at their current school and total years in teaching. As noted, there are well-documented difficulties in attracting and retaining staff in rural and remote schools (Cuervo & Acquaro, 2016; Lassig et al, 2015; Reid et al, 2010) so the higher proportions of temporary positions in these schools may be related to this. This finding is worthy of further research, given the current investment in redressing the gaps between urban and rural and remote education.

Staff in schools were also asked to estimate the socio-economic status (SES) of the students in their school, rating their own school as either very advantaged, advantaged, average, disadvantaged or very disadvantaged. While this data is not verified by rigorous metrics, it represents the teacher's own evaluation of their school's relative SES. Cross-tabulation outlines some interesting relationships between teacher-reported school SES and the proportion of permanent, temporary and casual teachers. Disadvantaged and average SES schools were more likely to report lower levels of permanent employment and higher levels of temporary employment than those schools with above average SES and also very disadvantaged schools. Disadvantaged schools were also more likely to report higher levels of casual employment. These findings require further in-depth analysis, ideally using a more reliable measure of school SES.

WORK HOURS IN SCHOOLS

We asked staff to estimate their average hours per week for three different conditions:

1. hours at school during term time
2. hours at home during term time;
3. hours at home during school holidays.

Total hours during term were calculated by adding 1. and 2. as shown in Table 3. The average (mean) total hours that full-time employed classroom and specialist teachers work during term is 55 per week, comprised of slightly more than 43 hours per week in school plus approximately a further 11 hours per week at home.

Table 3: Working hours by employment role

		Employment role									
		Teachers (classroom or specialist)		Assistant principal or head teacher		Principal or deputy principal		Consultant		Total	
		<1.0	Full-time	<1.0	Full-time	<1.0	Full-time	<1.0	Full-time	<1.0	Full-time
Average hours/ week at school during term	Valid number	2,241	8,114	171	2,482	19	1,194	2	44	2,433	11,834
	Minimum	1	30	5	30	9	30	18	35	1	30
	Maximum	75	75	65	70	50	75	27	60	75	75
	Mean	26	43	30	45	37	50	23	45	26	44
	Median	27	44	30	45	40	50	23	45	27	45
	Mode	24	40	40	45	45	50	18 ^a	40	24	45
Average hours/ week at home during term	Valid number	2,217	9,636	171	2,831	18	1,299	2	50	2,408	13,816
	Minimum	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0
	Maximum	40	40	40	40	28	40	15	30	40	40
	Mean	10	11	12	12	11	12	9	11	10	11
	Median	8	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	8	10
	Mode	10	10	10	10	10	10	2 ^a	10	10	10
Total hours during term	Valid number	2,202	7,959	170	2,445	18	1,178	2	41	2,392	11,623
	Minimum	1	30	10	36	10	37	20	42	1	30
	Maximum	108	100	85	106	73	100	42	75	108	106
	Mean	35	55	41	58	47	62	31	55	36	56
	Median	35	55	42	57	49	60	31	55	36	55
	Mode	40	50	50	60	50	60	20 ^a	60	40	60

^a Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

This is slightly higher than the hours reported recently in Victoria (Weldon & Ingvarson, 2016). Both the Victorian and NSW results, however, are considerably higher than those of the OECD, which measures teachers' required hours in Australia overall at approximately 1200 hours per year, inclusive of contact hours at around 800 hours per year — which is above the OECD average (OECD, 2014). By our measure, teachers are reporting hours of work at school (inclusive of contact and non-contact time) at approximately 1720 hours per year, suggesting they are high on an international as well as domestic scale.

Consultants' hours are similar to classroom/specialist teachers' hours at 55 per week, with a similar at-school/at-home breakdown. Assistant principals' or head teachers' average term hours are 58 per week (approximately

45 at school and approximately 12 at home), while principals' or deputy principals' self-reported hours are 62 per week (50 at school and approximately 12 at home). Again, this is slightly higher than principal hours reported in Victoria (Weldon & Ingvarson, 2016). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2003) defined very long working hours as 50 hours or more per week, a category used by labour market scholars (Campbell, 2007; Campbell & van Wanrooy, 2013; Charlesworth, Strazdins, O'Brien, & Sims, 2011; Venn, Carey, Strazdins, & Burgess, 2016). All categories of teachers are, by this definition, working "very long hours", reflecting the ongoing expansion of teachers' working hours documented in a range of the research literature (Bridges & Searle, 2011; Butt & Lance, 2005; NSW Public Service Commission, 2017), and suggested by our phase one study (McGrath-Champ, Wilson, et al, 2017). Among employees, while usually very long working hours tend to be less prevalent in predominantly female occupation groups (ABS 2003), it is evident that this is not the case with NSW public school teachers.

Across all these employment roles, work undertaken at home was consistently 11 or 12 hours per week, indicating that work in schools is too great in volume to be undertaken at the school workplace. Staff also reported working up to 40 hours per week during school holidays, however the most frequently reported estimate (mode) was 10 hours per week. A large proportion also reported working 20 hours per week during school holidays.

Self-reported estimates for average hours per week are presented for those employed in both permanent and temporary full-time work in schools in the following pyramid diagrams, Figure 1 (below) and Figure 2 (page 16). The diagrams include a breakdown by gender. Total work hours per week do not appear to vary much by gender or permanent/temporary employment status (see Figure 1, below). However, on calculation we find women report just marginally higher total average hours of 56.9 while for males it is 55.1. This is statistically significant on the Independent Samples Mann-Whitney U-test ($t=8.94, p<.001, n=11,580$).

Figure 1: Full-time permanent or temporary staff total average hours/week at school and at home during term time, by gender

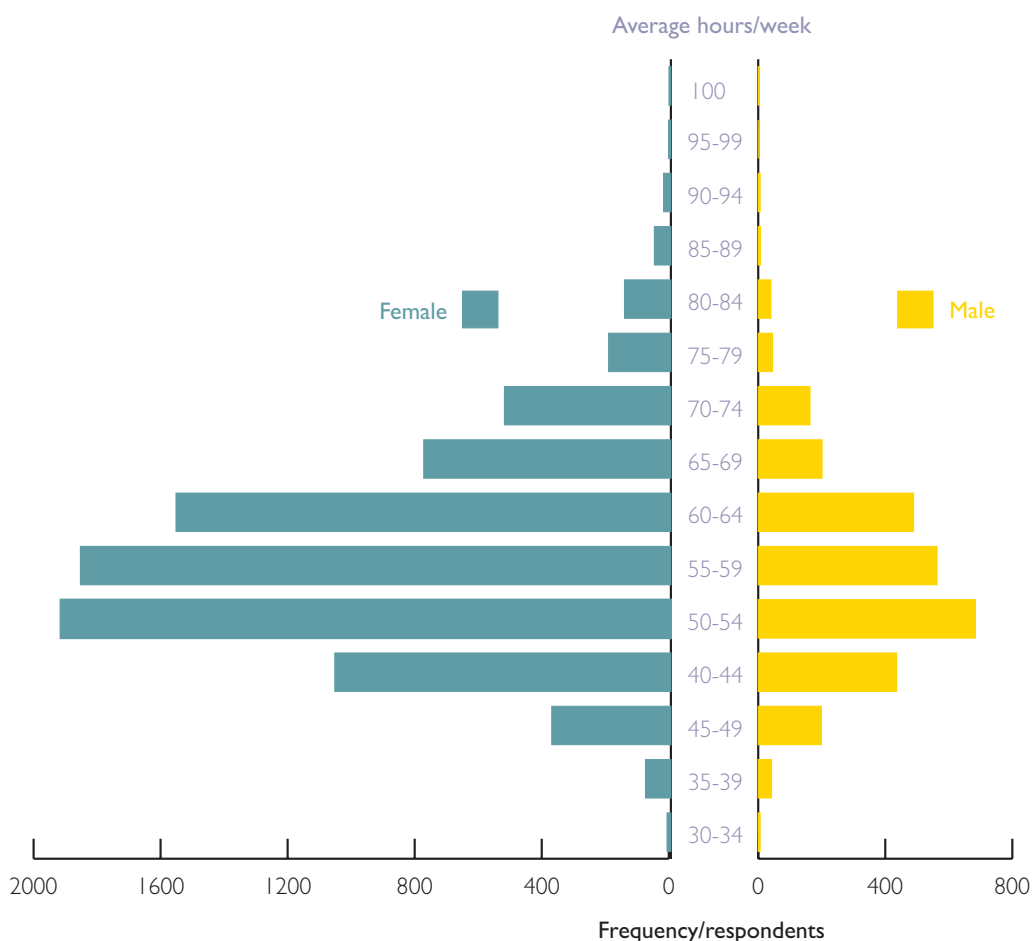
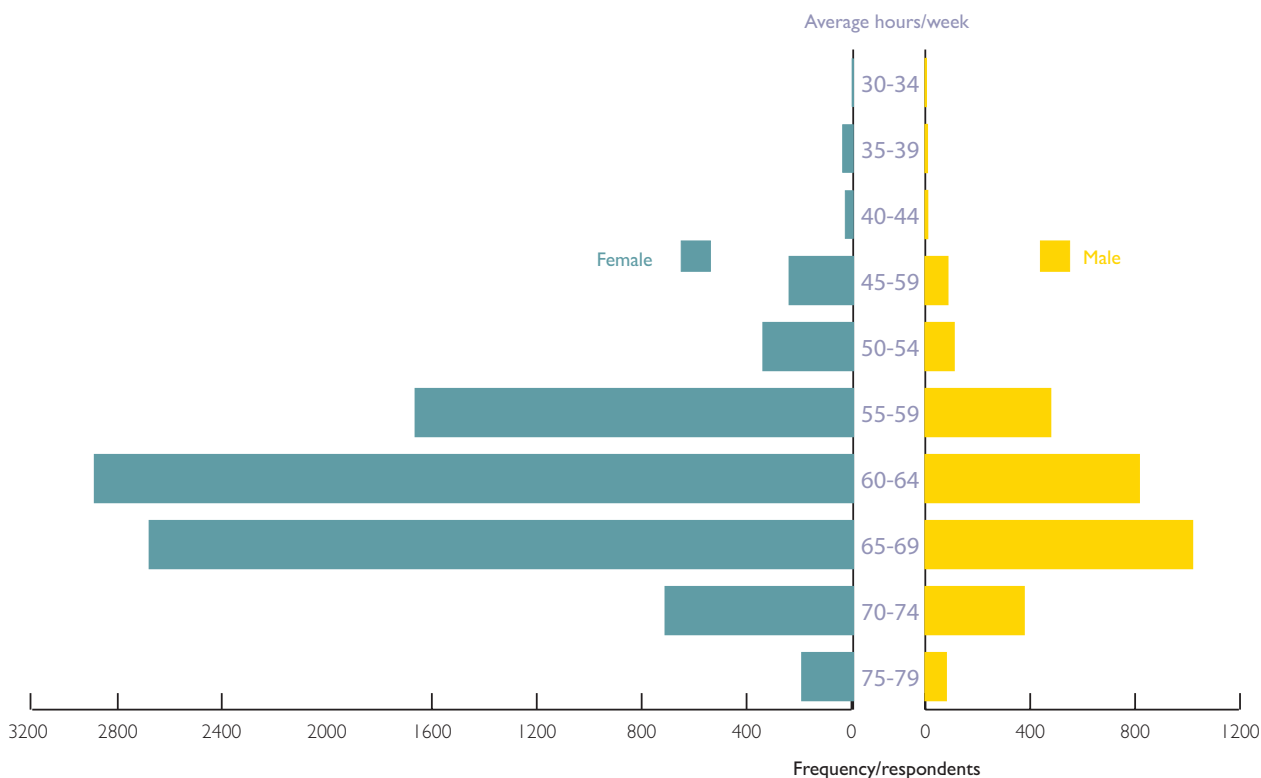


Figure 2: Full-time permanent or temporary staff average hours/week at school during term



We see more substantial variation in work hours in regard to work role (see Table 3, page 14). Here it is evident that all staff are reporting high work hours, although naturally these vary by their full-time/part-time status. The part-time figures (<1FTE) are difficult to discuss as a whole group because of the wide range of hours worked within that category. However, looking at those employed full-time, we see that the most commonly reported total hours during per term, the modal response, is 50 for classroom teachers, specialist teachers and head teachers; 55 for consultants; and 60 for assistant principals, deputy principals and principals (although principals showed multiple modes; this is the lowest).

The means, or arithmetic averages, are a little different to the modes as they are impacted by a skewed distribution, with some staff reporting very high hours. The maximum full-time reported average weekly hours range between 75 and 106 across the different roles. We see the highest mean full-time hours among principals (63) followed by deputy principals (60), assistant principals (59), head teachers (57), classroom teachers (56), consultants (55) and specialist teachers (53) (see Table 4, page 17).

One of the major points of comment from respondents concerned how large, in terms of time, the job of teaching now is. These reports were not only by teachers with lengthy working experience but also from those with relatively short experience in schools.

“I am currently on leave from the head teacher position and am working as a classroom teacher. This decision was due to excessive work hours, averaging 80-plus hours per week in term and 50-plus hours in ‘holidays’ as a head teacher for six years. The stress of this unsustainable workload left me physically exhausted and mentally drained. Total burn out. Having been working as a classroom teacher for a year, I still feel unable to resume my duties, although I am gradually recovering. I felt there was no real support for me in [the] couple of years building up to this decision. I was told to reprioritise, but when I did, I was continually instructed to do things I had prioritised at a low level.” (#6703525788)

Table 4: Hours during term by school role and full-time equivalent

		Average hours/week at school during term		Average hours/week at home during term		Total hours during term	
		<1.0 FTE	Full-time	<1.0 FTE	Full-time	<1.0 FTE	Full-time
Classroom teacher	Valid number	1,522	7,187	1,505	8,556	1,494	7,054
	Minimum	1	30	0	0	1	30
	Maximum	72	75	40	40	108	100
	Mean	26	44	10	11	36	56
	Median	27	45	9	10	35	55
	Mode	24	40 ^a	10	10	40	50
Specialist teacher (e.g. LAST, librarian, school counsellor, careers advisor, consultant)	Valid number	719	927	712	1,080	708	905
	Minimum	2	30	0	0	2	32
	Maximum	75	75	40	40	85	90
	Mean	26	42	9	10	34	53
	Median	27	40	8	10	35	50
	Mode	24	40	10	10	40	50
Head teacher	Valid number	52	1,278	51	1,471	51	1,265
	Minimum	6	30	2	0	13	37
	Maximum	50	70	40	40	65	106
	Mean	30	44	12	12	42	57
	Median	30	45	10	10	42	55
	Mode	40	45	5	10	50	50
Deputy principal	Valid number	15	451	15	493	15	446
	Minimum	9	30	1	1	10	37
	Maximum	45	75	28	40	73	100
	Mean	37	48	12	11	49	60
	Median	40	50	10	10	50	59
	Mode	45	50	10	10	50	60
Assistant principal	Valid number	119	1,204	120	1,360	119	1,180
	Minimum	5	30	1	0	10	36
	Maximum	65	70	40	40	85	100
	Mean	30	47	11	12	41	59
	Median	30	45	10	10	40	60
	Mode	30	45	10	10	40 ^a	60
Principal	Valid number	4	743	3	806	3	732
	Minimum	21	30	5	0	26	40
	Maximum	50	75	8	40	53	94
	Mean	38	51	7	12	40	63
	Median	40	50	7	10	42	60
	Mode	21 ^a	50	5 ^a	10	26 ^a	60
Consultant	Valid number	2	44	2	50	2	41
	Minimum	18	35	2	0	20	42
	Maximum	27	60	15	30	42	75
	Mean	23	45	9	11	31	55
	Median	23	45	9	10	31	55
	Mode	18 ^a	40	2 ^a	10	20 ^a	60
Total	Valid number	2,433	11,834	2,408	13,816	2,392	11,623
	Minimum	1	30	0	0	1	30
	Maximum	75	75	40	40	108	106
	Mean	26	44	10	11	36	56
	Median	27	45	8	10	36	55
	Mode	24	45	10	10	40	60

^a Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

WORK ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

The roles of teachers are highly complex and dynamic. In this survey we asked staff to reflect on a range of work activities, developed from earlier research, and to indicate the frequency with which they undertook those tasks — or to indicate whether the task was not relevant to their school role.

Frequency of activities undertaken in schools

Daily activities

Table 5 (page 19) outlines the top 10 activities the participants identified with “I do this work every day”. These are in order of how frequently they were reported as part of daily work, with the most prevalent at the top. Although we recognise that some times of the year are busier with particular tasks than others, for example when student reports are due, we asked for a general assessment of frequency in order to capture a broader picture of teachers’ work across the year. They are ranked according to the proportion of the total sample which listed them as daily activities; but the table also provides data for three categories of school role: classroom/specialist teachers, head teachers and assistant principals; and principals and deputy principals.

Unsurprisingly the type of daily work varies with the school role. However, it is clear that irrespective of role a very large majority of daily work is concerned with teaching and learning activities. Among principals, deputies and consultants, approximately 24 per cent undertake lesson planning and preparation daily. More than half of teachers develop strategies for meeting the needs of students and more than 35 per cent work specifically on curriculum differentiation to meet this aim. Among classroom teachers, head teachers and assistant principals, the numbers undertaking these activities are very high, confirming that much of the daily activity in schools is oriented around teaching and learning. The totals in this table profile the work done within schools.

The daily work undertaken in schools, reported in Table 5 (page 19), shows some clear characteristics. All of the activities in the top 10 can be grouped into the following:

1. **Teaching** — relating to the act of teaching itself, or the preparation and follow up associated with it; including planning, supervision, marking and maintenance of the classroom environment.
2. **Getting to know students** — finding opportunities to communicate and get to know students as individuals, including supervision and welfare work around classroom learning and issues beyond the classroom.
3. **Adjustment** — where 1. and 2., above, are brought together to tailor teaching and learning to meet student needs, including curriculum differentiation and other strategic pedagogical approaches to achieve this aim.

Although teaching and learning work is diverse and complex in enactment, it is evident that in reflecting on their professional work, the majority of teachers have reported undertaking a similar range of daily tasks.

All tasks that appeared within the profile of work done in schools on a daily basis are included and grouped in a summary in Table 6 (page 20). Those in the top 10 are in **green** and again highlight the focus on getting to know students, planning work and engaging in teaching and learning so that it meets the needs of students. However, it is also interesting to note the many other duties that substantial numbers of teachers now undertake on a daily basis. For example, more than 25 per cent report daily work on planning and implementation of statewide policies; and planning and implementation of school initiatives and projects. This represents more than 4000 staff in schools, who undertake this work on a daily basis. Even the small proportions reporting daily work on “navigating implementation of new external technology platforms e.g. SPaRO, Scout, PLAN”, equate to more than 1000 staff across the state.

Table 5: Work in school — top 10 most commonly reported activities done every day

I do this work every day	Teachers (classroom or specialist)			Assistant principal or head teacher			Principal or deputy principal			Consultant			Total	
	Count	Teacher %	Total %	Count	AP/HT %	Total %	Count	P/DP %	Total %	Count	Consult %	Total %	Count	Total %
1. Planning and preparation of lessons	10,940	88.4	65.1	2,656	86.9	15.8	319	24.3	1.9	21	33.9	0.1	13,936	82.9
2. Differentiating the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students	10,296	83.5	61.4	2,584	84.6	15.4	472	35.9	2.8	27	43.5	0.2	13,379	79.8
3. Developing other strategies to meet the learning needs of students (e.g. those with special needs, low-engagement/ attainment etc)	9,607	77.7	57.2	2,319	75.9	13.8	718	54.3	4.3	34	54.0	0.2	12,678	75.4
4. Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals, and understand their backgrounds	9,136	79.3	58.2	2,299	79.9	14.7	979	79.4	6.2	20	33.3	0.1	12,434	79.2
5. Communicating with individual students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare/wellbeing issues, student engagement and behaviour)	8,094	70.2	51.5	2,264	78.6	14.4	983	79.5	6.3	22	36.7	0.1	11,363	72.4
6. Communicating with individual students about their classroom learning other than as part of formal feedback; include email correspondence or other digital tools	7,313	63.5	46.6	1,937	67.2	12.3	553	44.9	3.5	19	32.2	0.1	9,822	62.6
7. Classroom environment and equipment maintenance, both curricular and extra-curricular	7,301	63.6	46.7	1,810	63.0	11.6	509	41.4	3.3	16	27.6	0.1	9,636	61.6
8. Playground duty and other supervision tasks	6,862	59.7	43.8	1,793	62.3	11.5	744	60.4	4.8	16	27.1	0.1	9,415	60.1
9. Marking students' work.	7,208	60.4	44.3	1,693	56.7	10.4	235	18.5	1.4	16	25.8	0.1	9,152	56.3
10. Identifying, responding to and documenting student behaviour, welfare and wellbeing concerns	5,866	55.4	40.4	1,921	71.1	13.2	843	72.9	5.8	24	42.9	0.2	8,654	59.6

Table 6: Profile of daily work in schools

Planning and programming
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and preparation of lessons. 82.9 per cent • Differentiating the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students. 79.8 per cent • Developing other strategies to meet the learning needs of students (e.g. those with special needs, low-engagement) 75.4 per cent • Planning and implementation of statewide policies. (e.g. literacy and numeracy strategy.) 27.4 per cent • Planning and implementation of school initiatives and projects (e.g. STEM, PBL, etc) 25.5 per cent • Planning and preparation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) 15.7 per cent • Developing new units of work and/or teaching programs. 15.4 per cent
Collegial interactions and professional learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting/managing professional colleagues and/or other school staff. 55.9 per cent • Finding opportunities to reflect on and personally evaluate your teaching practice both formal and informal. 46.6 per cent • Observing, mentoring or supervising other teachers, whether part of official performance development processes or otherwise. 24.9 per cent • Before and/or after school hours meetings and/or professional learning. 23.4 per cent • Working on accreditation-related requirements. 8.4 per cent • Attending professional learning during school hours. 3.6 per cent
Relationships, welfare and communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals, and understand their backgrounds. 79.2 per cent • Communicating with individual students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare/wellbeing issues, student engagement and behaviour) 72.4 per cent • Communicating with individual students about their classroom learning other than as part of formal feedback. 62.6 per cent • Classroom environment and equipment maintenance, both curricular and extra-curricular. 61.6 per cent • Playground duty and other supervision tasks. 60.1 per cent • Communication and cooperation with parents, guardians: and carers. 43 per cent • Engaging in extracurricular activities with students (e.g. sports, cultural activities before or after school). 18.1 per cent • Liaising with and working with external agencies in relation to student needs. 12.3 per cent • Engaging in promotional activities for your school/public education. 10.6 per cent
Policies, procedures and administration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying, responding to and documenting student behaviour, welfare and wellbeing concerns. 59.6 per cent • Providing evidence of implementing NSW departmental policies and procedures. 14.2 per cent • Workplace health and safety requirements (e.g. planning and reporting on risk or incidents relating to lessons or excursions) 11.4 per cent • Work associated with the School Excellence Framework, including self-assessment and external validation. 7.5 per cent • Navigating implementation of new external technology platforms (e.g. SPaRO, Scout) 7 per cent • Budgeting and financing at whole school level, faculty level, curriculum level or extra-curricular level. 7.5 per cent
Assessment and reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking students' work. 56.3 per cent • Classroom work associated with external assessment (e.g. specific orientation and preparation of students) 19.1 per cent • Reporting to parents and caregivers. 15.7 per cent • Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies. 12.2 per cent • Writing and/or developing assessment tasks. 10.1 per cent • Responding to and dealing with NESA requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspections. 9.6 per cent • Administration and documentation requirements relating to HSC, ROSA and VET. 9 per cent • Reporting of student attainment information to external authorities. (e.g. Department, NESA etc) 3.3 per cent

Weekly and other frequency activities

Daily work is overlain with additional duties that occur on a weekly basis or other frequency. Some duties that were reported as daily work for a minority of staff were, for a much larger majority, undertaken as weekly duties (“I do this work, not every day, but every week”) or with another frequency (“I do this work but not every week”). Naturally, there is also variation in the profile of these activities according to the staff role in the school, but here again, reflecting on the total group we can add additional insight into the overall nature, or profile, of work in schools.

A summary of the top 10 activities most frequently reported as “every day”, “not every day, but every week” and “I do this work but not every week” is included in Figure 3 (page 22). It should be noted that the last of those categories represents work that may occur on a term basis, or it may occur more frequently on a fortnightly basis, for example — the metric used here does not distinguish except to say that these activities do not occur on a weekly basis. Additionally, these activities may be intense in nature and may involve lengthy periods of time.

The activities “playground duty and other supervision”, “working on accreditation-related requirements” and “reporting to parents and caregivers” are highlighted in purple. These activities are reported by a large proportion of staff, but at different levels of frequency. A total of 94.2 per cent of teachers report undertaking supervision duties either daily or weekly, although not directly focused on teaching and learning these activities are important for relationship building and student welfare. Teachers reported that playground duty was not an area requiring additional time or resources although it was an activity identified in qualitative data as causing concern, where some teachers described the difficulty in meeting the high levels of need required by some students in this context.

A total of 70 per cent of teachers engage in reporting to parents on either a weekly (27 per cent) or less than weekly (51.5 per cent) basis. Survey respondents noted that parent-related reporting was becoming more complex, frequent, repetitious, and focused on complying with departmental requirements. Similarly, though somewhat more surprising, a total of 80.5 per cent of teachers in schools report working on accreditation-related requirements on either a weekly (29 per cent) or other-frequency (58.6 per cent) basis. Unlike playground duty, both these frequently occurring activities were the focus of many comments in qualitative data and featured among activities that teachers were likely to evaluate negatively. Additional details on these evaluations are presented later in this report.

The most frequently reported daily activities are dominated by work relating to getting to know students, planning work, and engaging in teaching and learning so that it meets the needs of students. However, the top 10, “not daily, but weekly” activities span a more diverse range of work, including a large proportion (65.1 per cent) reporting weekly attendance at out-of-school-hours meetings, professional development and engaging in extra-curricular activities (42.7 per cent) and a range of other administrative activities, such as the development of new units of work (possibly related to recent curriculum and syllabus renewal).

The top 10 activities reported as “not weekly” are dominated by administrative duties, often involving paperwork, data and reporting. These duties were the focus of a great deal of comment in the open-response items. Although they are reported as less frequent there are many claims that this type of work is increasing and encroaching on the primacy of other activities. From the abundant qualitative responses about these matters, the following are indicative of very widely held sentiment.

“The amount of paperwork to be completed is ridiculous.” (# 6703577037)

“The data collection is insane!” (#6755322598)

“The amount of time spent on paperwork is ridiculous — we should be teaching not ticking boxes.” (#6703461659)

“The paperwork and administrative work has increased enormously.” (#6703503896)

“The amount of paperwork I need to complete is totally unachievable.” (#6703505593)

“Accountability has increased as responsibility has been decentralised.” (#6703485991)

“The amount of paperwork has grown exponentially.” (#6703448368)

“The amount of ‘box-ticking’ paperwork and time spent proving our quality of teaching has greatly increased.” (#6703452349)

“Data and paperwork for accountability has increased exponentially.” (#6703494548)

And in a most pithy, succinct manner these concerns were summarised by a respondent thus:

“Cloning would help immensely.” (#6721429687)

These comments broadly reflect the ongoing intensification of teachers’ work (Easthope & Easthope, 2000), as they complete their daily work amid what has been described in our earlier work with Federation members as a “tsunami” of paperwork (Fitzgerald et al, under review) and other administrative requirements (McGrath-Champ, Wilson, et al, 2017).

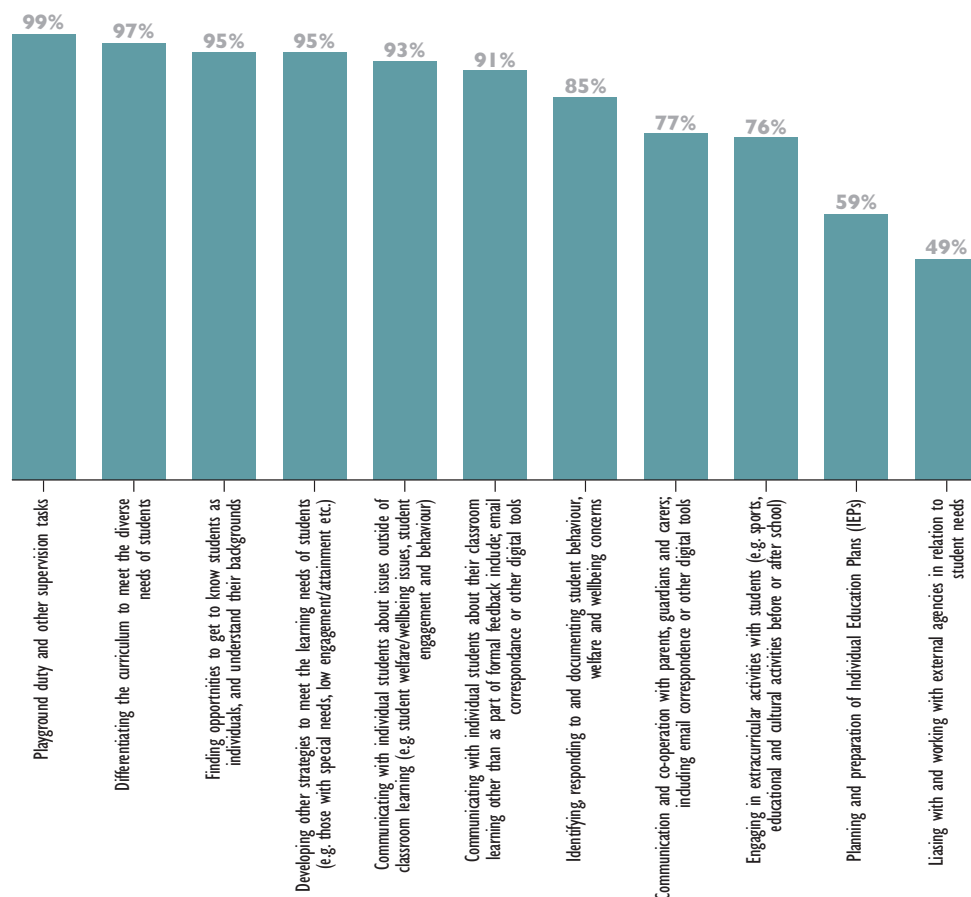
Figure 3: Summary of frequency of work activities

Activity Frequency	I do this work every day	I do this work, not every day, but every week	I do this work, but not every week
Top 10 (in rank order)	Planning and preparation of lessons 82.9%	Before and/or after school hours meetings and/or professional learning 65.1%	Attending professional learning during school hours 68%
	Differentiating the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students 79.8%	Engaging in extracurricular activities with students (e.g. sports and cultural activities) 42.7%	Workplace health and safety requirements (e.g. planning and reporting on risk or incidents) 59.5%
	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals 79.2%	Developing new units of work and/or teaching programs 41.7%	Reporting of student attainment information to external authorities (e.g. Department, NESA etc) 59.3%
	Developing other strategies to meet the learning needs of students (e.g. those with special needs, low engagement) 75.4%	Writing and/or developing assessment tasks 41.1%	Working on accreditation-related requirements 58.6%
	Communicating with individual students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare) 72.4%	Planning and implementation of school initiatives and projects (e.g. STEM, PBL, etc) 37.5%	Work associated with the School Excellence Framework, including self-assessment and external validation 53.5%
	Communicating with individual students about their classroom learning other than as part of formal feedback 62.6%	Communication and cooperation with parents, guardians and carers 34.9%	Reporting to parents and caregivers 51.5%
	Classroom environment and equipment maintenance, both curricular and extra-curricular 61.6%	Playground duty and other supervision 34.1%	Responding to and dealing with NESA requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspections 51.5%
	Playground duty and other supervision 60.1%	Finding opportunities to reflect on and personally evaluate your teaching practice both formal and informal 29.8%	Engaging in promotional activities for your school/public education 50%
	Identifying, responding to and documenting student behaviour, welfare and wellbeing concerns 59.6%	Reporting to parents and caregivers 29%	Providing evidence of implementing NSW departmental policies and procedures 48.9%
	Marking students' work 56.3%	Working on accreditation-related requirements 27%	Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies 47.5%

Key: Green – Top 10 most common activities | Purple – Activities in top 10 for > 1 frequency category

It is notable that despite this intensification, NSW public school teachers are evidently strategising to preserve their work that is most focused on students. Figure 4 (below) highlights the extremely high proportions maintaining focus on working directly with students to meet their individual needs. The preservation of this student-oriented work may explain the rise in work hours with the imposition of new, administrative demands. As teachers continue to make students the focus of their work, the new tasks impose an additional burden. Qualitative comments make it clear that many teachers are suffering from the additional demands and feel frustrated that these distract them from their work with students. The following section provides more detail on how the range of professional activities are evaluated by teachers.

Figure 4: Student-focused work (daily or not daily but weekly) across all teaching roles



Evaluation of activities undertaken in schools

Figure 5 (page 24) shows the activities with the four highest and four lowest proportions agreeing/disagreeing with five different evaluative statements. Respondents were asked to mark those activities they believed met the characteristic of these five statements:

1. This work is important/necessary.
2. More time and resources are needed for this work.
3. The way this work is managed is too time consuming/cumbersome.
4. This work is focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning.
5. Less time and resources should be spent on this work.

A clear pattern emerges in this data, where positively evaluated activities (that are valued as important/necessary, worthy of more time and resources) relate to teaching and learning activities such as building relationships with and supporting students, while negatively evaluated items (that are seen as time consuming/cumbersome, focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning and should have less time and resources spent on them) are dominated by administrative activities.

Figure 5: Evaluative summary of work activities

Evaluation	This work is important/necessary	More time and resources are needed for this work	The way this work is managed is too time consuming/cumbersome	This work is focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning	Less time and resources should be spent on this work
Agree	Planning and preparation of lessons	Developing other strategies to meet the learning needs of students (e.g. those with special needs, low-engagement)	Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies	Reporting to parents and caregivers	Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies
	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals	Developing new units of work and/or teaching programs	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures	Classroom work associated with external assessment (e.g. specific orientation and preparation)
	Communicating with students about their classroom learning	Differentiating the curriculum to meet the needs of students	Planning and implementation of statewide policies. (e.g. literacy/ numeracy strategy)	Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures
	Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare)	Planning and implementation of school projects/innovations (e.g. STEM, PBL, etc)	Responding to and dealing with NESA requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspections	Working on accreditation-related requirements	Working on accreditation related requirements
Disagree	Responding to and dealing with NESA requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspections	Reporting of student attainment information to external authorities (e.g. Department, NESA etc)	Finding opportunities to reflect on and personally evaluate your teaching practice both formal/informal	Engaging in extracurricular activities with students (e.g. sports and cultural activities)	Engaging in extracurricular activities with students (e.g. sports and cultural activities)
	Work associated with the School Excellence Framework, including self-assessment and external validation	Playground duty and other supervision tasks	Communicating with students about their classroom learning	Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare)	Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare)
	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures.	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures	Supporting/managing professional colleagues and/or other school staff	Communicating with students about their classroom learning	Communicating with students about their classroom learning
	Navigating implementation of new external technology platforms (e.g. SpARQ, Scout, PLAN)	Administration and documentation requirements relating to HSC, ROSA and VET	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals

Key: Green – Top 4 most positively evaluated activities | Purple – Top 4 most negatively evaluated activities

Teachers evaluated their most frequent daily activities, associated with getting to know their students, and also planning and delivering teaching and learning so that it meets the needs of students, positively — identifying this work as important and necessary but also in need of more time and resources. By contrast teachers identified administrative types of activities, often involving documentation, working with data and accreditation requirements, as the cumbersome, time-consuming and not worthy of additional time or resources. This pattern, apparent in data from throughout the survey, reflects a tension between how teaching and learning and administrative activities are valued and allocated time and resources. In qualitative data, teachers frequently commented that administrative tasks were encroaching upon the time they normally preserved for teaching and learning work.

A commonly expressed view was that “teachers should be teaching, building rapport with students and planning exciting and engaging lessons and programs, not doing so much admin and data collection” (#6703442198). And yet a very common perception was that, instead, they were “spending so much time on assessment and data entry, rather than having time to get to know their students as individuals” (#6705946142). Having “so much admin work” meant “not enough quality time to prepare for differentiated lessons, individual student difficulties and [the] organisation of [the] classroom” (#6739948343). The quotes included in this section are drawn from a wider set of indicative quotes reflecting how respondents evaluated their work activities. Further quotes are provided in the Appendix.

To add depth to the analysis we differentiated the evaluation of activities by how frequently they are performed (see Figure 6, page 26).

Less frequent but negatively evaluated work includes “Planning and implementation of statewide policies (e.g. literacy/numeracy strategy)”, which is highlighted in purple as it does not appear on the top 10 activities for any of the frequency categories. This work is only done daily by 27 per cent of the sample or weekly by 26 per cent. However, despite this it is rated as highly time consuming and/or cumbersome by 30 per cent of staff. There is a high correlation between undertaking this activity, which is most evident among principals and deputy principals (49 per cent report it is daily work) and providing this negative evaluation. In other words, the small proportion of teachers who undertake this work almost universally rate it as cumbersome and time consuming.

More frequently undertaken, but negatively evaluated, activities include playground duty. More than 60 per cent of teachers reported doing playground duty every day and an additional 34 per cent said they did it, not every day, but every week. Qualitative data recorded that student/playground supervision during breaks has become more demanding with the increased range of social/emotional student needs and that, in conjunction with the imposts of administrative duties, abundant meetings and so forth, this task can be experienced as onerous. Playground and other supervision duties, though reported via the quantitative data not as time consuming/cumbersome was seen as needing no additional time or resources, with clear indications that some teachers struggle with this in conjunction with the expanding array of administrative duties.

Some 80 per cent of teachers in schools report working on accreditation-related requirements on either a weekly or less-than-weekly basis, yet this work is evaluated as time consuming/cumbersome (28 per cent), focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning (38 per cent) and should have less time spent on it (16 per cent).

“In a big school with a large staff, I have four duties a week. That doesn't include my staffroom duty or the extra duty on a rotating basis whilst we have our staff meetings.” (#6743112742)

“Huge increase in social/emotional needs of students has meant break times require additional supervision in alternate play spaces.” (#6707313744)

Other common daily activities such as communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning and developing strategies to meet the learning needs of students were also reported as requiring more time and resources. Throughout the data, students were reported as “having more intense learning needs” (#6703436414), due to “the support personnel [having] decreased from the Department” (#6710676142)

Figure 6: Evaluation and frequency of work activities

Evaluation	This work is important/necessary	More time and resources are needed for this work	The way this work is managed is too time consuming/ cumbersome	This work is focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning	Less time and resources should be spent on this work
Agree	Planning and preparation of lessons	Developing other strategies to meet the learning needs of students (e.g. those with special needs, low-engagement)	Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies	Reporting to parents and caregivers	Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies
	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals	Developing new units of work and/or teaching programs	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures	Classroom work associated with external assessment (e.g. specific orientation and preparation)
	Communicating with students about their classroom learning	Differentiating the curriculum to meet the needs of students	Planning and implementation of statewide policies (e.g. literacy/ numeracy strategy)	Data collection analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures
	Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare)	Planning and implementation of school projects/innovations (e.g. STEM, PBL, etc.)	Responding to and dealing with NESAs requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspections	Working on accreditation-related requirements	Working on accreditation-related requirements
	Responding to and dealing with NESAs requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspections	Reporting of student attainment information to external authorities (e.g. Department, NESAs etc)	Finding opportunities to reflect on and personally evaluate your teaching practice both formal/informal	Engaging in extracurricular activities with students (e.g. sports and cultural activities)	Engaging in extracurricular activities with students (e.g. sports and cultural activities)
Disagree	Work associated with the School Excellence Framework, including self-assessment and external validation	Playground duty and other supervision tasks	Communicating with students about their classroom learning	Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare)	Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare)
	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures	Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures	Supporting/managing professional colleagues and/or other school staff	Communicating with students about their classroom learning	Communicating with students about their classroom learning
	Navigating implementation of new external technology platforms (e.g. SPaRO, Scout, PLAN)	Administration and documentation requirements relating to HSC, ROSA and VET	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals	Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals

Key: Green – daily | Purple – weekly | Yellow – other frequency | Grey – work not in the top 10 most frequent | White – Activities in top 10 > 1 frequency category

Overall, in Figure 6 (page 26), we see a pattern that might reasonably be expected, where frequently undertaken activities are highly valued as work that is important and needed; requiring more time and resources; and not cumbersome or poorly implemented. Indeed these daily activities, marked in **green**, are very much focused on their teaching and students' learning — consequently we see the fewest respondents rated them as concerned with compliance rather than teaching and learning.

Work that is frequently reported as occurring not daily, but weekly is both positively and negatively evaluated. Some of weekly teaching and learning activities, e.g. developing new units of work, are reported to require more time and resources. Other weekly work, such as working on accreditation requirements and planning/ implementing statewide policies, are negatively evaluated as being time-consuming, cumbersome, focused primarily on compliance and deserving of less time and resources.

Indeed activities undertaken on a frequency that is not daily or weekly are dominated by administrative, paperwork and reporting work related to policy implementation, accountability and compliance. These represent a new range of tasks not discussed in the literature on teachers' work, which focuses primarily on instructional and professional practices. In addition to the quotes provided earlier in this document, here we provide a sample of those available across the categories of work value and frequency (see also the Appendix):

“So much more time spent on ‘tasks’ unrelated to programming and lesson preparation for the children in my class. It feels like work and tasks related to the ‘classroom’ and preparing quality lessons for the students in your class is only 50 per cent of the job.” (#6727002651)

“I find lesson planning often gets pushed back to make time for administrative work when creating engaging, quality lessons should be a priority.” (#6703445080)

“Administrative tasks and data analysis (RoSA and HSC) have greatly increased.” (#6705652646)

“I believe that the administrative demands around WHS, SPaRO, LMBR, Finances, ASR, external testing and all the other useless busy work are detracting from the ability of school leaders and staff to engage creatively and be innovative in the delivery of teaching and learning.” (#6705828793)

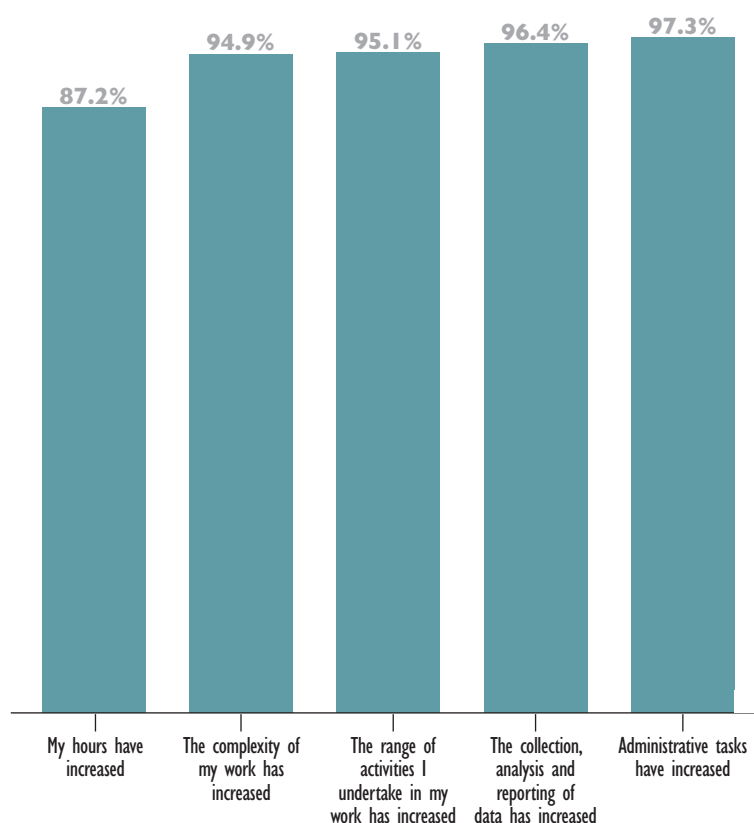
Again, these comments highlight the difficulties teachers report facing when trying to meet administrative demands without detracting from their highly valued teaching work and student learning.



CHANGES TO WORK IN SCHOOLS

Extremely high numbers of staff in schools report changes to their workload over the past five years, see Figure 7 (below). Not only are hours of work long (as reported in Work hours in schools, page 14), 87 per cent of respondents reported an increase in working hours. Given the high and increasing workload demands seen across all school roles, the strategy of delegation suggested by the Department's review of principal workload (Deloitte, 2017) is unlikely to be feasible, unless the Department was to employ more teachers.

Figure 7: Total percentage of staff reporting increases in workload



Even higher proportions report an increasingly complex workload with a widening in the range of activities undertaken. Increases in administrative duties are at the highest proportions (>97 per cent), while the collection, analysis and reporting of data is also extremely high (>96 per cent). This almost unanimous reporting in relation to increases in workload indicates a common experience at levels rarely encountered in social science research, where variance usually abounds. As participants commented in the open-response question for this section, "workload has increased significantly" (#6703464783).

The particularly resounding changes in administrative workload were felt across all school locations – metropolitan, provincial and remote or very remote (see Table 7, below). Almost identical reporting trends, with a surprising lack of variance across school locations, are seen for the reported increases in work relating to use of data.

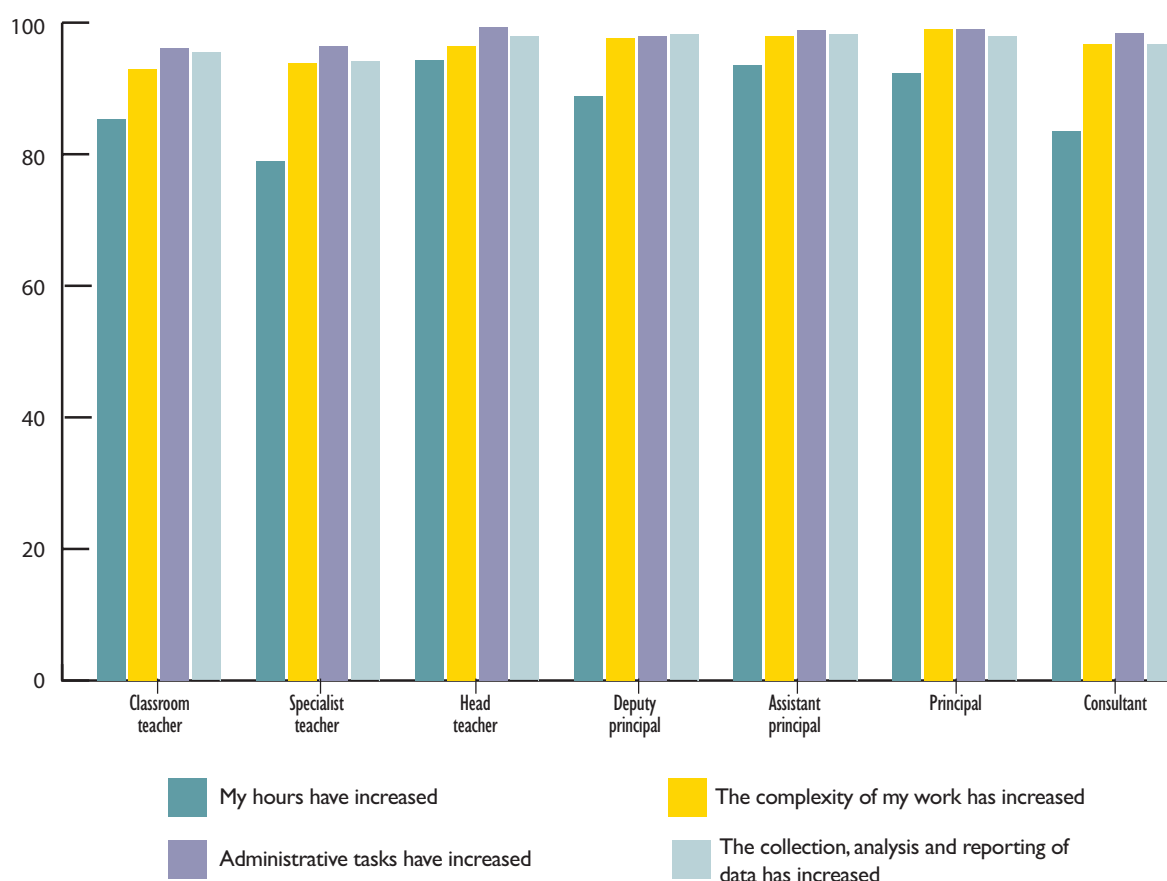
Table 7: Reported changes in administrative tasks by school location

Administrative tasks have:	Metropolitan schools	Provincial schools	Remote/very remote schools
increased	95.7%	96.6%	96.6%
not changed	3.9%	3.0%	3.2%
decreased	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%

These aspects of workload were also reported frequently in open responses. For some respondents, a general administrative increase was described, with comments such as “staff spend a large part of each day on administrative tasks” (#6703459015) or, in a particularly succinct statement, a view of now having “two jobs: teaching and administration” (#6723859300). In other responses, more particular dimensions of the new administrative work were specified, for instance taking the form of “pointless paperwork” (#6703515132): “there is way too much paperwork” (#6782272421), “paperwork is killing me” (#6703691840), “I am drowning in paperwork” (#6734171350). Such administrative demands were also often seen as being “irrelevant administration related to teacher accountability” (#6707701557) — for some this work was described as a “box-ticking-style evaluation” (#6704995007) exercise. Data-related activities were also described by respondents as largely performative (Hardy & Lewis, 2017), and even “pointless” (#6718165057); part of the issue here appeared to be the time required to make effective use of, and understand such data — “collection of student data has increased, however, there is not enough time to analyse it” (#6724069071). Data-related work seemed, for some teachers, to be taking over. In the words of one, “education should be about data and numbers, AND it should be about joy and curiosity. Guess which side gets the most attention.” (#6745093610). The evidence in this report suggests that many teachers feel it is the former.

Figure 8 (below) shows the proportion of staff reporting increases in four different aspects of workload: hours, complexity, administrative tasks and working with data. This includes part-time and casual workers, who are more highly represented among teachers than the other employment roles.

Figure 8: Percentage reporting changes in aspects of workload by employment role



It is clear that a very large majority in all school roles report increases in their workload. While more than 87 per cent report increased work hours and nearly 95 per cent or more describe increased complexity, range of duties and increasing administrative and data work, it is yet possible to discern some patterns in how these increases are felt and reported by different school roles. Proportionate reporting of increased duties showed:

Hours: Although a large majority reported increased hours, these proportions were highest amongst head teachers and assistant principals, and also among principals and deputy principals, although to a lesser degree.

Complexity of work: Although the majority reported increases in complexity of work, some teachers reported that the complexity of their work had reduced or not changed. Principals and deputies were most likely to report increases in complexity, and head teachers and assistant principals also had high proportions reporting increases in the complexity of their work.

Administrative tasks: All staff groups reported increases in administrative work, however head teachers and assistant principals were the most likely to report on this and principals and deputies were also likely to report increases here. Similarly, principals, deputies, assistant principals and head teachers were all more likely to report changes in data collection, analysis and reporting.

Another pattern of response noted was that head teachers, principals and assistant principals were the groups most likely to report decreases in the level of support received from the NSW Department of Education. The response patterns in relation to departmental support are reported, in full, in Table 8 (below). Here the pattern shows staff are split between reporting no change or a decrease in support. Very low proportions (between 8 and 12 per cent) report that departmental support has increased.

Table 8: Percentages of teachers reporting levels of change in departmental support over the past five years

The support provided by the Department for:		Classroom teacher	Specialist teacher	Head teacher	Deputy principal	Assistant principal	Principal	Consultant	Total
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Implementation of the new syllabuses has:	decreased	36.7	38.7	47.4	48.4	55.6	62.0	46.0	40.1
	not changed	52.1	49.9	39.2	39.0	34.5	27.0	34.9	48.5
	increased	11.2	11.4	13.4	12.6	9.8	11.0	19.0	11.4
Implementation of policies and procedure has:	decreased	35.3	40.8	49.2	52.6	52.8	53.8	43.1	39.5
	not changed	56.3	48.8	42.8	36.2	38.6	31.1	40.0	51.8
	increased	8.4	10.4	8.0	11.2	8.6	15.0	16.9	8.7
Implementation of ICT systems and software (e.g. LMBR) has:	decreased	39.8	42.4	51.2	44.5	49.0	42.3	40.6	42.2
	not changed	50.0	43.8	37.7	36.1	36.7	27.7	42.2	46.4
	increased	10.2	13.8	11.1	19.5	14.4	30.0	17.2	11.4
Implementation of processes relating to student behaviour and welfare has:	decreased	40.8	46.0	51.9	52.6	56.6	52.1	45.3	44.3
	not changed	50.5	42.9	40.2	37.4	35.9	39.4	42.2	46.8
	increased	8.7	11.1	8.0	10.1	7.6	8.5	12.5	8.9

Approximately 50 per cent of teachers report no change in departmental support, but between 35 and 40 per cent report a decrease in support for a range of implementation issues in schools. More than 40 per cent of teachers, for example, reported a decrease in support relating to student behaviour and welfare. Indeed, perceived increases in student needs were a particular focus of open responses: one respondent commented that “student welfare challenges all teachers with [there being] fewer counsellors or health resources” (#6715984838), while another noted a “greater focus on student wellbeing” (#6733794660) because there was “so much stress and anxiety” (#6733794660) being identified in students today.

Other staff roles generally show higher proportions reporting a decrease in departmental support, with more than 50 per cent of principals and assistant principals reporting decreases in relation to new syllabuses, policy implementation, and student behaviour and welfare. More than 50 per cent of head teachers reported a decrease in support in relation to information and communication technology (ICT) and student behaviour and welfare.

The theme of decreased support was also prominent in qualitative responses. While participants felt that demands had increased, consistent with the quantitative findings, they felt that the level of support they were

receiving either had not changed, or had decreased. As one teacher explained, “the fact that support provided for implementation of processes/ICT/etc has not changed is important as the demands on staff have increased yet we’ve not had increased support to assist us” (#6708395150). Another theme that related to potential support was in relation to professional development and professional learning. Despite “many more policies and rule requirements ... most support [was] simply ... more information thrown at us” (#6720603224). Meaningful professional development and professional learning was apparently non-existent for these participants. Whenever these were mentioned, they were identified as either being unnecessary and unhelpful, and taking time away that could be used more effectively for other purposes; or, as being insufficient.

EFFECTS OF CHANGES TO WORK IN SCHOOLS

We present below the effects of substantial workload changes reported almost universally by school staff. Here we draw on some questionnaire items directly relating to the impact of change, but also some other items which, while not directly related to change, provide some indication of work conditions within schools. The effects of workload are explored in relation to:

- impact on staff
- impact on professional teaching and learning in schools.

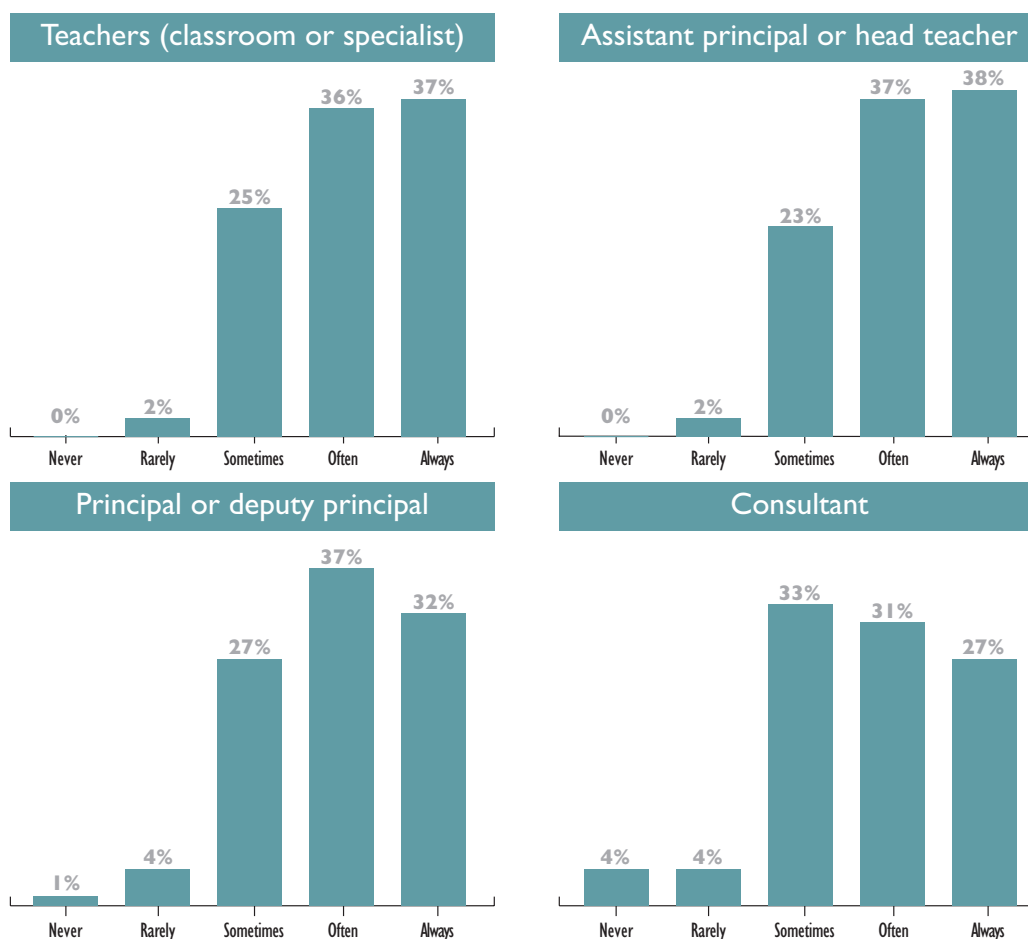
Although devised inductively, these categories almost exactly mirror those identified in the phase one study (McGrath-Champ, Wilson, et al, 2017).

Impact on staff

Too much effort, contradictory demands, limited autonomy

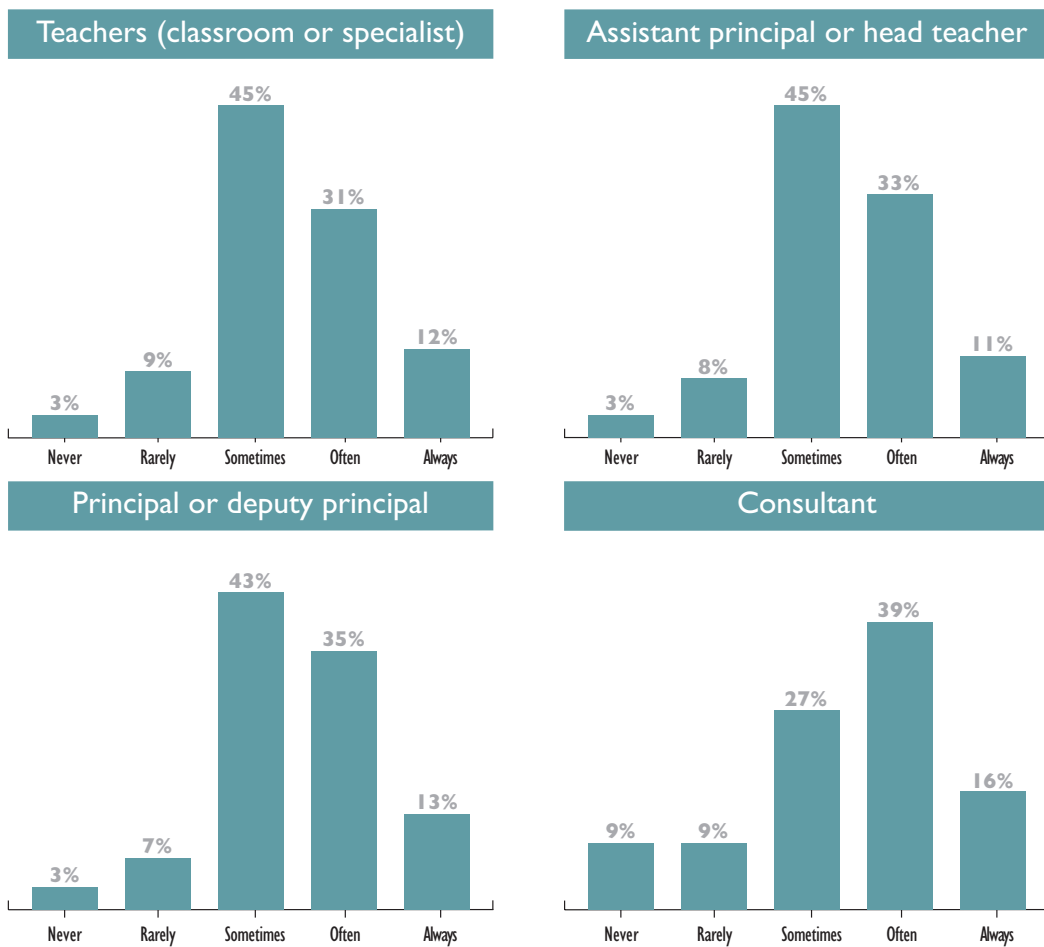
Many report that their work often or always requires “too great an effort” with 73 per cent of teachers, 75 per cent of head teachers and assistant principals and 71 per cent of principals and deputy principals reporting this (see Figure 9, below).

Figure 9: Percentages of full-time staff reporting how often their work requires ‘too great an effort’



In a similar vein, we find that a large proportion of teachers report experiencing contradictory requirements in their work, see Figure 10, below. When asked “how often does your work impose contradictory requirements on you”, only a small 12 per cent of teachers, 11 per cent of assistant principals and head teachers, and 9 per cent of principals and deputy principals responded “rarely” or “never”. Inversely, large proportions of these staff, between 43 per cent and 54 per cent, depending on school role, reported that they “often” or “always” had contradictory requirements, with consultants reporting the highest level. This data is consistent with findings from elsewhere in the questionnaire, including qualitative comments, which make it clear that teachers are currently facing challenges in meeting their work demands and preserving their focus on teaching students in the face of increasing administrative demands.

Figure 10: Percentages of teachers reporting how often their work imposes contradictory requirements upon them



In relation to the “how” work should be carried out, 48 per cent reported that they “sometimes” had freedom to decide on this, while 33 per cent said this was the case “often” or “always”. However, in a profession where autonomy is a well-established feature, it was more surprising to see that overall nearly one in five teachers reported that they “never” or “rarely” had freedom over how their work should be carried out (19.4 per cent).

Figure 11 (page 33) shows the responses relating to how work is carried out for different employment roles. There are nearly identical response patterns for teachers, assistant principals, head teachers, principals and deputies, with only consultants showing differences reflecting higher levels of autonomy in how work should be carried out.

Related to this is the freedom teachers report having in their work. This was examined with two items focused on autonomy. The first asked about the freedom to decide how work should be carried out (Figure 11, page 33), the second asked what freedom they had in relation to what work should be carried out within the scope of their work (Figure 12, page 34).

Figure 11: Percentages of teachers reporting levels of freedom to decide how work should be carried out

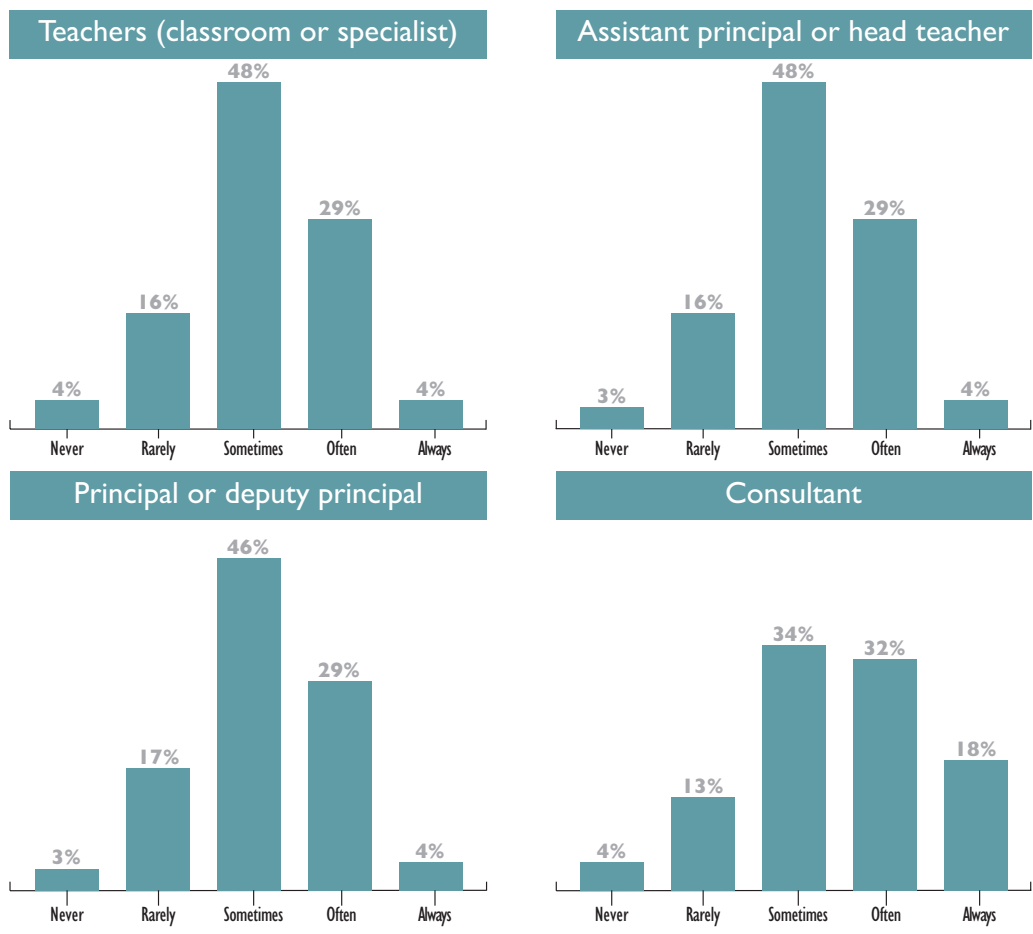
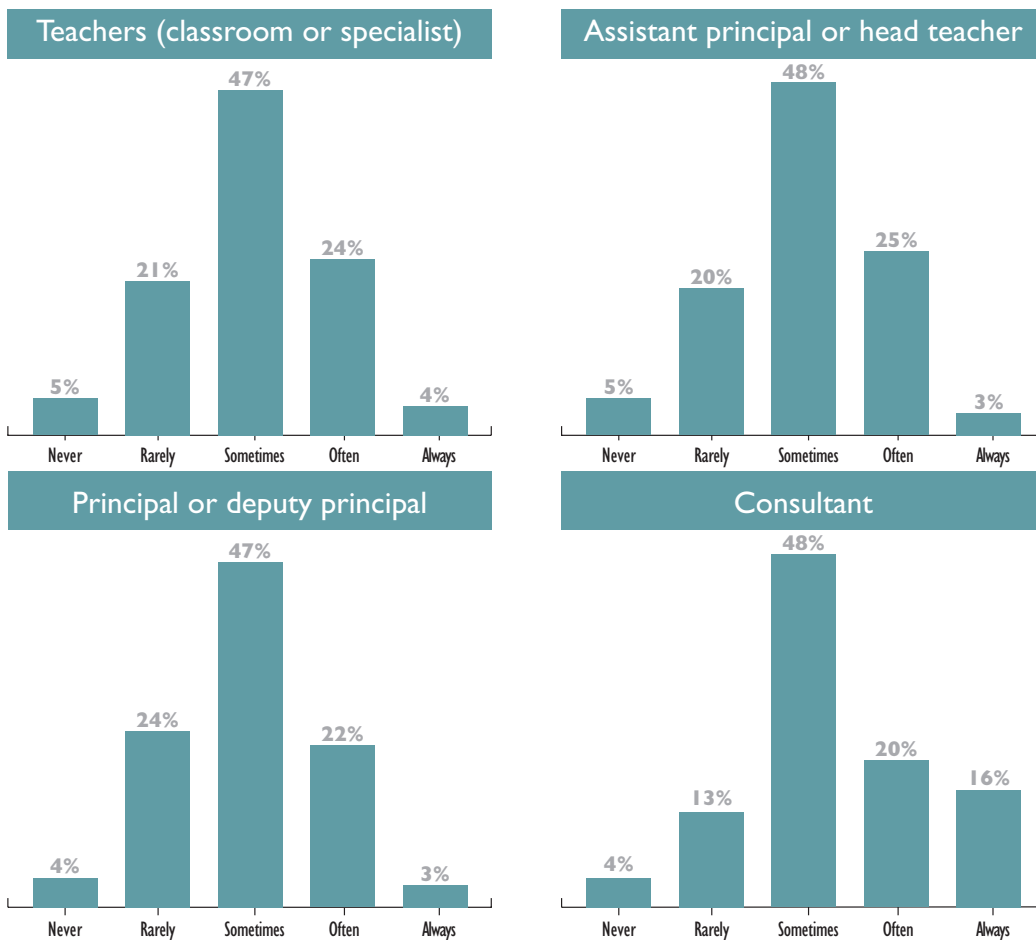


Figure 12: Percentages of teachers reporting levels of freedom to decide what work should be carried out



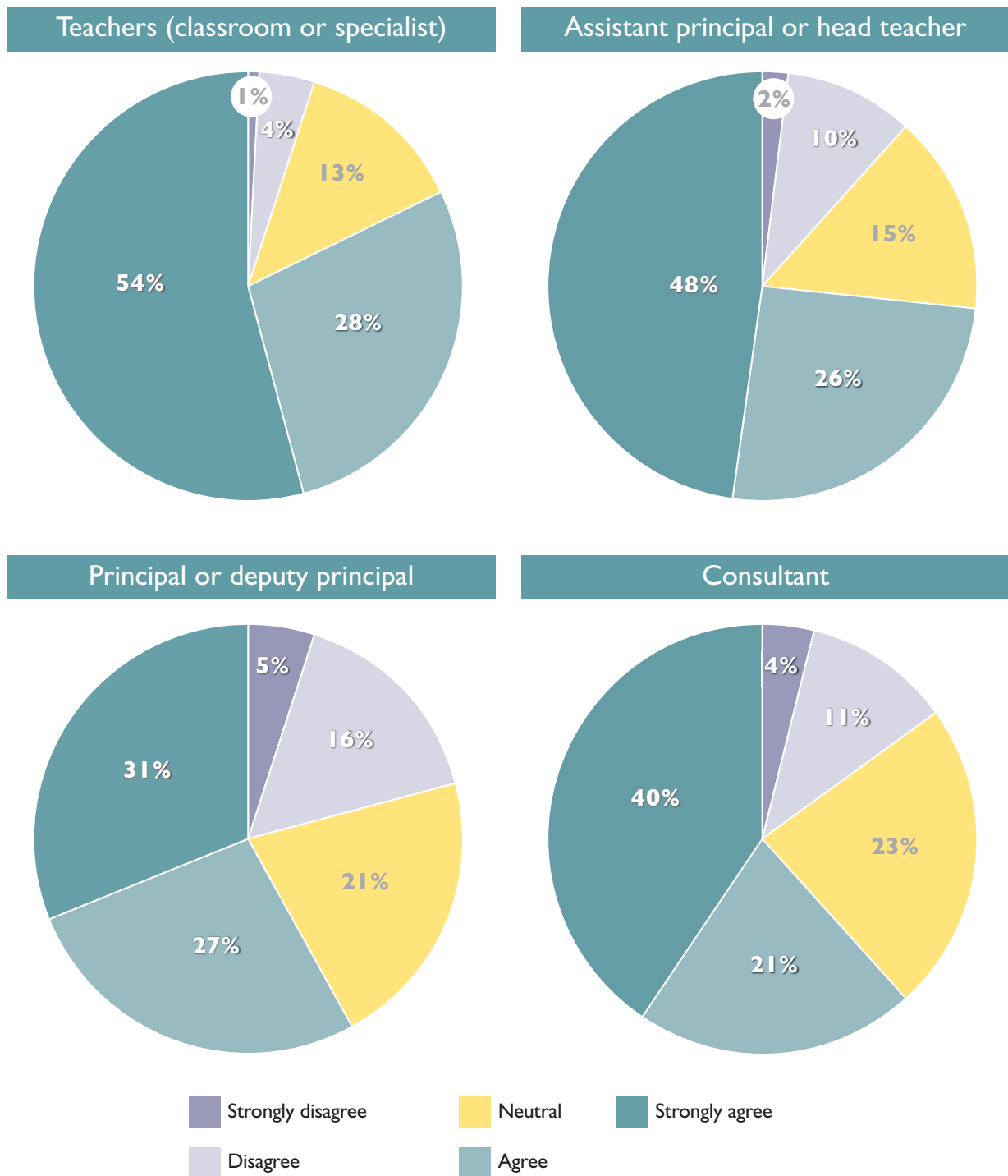
Teachers’ autonomy is seen to be an indicator of professional respect (Pearson and Moomaw, 2005); and is an integral element in professional roles where contradictory and competing demands require freedom to manage these within complex professional roles.

In relation to “what” work should be carried out, similar patterns are observed. Some 27 per cent report that they “often” or “always” have freedom over what is done, while 48 per cent report this is “sometimes” the case. However, more than 35 per cent of teachers report that they only “rarely” or “never” have freedom to decide on what is done. When we consider the different professional roles within schools (see Figure 12, above) we see similar patterns to the “how” item, with consultants reporting higher levels of autonomy and between 25 and 28 per cent of the others reporting low levels. Effectively these data suggest that at least one in five teachers are now experiencing very low levels of professional autonomy.

Impact upon career aspirations

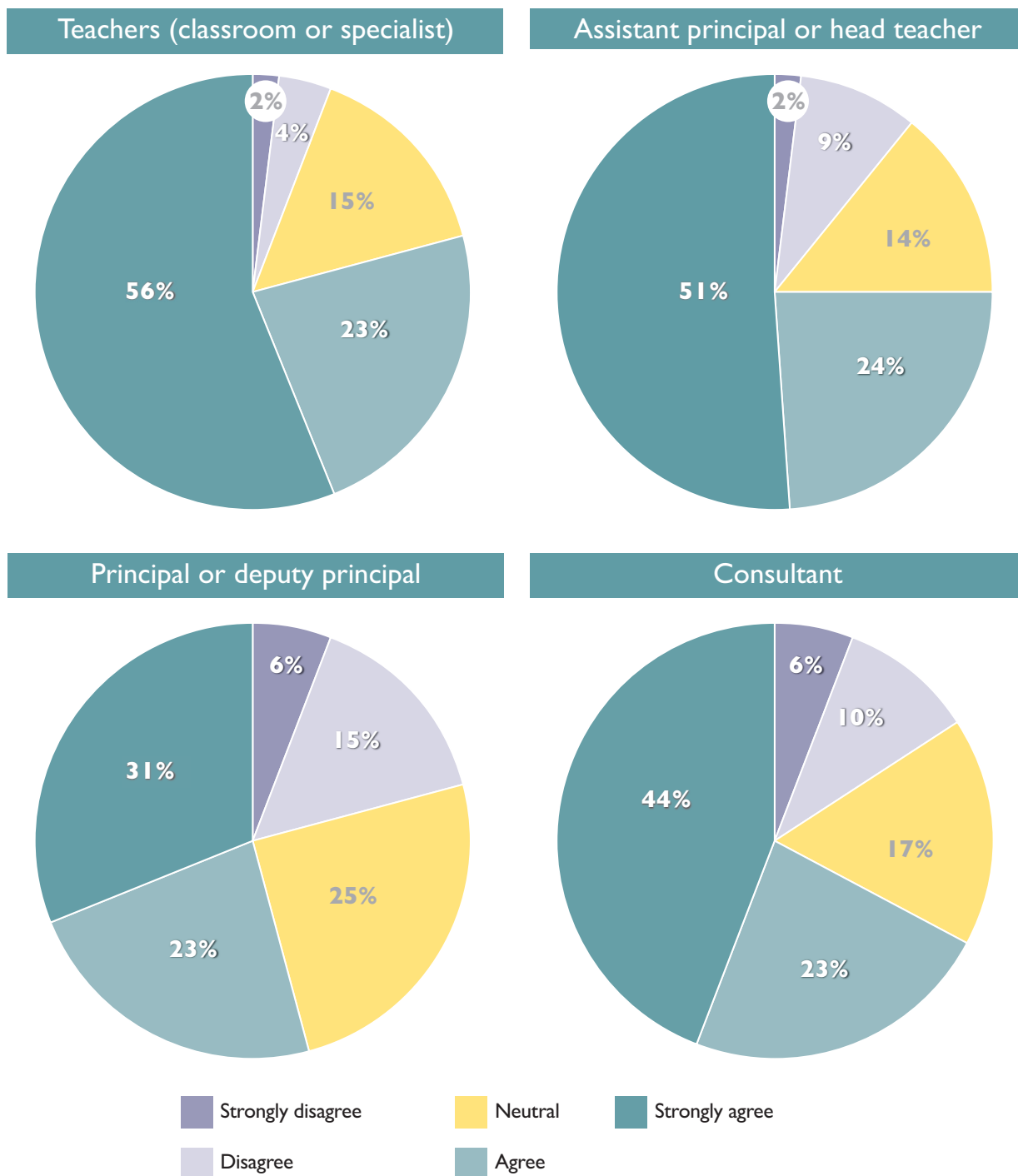
Eighty-two per cent of full-time teachers agree/strongly agree that their high workload demands have negatively impacted upon their career aspirations (see Figure 13, page 35).

Figure 13: Percentages of teachers reporting a negative impact on their career aspirations due to work demands



Similarly, 79 per cent of teachers also agree/strongly agree that workload demands associated with the roles of school executive, including those of principals, have negatively impacted on their personal aspirations to seek those roles (see Figure 14, page 36). This has potentially serious implications for not only individual teachers' careers but also the sustainability of staffing for school executive positions. This data raises concerns about future workforce capacity that requires further research attention.

Figure 14: Percentages of teachers reporting their career aspirations are negatively impacted by the workload associated with school executive positions



Difficulty attending to family commitments and work-life balance

Substantial proportions of full-time staff report that their current workload conflicts with family commitments and negatively impacts upon their work-life balance. Among male staff, 84 per cent agree, or agree strongly that workload conflicts with family responsibilities, while among females the proportion is slightly higher at 86 per cent (see Figure 15, page 37). Higher proportions again agree/strongly agree that workload negatively impacts on their work-life balance with 84 per cent of male staff and 86 per cent of female staff responding in this way (see Figure 16, page 37). Given the substantial size and representativeness of this sample, these findings bear out the deeply detrimental effects of teachers' work and workloads.

Figure 15: Percentages of full-time teachers reporting their workload demands conflict with their family responsibilities

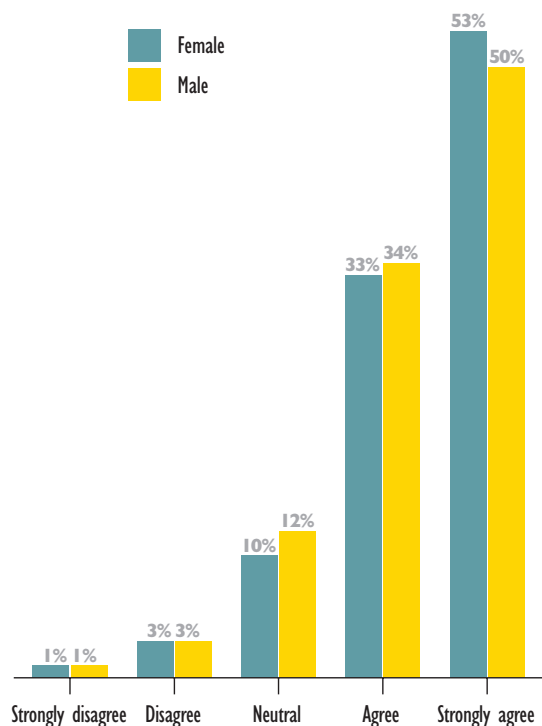
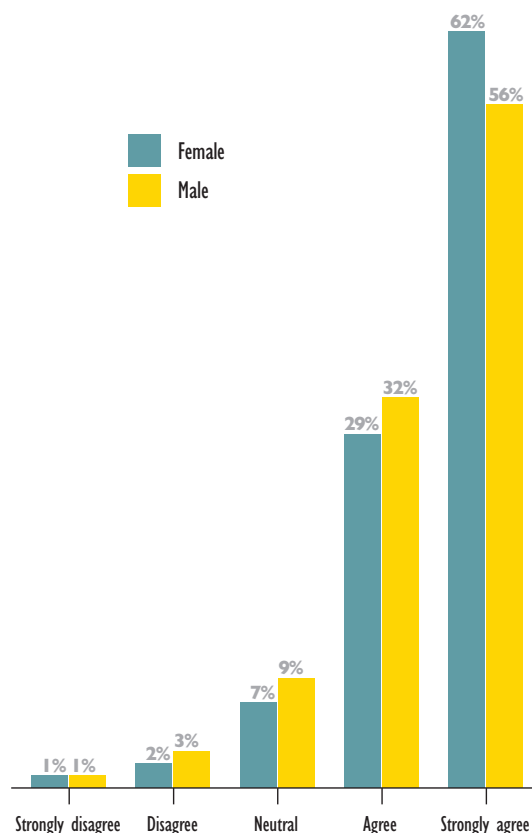


Figure 16: Percentages of full-time teachers reporting their workload demands negatively impact on their work-life balance



It is consistent with the state government's own evidence through the *People Matter Employee Survey* which, in 2016, revealed that only 43 per cent of public school teachers agreed with the statement: "My organisation offers practical employment arrangements and conditions to help employees achieve a work-life balance." This was substantially worse than for public service employees overall, where agreement stood at 58 per cent (NSW Public Service Commission, 2016, p24). It should be noted that the State Government's survey does not specify at what level respondents should understand the expression "my organisation", which is open to interpretation as either the Department of Education or the school at which a teacher works. Regardless, the detrimental effect of teaching as an occupation on work-life balance and family was among the fullest articulations in respondents' comments.

"I'd like my life back. I can't spend time with my own children. If I do I don't have work prepared. I'm having to buy resources in my own time with my own money. My kids do not love shopping for class supplies. My children are at before and after school care 7-6 so that I can prepare lessons and set up classrooms and attend long meetings. I never put my hand up for the stress that schools have been dumping onto us over the last seven years." (#6705685364)

And, "The increase in workload has affected my home-life balance and personal wellbeing. I find my workload intrudes on quality time with my family and I have very little time to care for myself or pursue personal interests or exercise ... I see new teachers overwhelmed by the demands of the profession and see experienced teachers losing heart with what the profession and the job now entails. I am left disheartened and frustrated over the intrusion of the profession into my personal and private time with my own children and family members. It is simply not possible to sustain. Something has to give. If I do my job to the standard required, my family suffer; if I focus more on my family life, I fall behind in my employment requirements ... Every other week, term, year the job description just gets added to time and time again. Something must change or the [Department] will be looking at workers compensation for staff riddled with anxiety and stress disorders and the consequent physical body problems." (#6703500250)

Limited opportunity to take breaks

The questionnaire asked staff to report on how often they were able to take an uninterrupted recess and lunch break on typical school days. Table 9 (below) outlines the full pattern of responses. A very high proportion of respondents report rarely or never having access to uninterrupted breaks at recess (57.3 per cent) or at lunch (72.7 per cent). Among staff, principals and deputy principals were the least likely to have uninterrupted breaks, with high rates unable to access a break for recess (87.7 per cent and 84.7 per cent respectively) and for lunch (93.8 per cent and 90.1 per cent respectively).

Table 9: Teachers' likelihood of uninterrupted recess and lunch breaks on a typical day

		Which category best describes your current employment role (include acting positions of 6 months or more)?									
		Classroom teachers	Specialist teacher (e.g. LAST, librarian)	Head teacher	Deputy principal	Assistant principal	Principal	Consultant	Total		
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	Count	%	
On a typical day, I have an uninterrupted break of 15 minutes at recess	Always	2.0	3.1	1.0	1.5	1.7	0.2	3.1	325	1.9	
	Usually	17.0	16.4	6.7	4.2	10.9	2.0	15.4	2482	14.4	
	Sometimes	30.6	26.7	16.9	9.7	21.9	10.0	20.0	4573	26.5	
	Rarely	34.8	33.6	41.2	31.9	39.6	35.4	30.8	6151	35.6	
	Never	15.6	20.1	34.1	52.8	25.9	52.3	30.8	3742	21.7	
On a typical day, I have an uninterrupted break of 30 minutes at lunch	Always	0.8	1.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.2	3.2	145	0.8	
	Usually	8.3	7.5	3.4	1.1	3.8	1.0	7.9	1172	6.8	
	Sometimes	23.4	19.4	10.3	8.0	15.2	5.0	17.5	3390	19.7	
	Rarely	38.9	37.7	35.7	21.3	36.4	22.9	34.9	6358	36.9	
	Never	28.6	33.7	49.9	68.8	44.0	70.9	36.5	6163	35.8	

While classroom teachers are the most likely to report interrupted breaks, the proportions doing so are still very low, with only 19 per cent responding that they usually or always do so at recess and only 9.1 per cent reporting the same for lunch. These numbers are surprising low given that, unlike other school roles where there is more opportunity for meal and toilet breaks in lieu of a lack of time at recess and lunch, classroom teachers have no such opportunity because of their important face-to-face roles during class time. While there is little other data available to judge any change over time in school staff's access to breaks (Gardner & Williamson, 2004), and this data is admittedly limited to self-report, given that this was an issue more than 10 years ago, it is clear that the problem still needs to be addressed.

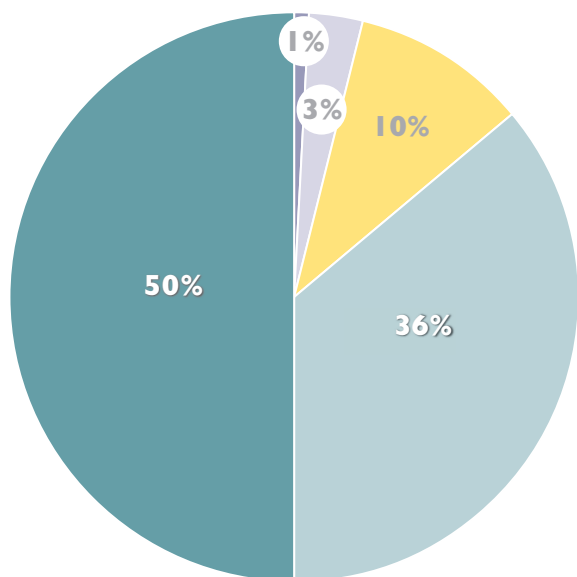
Impact on teaching and learning

Teachers were asked to evaluate the impact of change in work over the last five years in relation to their school's capacity to develop and sustain quality teaching. See below Table 10, and Figures 17 and 18.

Table 10: Impacts of recent change

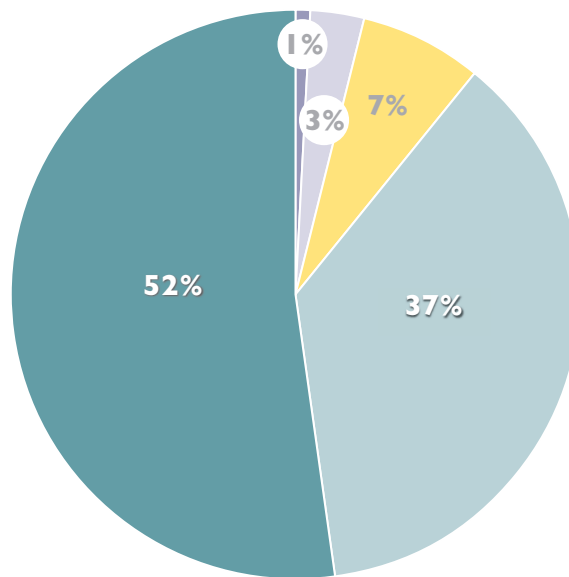
Is teaching and learning hindered by:	a high workload among staff?	the extent and processes of providing evidence of compliance with policy requirements?	new, superficially administrative, demands introduced by the department over the past five years?
Agree/agree strongly	89.0%	86.0%	91.0%
Disagree/disagree strongly	4.0%	4.0%	1.5%

Figure 17: Percentages of teachers reporting that their school's/workplace's capacity to develop and sustain quality teaching and learning is hindered by compliance



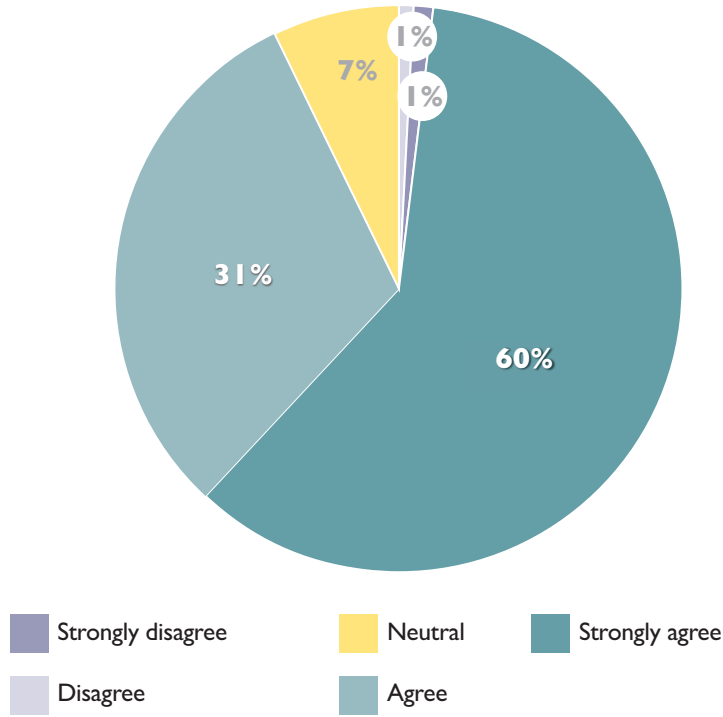
Strongly disagree Neutral Strongly agree
Disagree Agree

Figure 18: Percentages of teachers reporting that their school's/workplace's capacity to develop and sustain quality teaching and learning is hindered by the high workload among staff



Strongly disagree Neutral Strongly agree
Disagree Agree

Figure 19: Percentages of teachers reporting that their school's/workplace's capacity to develop and sustain quality teaching and learning is hindered by administrative demands



The data here are clear that teachers feel their current workload, both in its size and scope, is hindering their teaching and students' learning. It is perhaps the nature of this workload and the additions to it, perceived by respondents, that is most problematic, rather than simply hours worked — this is indicated by the extremely large proportion of responses that agreed, or strongly agreed that administrative demands introduced during the past five years were obstructing their teaching work (91 per cent). The correspondingly, extremely low proportion of responses that either disagreed or strongly disagreed (1.5 per cent) with this statement also reflects such views very clearly.

These findings support research that suggests growing tensions for teachers to balance mandated tasks of limited apparent utility, and their own values in relation to pedagogical priorities and other teaching tasks perceived to be of greater importance (see e.g. Kostogriz & Doecke, 2011; McGrath-Champ, Wilson, et al, 2017). Such a finding is also supported by the extensive qualitative commentary provided throughout this report.

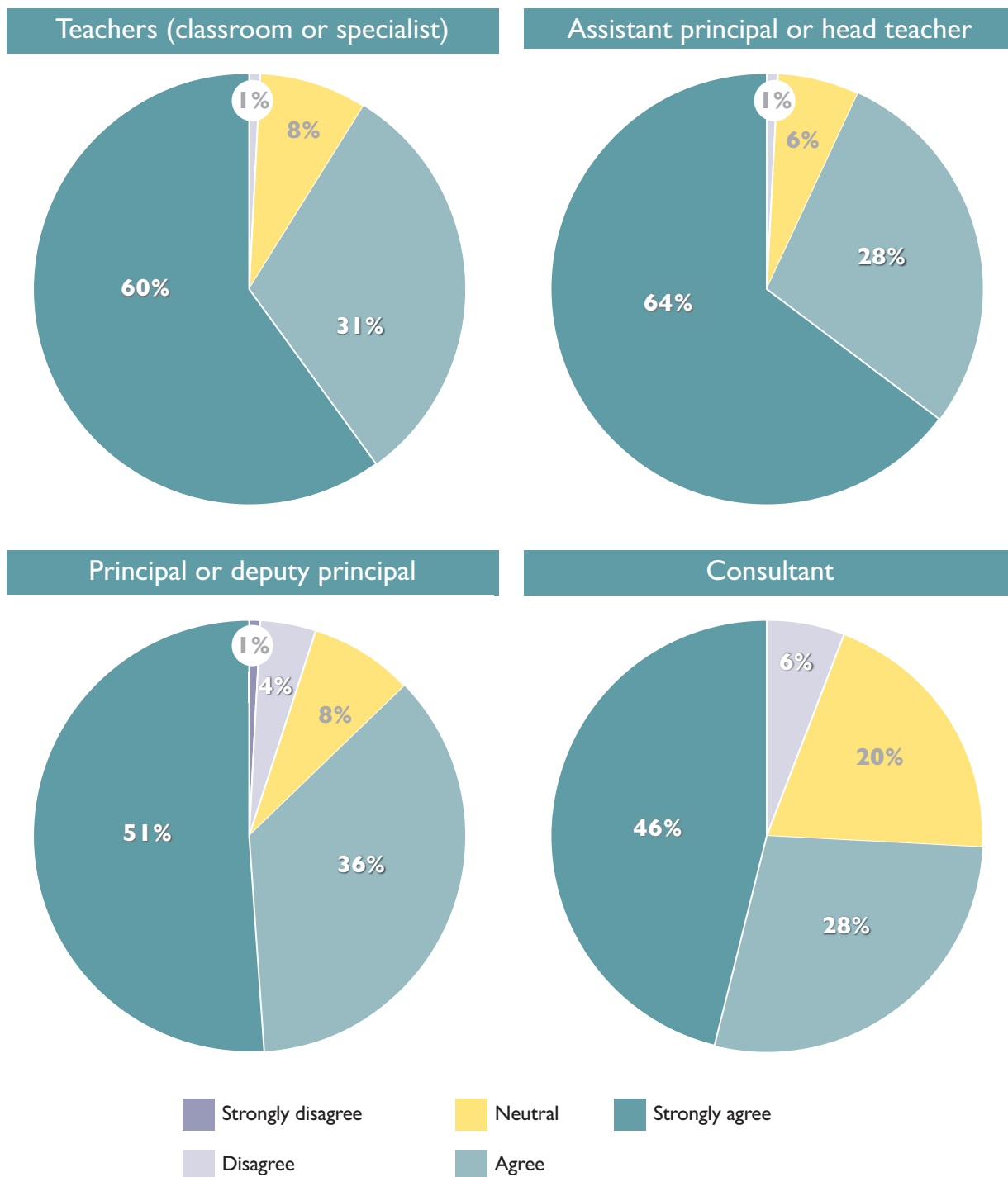
Earlier analysis confirmed that school staff were experiencing new administrative demands related to collection, analysis and reporting of data, the provision of evidence of implementing departmental policy and practices, and a range of compliance requirements of state or educational authorities. The questionnaire specifically asked to what extent teachers agreed that their school's capacity to develop and sustain quality teaching and learning is hindered by these new, specifically administrative, demands. Many of these new administrative demands featured highly in weekly and less-frequent work activities, and they were among the work activities most negatively evaluated in terms of being time consuming/cumbersome, and focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning. Many staff also agreed that less time and resources should be spent on these administrative activities.

When specifically asked, more than 91 per cent of teachers agreed (31 per cent) or strongly agreed (60 per cent) that new, specifically administrative demands impacted upon their school's capacity to develop and sustain quality teaching and learning (see Figure 19, above). A tiny number, less than 2 per cent disagreed with this and 7 per cent responded neutrally. The rise in administrative demands was reported almost universally (by more than 97 per cent) and administrative activities featured prominently in the weekly activities that teachers undertake. It is notable that while teachers report that their daily activities remain

dominated by teaching and student learning activities, both quantitative and qualitative analyses of this survey suggest growing work pressures as teachers seek to “protect” the time taken for teaching and learning in the face of increasing administrative, and other, demands.

The conflicting demands of administrative and paperwork countering against teaching and learning work are reported most highly by classroom and specialist teachers (91 per cent) and head teachers and assistant principals (92 per cent). Unsurprisingly principals, their deputies and consultants, whose work is often outside of the classroom, show slightly lower levels of agreement with this proposition – albeit at still very high levels (87 per cent and 74 per cent respectively). See Figure 20 (below) for details.

Figure 20: Percentages of teachers (by employment role) reporting that their school’s/workplace’s



capacity to develop and sustain quality teaching and learning is hindered by administrative demands

The slightly higher proportion of teachers reporting this to be a problem may be due to teachers generally having more classroom-based responsibilities that may come into conflict with administrative requirements. These findings are further supported through qualitative responses that illustrate the frustration teachers are feeling in being unable to focus on those tasks they deem most important — those directly related to their teaching and students' learning. Respondents frequently made comments relating to the impact of their workload upon their capacity to teach as they would wish. Comments frequently focused on having “less time for teaching and planning to teach” (#6703438211), as “more unnecessary admin tasks [have taken] away from quality teaching time” (#6705839514). One respondent commented on the effects of workload stress on the “joy” of teaching, saying “the stress level and pressure has increased so much so that the joy of teaching is reduced” (#6718737437).



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

The questionnaire listed 11 strategies asking respondents to rank these in priority order from most helpful to least helpful in supporting their work:

- Reducing face-to-face teaching time for teachers, executives and teaching principals to increase collaboration on planning, programming, assessing and reporting
- Acknowledging the professional judgement of teachers, executives and principals by developing protocols for the collection/recording and analysis of data, to eliminate processes that are unnecessary/cumbersome/extremely time consuming
- Providing more specialised teacher support for students with special needs
- More effective system-level planning to prevent imposing competing workload demands on schools and/or unrealistic time frames
- Ensuring that there is consultation prior to any significant change, reform or initiative to ensure it has educational value and to determine the time and resources necessary to support effective implementation in schools
- Providing more professional learning and development for staff during school hours to support collaboration in and across workplaces
- Providing more teacher consultancy support for curriculum and other program implementation
- Providing more administrative and support staff to schools
- Supporting the implementation of initiatives/ programs/ strategies by a targeted reduction of face-to-face teaching for relevant staff
- Employing more staff within the Department to undertake administrative tasks and other duties to assist schools to meet compliance obligations (e.g. work health and safety)
- Ensuring ICT systems and software (e.g. LMBR, SPaRO) are fit for purpose with the necessary time and resources provided for implementation.

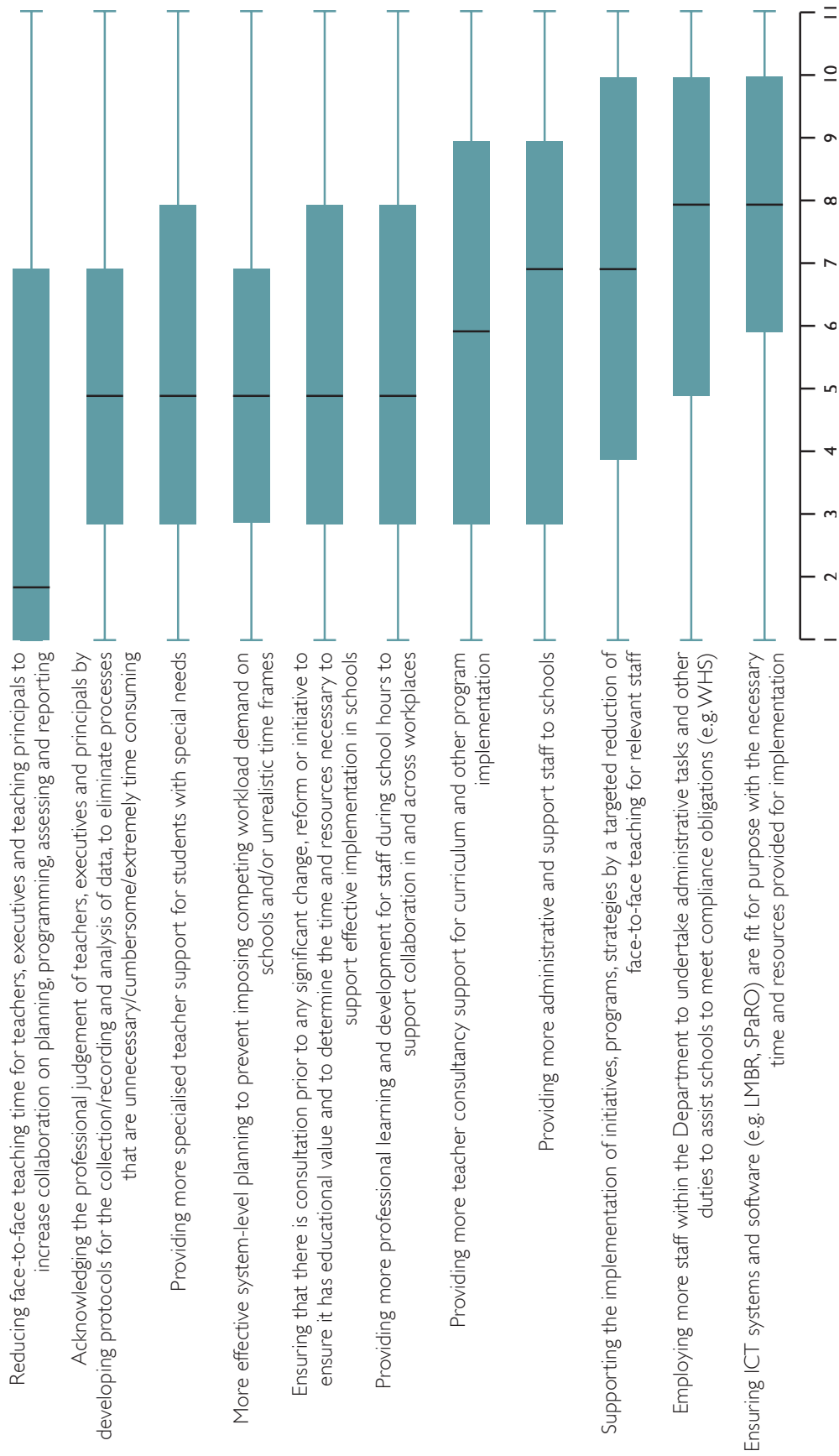
The list of candidate strategies was developed from earlier qualitative interview studies and also subject to several rounds of consultation and piloting with teachers prior to conducting the full study.

After ranking the provided strategies, teachers were given the opportunity to record any other ideas that they thought would support their work. Almost 5500 respondents (30 per cent) provided an open-response comment. Comments that “many of these things [support strategies] are equally important” (#6717337698) and that “these cover the issues well — it’s difficult to order them 1-11 because they’re all important” (#6703444817), convey the sense by many teachers that a multi-faceted approach is needed to address the problems teachers face with their work in schools.

There is much to be unpacked in the complexity of the rankings and the comments. We start first by presenting the strategies, ranked by the shape of their distributions, in Figure 21, page 44). Here we see the ranking distributions in box plots. The box represents the interquartile (IQ) range and 50 per cent of the responses. The line across the box represents the median response. The “whiskers” are lines that extend from the upper and lower edge of the box to the highest and lowest rank values recorded for that strategy.

From Figure 21 it is clear that all strategies received the full range of rankings; some respondents ranked them as top while others ranked them as 11th. Nevertheless it is clear that some were more positively ranked by a majority of teachers.

Figure 21: Rank order and distribution of suggested strategies key



REDUCE TEACHING FOR MORE COLLABORATION

The top-ranked strategy was:

I. Reducing face-to-face teaching time for teachers, executives and teaching principals to increase collaboration on planning, programming, assessing, and reporting

Nearly 40 per cent of the respondents ranked this as their top, their sought-after, strategy to assist teachers with their work; more than 50 per cent of teachers ranked this above seventh. The proportion ranking this as their top strategy is distinctly higher than any other strategy. This strikingly strong message of “time, more time” for preparation via reduced face-to-face was reinforced in abundant open-ended comments, with the following typical responses:

“To accomplish even some of the necessary work undertaken each and every day an increase in RFF would assist to accomplish some of the tasks that teachers take home nightly.” (#6755330520)

“Providing teachers with more planning time during the week.” (#6740394000)

“More RFF — workload has significantly increased, but classroom teachers still only get two hours off a week.” (#6736381732).

And, “... effective collaboration with colleagues for the purpose of planning and supporting the planning of teaching and learning programs.” (#6752349124)

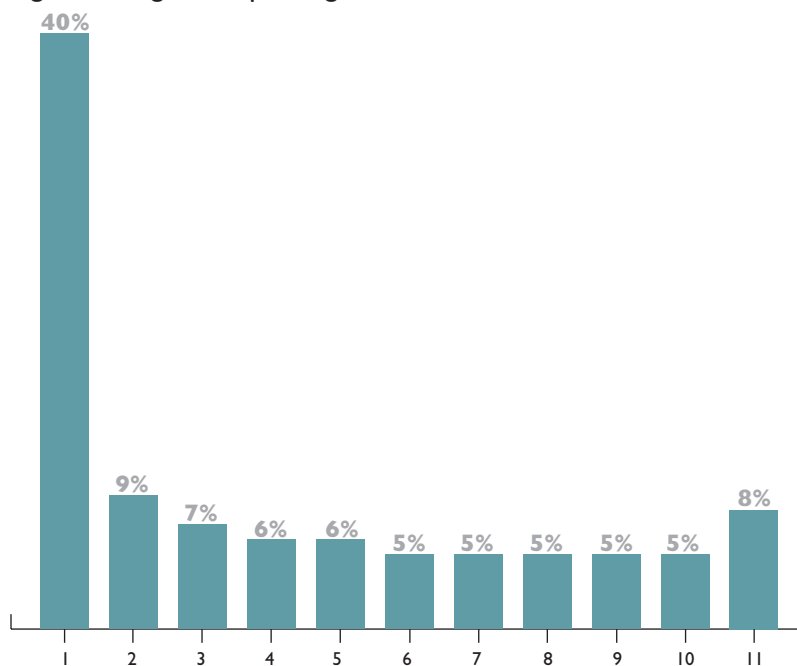
An elaborated response conveying the same idea was:

“Reduce the amount of ‘administrative’ tasks for teachers to carry out and let us do what we are trained to do: prepare quality lessons to ensure the best learning environments for students. A slightly lighter (reduction in) face-to-face hours teaching will also free us up to prepare better lessons. Anything that is going to free us up to create quality lessons will help improve student outcomes.” (# 6737205984)

It is notable, too, that while the top-ranked strategy requires relief from face-to-face teaching for more collaborative professional work on planning, programming, assessing and reporting, the provision of more professional learning to achieve similar ends, although highly rated, is ranked number one by only 5.5 per cent of staff. Teachers’ responses suggest that time for collaborative professional practice, rather than further professional development, encouraging and skilling them for such practice, is now what is most needed.

Figure 22 (below) shows detail on the ranking response pattern for the top strategy.

Figure 22: Rank distribution of the top-ranking strategy to support work in schools: Reducing face-to-face teaching time for teachers, executives and teaching principals to increase collaboration on planning, programming, assessing and reporting



It must be noted that while this strategy was clearly ranked first, some 8 per cent of teachers also ranked it last. A lower proportion of respondents ranked the second top strategy as last (6 per cent). This second strategy, acknowledging professional judgement and developing protocols to eliminate processes that are unnecessary/cumbersome/extremely time consuming, is perhaps more uniformly supported than the first, but at a lower level.

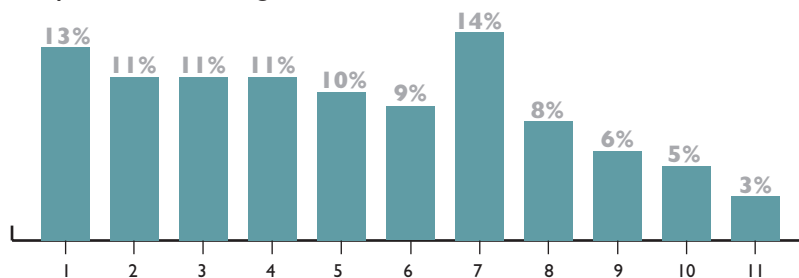
ACKNOWLEDGE PROFESSIONALISM AND ELIMINATE THE UNNECESSARY

The second-ranked strategy:

2. Acknowledging the professional judgement of teachers, executives and principals by developing protocols for the collection, recording and analysis of data, to eliminate processes that are unnecessary/cumbersome/extremely time consuming

This strategy was top-ranked by a much smaller proportion, 12.6 per cent. However, its distribution provides strong support overall and as noted above, surprisingly, a lower percentage of teachers ranked this toward the bottom (as shown in Figure 23, below), than they did the top strategy — where evidently opinions were more mixed.

Figure 23: Rank distribution of the second top-ranking strategy to support work in schools: Acknowledging the professional judgement of teachers, executives and principals by developing protocols for the collection/recording and analysis of data, to eliminate processes that are unnecessary/cumbersome/extremely time consuming



This strategy echoes the central theme evident throughout the analysis of the survey data. That is, that time and respect is required to support the professional judgement of teachers for them to continue their important work in teaching and learning, unabated by other activities that detract from that aim. This perspective is seen repeatedly in different parts of the survey data.

Teachers' rankings on the strategies, like other response patterns in the survey, reflect a keen focus on professional practice related to teaching and learning. Lack of trust, respect and esteem for the professionalism of teachers and a desire for improvement in this was a recurrent theme elicited in the study. It accords with the strategy of acknowledging respondents' professional judgement expressed through effective data collection arrangements and elimination of what are widely and intensely perceived as time-wasting processes.

Commenting about the acknowledgment of professionalism as a desired support strategy a respondent lodged the plea for "a basic assumption from my employer that I know what I am doing and don't have to constantly account for it". (#6707701557)

And further, "I am expected to collect evidence for EVERY lesson I teach and have them in my program to prove that I have taught the lesson. There is ZERO trust and respect." (#6705134257)

"Trusting that after five years of tertiary education, years of experience and a record of excellence and professionalism in the classroom, that teachers are capable of thinking for themselves and making complex decisions without the extraordinary layers of bureaucracy and political interference." (#6710718550)

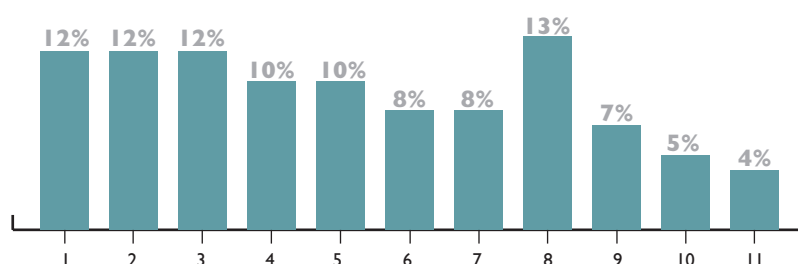
PROVIDE SUPPORT

The third-ranked strategy was:

3. Providing more specialist teacher support for students with special needs

This strategy was the most preferred (top-ranked) by 12.2 per cent of respondents, very similar to the acknowledgment of professionalism strategy (above) and has a similar rank distribution (see Figure 24, below) to that strategy. The diversity of student needs within classrooms, and the requirement for teachers to differentiate learning for particular students means many teachers feel they are spread too thinly and seek additional specialists and teacher aides for support.

Figure 24: Rank distribution of the second top-ranking strategy to support work in schools: Providing more specialised teacher support for students with special needs



The reduction in support generally, and in particular regarding specialist teacher support, was among the prominent comments about strategies received in this study, and resonates with the earlier 2017 interview study (McGrath-Champ, Wilson and Stacey, 2017). It was particularly noted as a matter that has changed over the past five years, with teachers feeling “expected to do so much more for each individual child in less time with less resources” (#6703462344). One respondent explained their view that “[the state policy Every Student, Every School] has significantly reduced support for students with learning support and behavioural needs” (#6703445583). Another commented that “the workload of analysing student behaviour and ability grows exponentially every year yet the support offered to help these students decreases” (#6703446740). Indeed, there appeared to be a perception that particular student needs — especially in relation to mental health — had increased markedly. In the words of one respondent, there is “appallingly little access to mental health professionals and we are dealing more and more with complex mental health issues in our classroom with minimal training and support” (#6703516345). Respondents also commented on needing “extra classroom support SLSOs” (#6733794660), and “support for behaviour students that impact on the whole class’s ability to learn” (#6740064614). This was more fully articulated in the following statement:

“Having support within the classroom (such as rotational teacher’s aide for example) for such things as resource development and preparation as well as for working with small groups of students requiring additional support within the classroom. The range of student levels and need for differentiation of activities to deal with these can be exhausting and, as a teacher, you sometimes feel that you do not have enough time to get around and check in with every one of your students. Yet we are required to constantly assess and evaluate where our students fit on various literacy and numeracy continuums: SENA, running records, individualised assessment for younger students ... This is totally unrealistic in a ‘normal’ classroom situation where there is one teacher amongst 20-30 students, dealing with learning needs, emotional, behaviour and special needs students.” (#6711325860)

There is affinity between this and another strategy, “Providing more teacher consultancy support for curriculum and other program implementation”.

This was ranked slightly lower overall, at seventh, but compatible with the notion of additional support for teaching, with a clear response of “bring consultants back” (#6703566354) and a link with programming: “a consultant would be desirable to develop learning content, scopes and sequences in the multi stages ... Alternatively, extra programming time would be very helpful so we could ensure continuity from K-6.” (#6755859606)

EDUCATIONAL VALUE AND EFFECTIVE PROCESSES FOR CHANGE

The fourth and fifth-ranked strategies are:

4. More effective system-level planning to prevent imposing competing workload demands on schools and/or unrealistic time frames

and

5. Ensuring that there is consultation prior to any significant change, reform or initiative to ensure it has educational value and to determine the time and resources necessary to support effective implementation in schools

Supported by 7 per cent and 9 per cent of respondents, respectively, as their top-chosen option, they call for better planning for change and seek consultation to ensure the educational value of change that is necessary. Strategy 4 was ranked fifth or above by 56 per cent of respondents, while that proportion for strategy 5 was 52 per cent. Together these strategies suggest that greater consultation, due diligence and sensitive timing are needed for the implementation of further change in schools.

The need for effective system-level planning is aptly illustrated by the open responses.

“Better implementation of systems — stop rushing to roll out initiatives that are not thought out and tested.” (#6720525953)

“The Department should stop changing things all the time. See how a change impacts before changing again. Stop politicians with no teaching experience making [educational] decisions.” (#6748477500)

“Choose one or two new initiatives, rather than several, for schools to implement at any time and allow teachers to become proficient in these before bringing in further initiatives.” (#6749841177)

These views are reinforced by the relatively low ranking (ninth) of reduced face-to-face teaching to support the implementation of (reform) initiatives and programs, while teachers’ core concern was succinctly expressed:

“Just let the teachers get on with teaching.” (#6755341242)

COLLABORATION UNDERPINNED BY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

6. Providing more professional learning and development for staff during school hours to support collaboration in and across workplaces

The need for more professional learning of a kind that genuinely supports collaboration and meets the needs of those working in schools was received through the survey and completes the top group of strategies (Table 11, page 49). The comment: “In my opinion, additional funding for professional learning is required as a matter of urgency. I used to have time to maintain my professional reading” (#6703459015) expresses the sorely lost capacity for essential, ongoing professional investment while others sought “real PDP implementation rather than compliance” (#6710670121). There is also a desire for consultation about professional learning: “Personal learning plans are a waste of time. Asking teachers to identify what they wish to learn is great but for the rest of it is a waste of time” (#6731949115). As well as specific types of professional learning, in the instance of executive staff, reflecting the work that has been added to their roles, particularly since the devolution of staffing and budgetary responsibilities over recent years; one respondent called for “developing the managerial and personnel skills of executive staff” (#6751967480).

Table 11: Top six strategies

1.	Reducing face-to-face teaching time for teachers, executives and teaching principals to increase collaboration on planning, programming, assessing and reporting
2.	Acknowledging the professional judgement of teachers, executives and principals by developing protocols for the collection/recording and analysis of data, to eliminate processes that are unnecessary/cumbersome/extremely time consuming
3.	Providing more specialist teacher support for students with special needs
4.	More effective system-level planning to prevent imposing competing workload demands on schools and/or unrealistic time frames
5.	Ensuring that there is consultation prior to any significant change, reform or initiative to ensure it has educational value and to determine the time and resources necessary to support effective implementation in schools
6.	Providing more professional learning and development for staff during school hours to support collaboration in and across workplaces

LOWER-RANKED STRATEGIES

The low rankings of more instrumental strategies (Table 12, below), suggesting more administrative and consultancy staff and/or ICT support is needed, indicate that teachers are not primarily interested in assigning duties to other staff in schools. Integrating both quantitative and qualitative analyses, we see that staff are suggesting that much of the administrative work could be streamlined and made less cumbersome, rather than passed on to others. Further, that the greatest preference of staff is to be enabled to prioritise and privilege their teaching and learning work.

“Focus on face-to-face teaching, try to reduce other tasks so we can focus on teaching.” (#6768602552)

“Teachers are just that, teachers, here for our students. We are not here to tick boxes and shuffle paper.” (#6703479908)

Table 12: Bottom five strategies

7.	Providing more teacher consultancy support for curriculum and other program implementation
8.	Providing more administrative and support staff to schools
9.	Supporting the implementation of initiatives, programs and strategies by a targeted reduction of face-to-face teaching for relevant staff
10.	Employing more staff within the Department to undertake administrative tasks and other duties to assist schools to meet compliance obligations (e.g. WHS)
11.	Ensuring ICT systems and software (e.g. LMBR, SPaRO) are fit for purpose with the necessary time and resources provided for implementation

SUMMARY: STRATEGIES THAT MATTER

The survey suggests that many teachers are yearning for the opportunity for more collaborative practice and to be able to attend to their core duties of teaching well. The current circumstances, with heavy workload and increasing administrative duties, are seen as making it difficult for staff to find the time and energy for important collaborative work.

School staff’s ranking of strategies thus reveal three strong, overarching themes regarding what is needed to address current concerns. These are:

- i) increased time and support for collaborative learning, primarily through reduced face-to-face teaching time and, to a lesser extent, opportunity for more in-school professional learning to support collaboration for teaching and learning;
- ii) increased specialist teacher support — for students with special needs and broader curriculum support;
- iii) greater consultation, due diligence and sensitive timing is needed for the implementation of further change in schools.

These findings regarding what is most needed broadly reflect sentiments reported in a recent workload survey in Victoria, where a reduction in contact time and the number of government initiatives was identified

CONCLUSION

This questionnaire survey, *Understanding work in schools: The foundation for teaching and learning*, was undertaken with the remit of further exploring, confirming and testing the findings of the earlier, qualitative study *Teaching and learning: Review of workload* (McGrath-Champ, Wilson, et al, 2017). Through the results of this extensive survey, we contribute a new mapping of the activities of teachers, evidence of their commitment to the students in their care and to their core tasks of planning for, and responding to, the needs of these students. However, we also find overwhelming confirmation of a perceived increase in workload, largely ascribed to additional administrative duties. This finding is supported by those of numerous state government (NSW Public Service Commission, 2016, 2017) and Department reports (Deloitte, 2017; NSW Department of Education, 2017). What is new in our research is the contextualisation of these administrative demands within the plethora of work that teachers already do, and the detailed focus on the work of all teachers, head teachers, assistant principals, deputy principals, principals and consultants.

The weight of evidence within this report makes it abundantly clear that teachers as a whole are subject to new and overwhelming demands imposed by the current policy landscape. Indeed, the narrative of increased workload via administrative requirements found throughout our entire report, is a reflection of the strongly held concerns of teachers regarding the changing nature of their work. It is clear that teachers feel under pressure to undertake the new administrative activities reported to have arisen within the past five years, and that they are struggling to satisfactorily balance the demands of these administrative requirements with their professional and frequently reported personal commitment, to preserving their focus on teaching and student learning. Many report that the changes in workload over the past five years are challenging their capacity to sustain the quality of teaching and learning in their schools.

With the findings of this study considered as a whole, three final, summative points can be made, also outlined in Figure 25 (page 51).

1. That the call for increased within-schools-hours time for collaboration in core, teaching-related activities is consistent with teachers' strong avowal that they regard their professional purpose as the education of students over and above furnishing unduly copious amounts of data, and completing onerous and highly time-consuming administrative tasks.
2. Teachers report a desire for greater professional respect and valuing of their judgement, their capacity to teach and the fact they do so with the interests of their students, parents and the wider Australian community foremost in their minds. Requirements that they continually furnish evidence that they are doing what is required of them run counter to this, diminishing their capacity to deliver the outcomes that they and others seek of them. This requires the elimination of processes that are unnecessary, cumbersome and extremely time consuming. To achieve this, teachers explicitly nominate more effective system-level planning as essential to preventing the imposition of competing workload demands and unrealistic time frames on schools. The evidence furnished within this report, and the wide-ranging policies and administrative demands cited by teachers, suggests that this will require a major overhaul of the systems currently in place.
3. Teachers need to be properly resourced in order to meet the diverse needs of the complex cohorts of students that the state's public schools are increasingly being called upon to support (Lamb, Jackson, Walstab & Huo, 2015). In conjunction with this, additional teacher consultancy support is needed to assist teachers to develop and implement the significant curriculum changes for which teachers are finding there is insufficient time, given existing teaching work and increasing administrative duties.

Figure 25: Integration of key findings and suggested ways forward



FUTURE DIRECTIONS: THE NEED FOR A SYSTEMIC RESPONSE

While the finding that teachers are spending the bulk of their daily work time on matters directly related to their teaching and to students' learning is affirming, the implications of this study's overall findings are not encouraging. These implications can be seen most clearly in the section of this report on the effects of workload increase. Teachers reported two distinct effects — first, effects on teachers, including their time, career aspirations, family commitments and work-life balance; and second, effects on opportunities for teaching and learning in schools. We emphasise that while distinct, these two effects are also inextricably linked. The administrative demands currently placed on schools are debilitating, curtailing teachers' scope to focus on teaching and learning and having serious implications for the sustainability of the teaching profession. The weight of the evidence in this report makes this clear, and negative impacts on students are likely to ensue.

As this survey has shown, teachers value their work very highly, and the current policy milieu does not allow teachers to do this work justice in their own eyes. We conclude that it is in the interests of the Department and wider community to value teachers' work, and a planned, systemic response is required to alleviate the unnecessary administrative demands placed on teachers. Among other things, this should include teachers' nominated, preferred response of a reduction in face-to-face teaching to allow teachers the time and space to work together and do what they want to do — teach.



APPENDIX: EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES — QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE

This Appendix contains illustrative quotes from survey respondents, providing evaluation for the top four and bottom four teaching activities. They are arranged according to the evaluation items:

Table 13: This work is important/necessary

Table 14: More time and resources are needed for this work

Table 15: The way this work is managed is too time consuming/cumbersome

Table 16: This work is focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning

Table 17: Less time and resources should be spent on this work

Table 13: 'This work is important/necessary'

(i) Top 4
<p>1. Planning and preparation of lessons</p> <p>Less face-to-face teaching time to allow planning, programming and organisation of events to be done during school hours rather than teaching all day and then marking, planning and doing admin duties in our personal time. 6703443831</p> <p>An acknowledgement that teaching is no longer planning and programming for classes, but now includes key roles in strategic direction planning and many other committees that seem to have "trickled down" from the top. 6703444352</p> <p>I find lesson planning often gets pushed back to make time for administrative work when creating engaging, quality lessons should be a priority. 6703445080</p> <p>Need to simplify the process/es within school environments so I am able to actually spend time developing work and programs to enrich my students learning rather than just on administrative tasks aimed to micro manage me as a staff member. 6703500689</p>
<p>2. Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals</p> <p>As a year advisor I have very limited time to assist my year group to achieve greatness within and develop well-rounded individuals. 6705095726</p> <p>If I taught one less class a cycle, I feel I would have more time to adequately prepare engaging and meaningful lessons to students, as well as more consistent and constructive individual feedback. 6705113626</p> <p>More student support teachers in the classroom to assist teachers with the students that require additional support is essential. Today's generation is coming with more issues and specific requirements that the regular CRT cannot effectively cater for when there are several in the one class. Funding needs to be easier to access so these students are supported so they can grow into successful individuals rather than falling through the cracks as they are at present. The Department needs to get rid of the red tape rather than just expecting things to happen on a wing and a prayer. Provide more funding for welfare officers. Teachers are educators, not welfare officers. 6703621754</p> <p>All directorates to communicate so each knows what the other is expecting of school-based staff, sharing information and beginning to understand the individual needs of each school; just as we understand the individual needs of our students. 6703443641</p> <p>Smaller class sizes so teachers can do more individualised teaching, assessing, feedback, etc. Minimise expectations on formal reporting as this is very time consuming and stressful for teachers, which takes time away from quality planning and teaching. 6707730729</p>
<p>3. Communicating with students about their classroom learning</p> <p>Teachers should be teaching, building rapport with students and planning exciting and engaging lessons and programs, not doing so much admin and data collection at such an early age (of students). 6703442198</p> <p>Very little time for teacher/student feedback. One hour RFF purely dedicated to student feedback. 6703467650</p> <p>Very little time for any deep understanding. 6703503533</p> <p>There seems to be more work needed outside the classroom, leaving less teaching time for kids. 6703482759</p> <p>I find it impossible to sustain what is required of me to be successful in the classroom. Burnt out. 6703469270</p>
<p>4. Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare)</p> <p>A teacher's aide in each classroom and welfare staff to supervise and follow up with social issues in the playground would make a difference. 6703728099</p> <p>More resources are needed to improve ... student ... welfare. 6705114791</p> <p>I rarely get a break as I am either on playground duty or dealing with welfare/behaviour issues at break time. 6705134257</p> <p>More resources to support teachers working on front line of welfare — mental, emotional, physical wellbeing. 6705268610</p>

(ii) Bottom 4

1. Responding to and dealing with NESA requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspection

Reduce the stress and cumbersome workload associated with the PDP/NESA processes. 6703631997

NESA imposes increased workloads with unrealistic timeframes yet offers NO time, financial, staffing support to schools. These tasks should be a stand-alone position paid for by NESA. 6704657539

Having dedicated administrative staff to take care of NESA requirements/enrolments and timetabling procedures for students. 6707828597

2. Work associated with the School Excellence Framework, including self-assessment and external validation

I was burnt out chairing the School Excellence Framework. It was the most stressful experience in my teaching career. Did I learn anything from it — nothing! 6718215542

Get rid of School Excellence Framework! What a waste of time. 6718646608

3. Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures

The real issue is reasonable expectations for whole-student wellbeing and citizenship not data-focused/number-bragging people seeking promotion or unrealistic ... policy creation. 6703564721

More policies, more documentation, greater accountability and less time and energy to commit to creating actual quality lessons. More value placed on standardised testing and less value placed on student creativity. 6703448212

Data collection dominates everything. Focus taken off children and on to implementing policies, procedures and empowering. 6703475313

Extreme expectations regarding compliance and administrative tasks. Too many layers of red tape, new policies and procedures with very little, if any, professional learning to support staff. 6705666304

It's not about teaching any more and, in the words of my own principal, 'it's not enough to be a great teacher'. We're all required to constantly complete menial tasks so that the person one level above us can tick pointless boxes that demonstrate accountability or implementation of policy 'x' or policy 'y'. Good teachers leave because they have the sense to get out of a system which is fundamentally broken and the only ones who stay on to become 'leaders' are the fools too blinded by the system to actually implement effective change. 6706109420

A lot more emphasis on data and policy implementation. Change fatigue. 6703669273

4. Navigating implementation of new external technology platforms e.g. SPaRO, Scout, PLAN

I believe that the administrative demands around WHS, SPaRO, LMBR, Finances, ASR, external testing and all the other useless busy work are detracting from the ability of school leaders and staff to engage creatively and be innovative in the delivery of teaching and learning. 6705828793

More consultants for beginning principals so that they are confident in using programs such as SPaRO. 6711074252

Scrap the entire portal and start over: Half my life is trying to find policies or where to complete a task and then trying to find out how to go about it. There is no logic to it. Why can't everything be in one area for principals, deputies, teachers, corporate? The portal is a nightmare and needs to be fixed. Programs need to be easier to use. SPaRO, EBS4 and many others are difficult to use and navigate.

Steps do not follow the usual steps in most other programs. Eg. in SPaRO for the annual school report you have to enter data and text in different fields, adding photos are not a simple browse button, you've got to upload it in another section than select it from there.

Then when the report is finished, you've got to go into "self-assessment" to view and approve it. Why isn't "approve" in the ASR section? It makes no sense that approval of the ASR to be in under the self-assessment tab. This is common amongst software with the DoE. The steps are not logical ... I don't know how less tech savvy principals get anything done! 6718478195

EV, NESA inspections, SEF, accreditation, myPL, LMBR, SPaRO, SAP/eFPT budgeting, Scout, learning progressions, NAPLAN online etc, etc, all rolled out too hurriedly, massively flawed and under-resourced. 6727539927

Table 14: 'More time and resources are needed for this work'

(i) Top 4

1. Developing other strategies to meet the learning needs of students (e.g. those with special needs, low engagement/attainment)

Work is more intense with students having more intense learning needs. 6703436414

[There is presently] less concentration on the kids and their learning needs, more concentration on data and irrelevant paperwork. 6705578511

The weight of student learning needs have increased as the support personnel have decreased from the Department. 6710676142

2. Developing new units of work and/or teaching programs

It is impossible to fit all that is asked of us to teach into our day. It is also impossible to do all of our data and programming and lesson prep at school — it has to be done at home if we are to see our family. 6724441795

So much more time spent on "tasks" unrelated to programming and lesson preparation for the children in my class. It feels like work and tasks related to the "classroom" and preparing quality lessons for the students in your class is only 50 per cent of the job. 6727002651

Increase in paperwork does not improve my teaching or student outcomes. It takes me away from maintaining my classroom (Industrial Arts teacher), developing new units of work and projects and providing extra tuition to my students and fellow staff for their development. 6734229052

3. Differentiating the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students

A marked increase in data analysis and differentiation planning with no time allowed to be able to do these tasks (expected to be done in your own time). 6739050944

Teachers are spending so much time on assessment and data entry, rather than having time to get to know their students as individuals in order to differentiate for individual learning needs. 6705946142

The amount of administrative work for differentiation of curriculum to cater for students with special needs, IEPs, PLPs, 8-ways etc has increased exponentially. 6736951238

So much admin work, not enough quality time to prepare for differentiated lessons, individual student difficulties and organisation of classroom. 6739948343

How many new syllabuses can you implement in a few years, without face-to-face support? Apparently all of them. 6743112742

Differentiating curriculum has become untenable because every child needs an individual program. 6703475313

4. Planning and implementation of school projects/innovations (e.g. STEM, PBL etc)

There have been many increases in policy implementation e.g. PDP; targets for literacy/numeracy, STEM, new syllabus, changes to assessments for stage 6 yet little time given to develop the materials in practice. 6742315386

With the changing focus of educational goals such as STEM and project-based learning, many hours go into the planning of activities and differentiation of tasks for an ever-increasing cohort of disadvantaged/alternate students. On top of that, the management of resources, machinery and self-training to allow these units of work to flow and become meaningful for students to develop and engage with — there simply is not enough time in the day. 6771754984

This year we have had 80 minutes of our release time changed from a KLA to STEM being done as RFF, therefore we now have an extra KLA to fit into our already stretched to the limit timetable. 6708444555

The amount of information that comes via email from the Department, and school executive has increased but the time to read has decreased. As a new scheme teacher my professional learning load has increased, and I am thrown into committees, teams and working groups more and more frequently. 6708864550

Extra meetings, extra-curricular work (sport teams, extra jobs, extra data entry etc) done in own lunch/recess times, therefore miss out often on 30-minute break. 6716362485

(ii) Bottom 4

1. Reporting of student attainment information to external authorities (e.g. Department, NESAs etc)

The school term has become dominated by collecting data — pre-testing, observation, post-test results and comparisons, PLAN, etc. We spend so much time analysing the kids to prove exactly to the single skill what in particular they may have gained, we don't have enough time to properly address the syllabus and teach. 6736433143

Increasing reporting demands, increased need to collect and report data, increased need to justify actions, continual changes in policy, procedure at a school and departmental level — usually poorly supported in terms of time and resources. 6734097298

There is now so much paperwork and reporting, not to mention everything that needs to be recorded and annotated online. 6736603050

2. Playground duty and other supervision tasks

Playground duty. In a big school with a large staff, I have four duties a week. That doesn't include my staffroom duty or the extra duty on a rotating basis whilst we have our staff meetings. 6743112742

Workload has increased but so have playground duties. 6755515389

Huge increase in social/emotional needs of students has meant break time requires additional supervision in alternate play spaces. 6707313744

Increased teaching periods and increased playground supervision duties. 6718657731

3. Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures

See Table 13 Item (ii) 3

4. Administration and documentation requirements relating to HSC, RoSA and VET

The workload for VET Retail has risen to a point that I find it very hard to cope with all of the expectations from RTO and NESAs. 6726470161

Saving of samples of student work for RoSA has increased workload. VET teachers have a bigger workload in reporting and assessing but no allowance time to complete it. 6736931215

Administrative tasks and data analysis (RoSA and HSC) have greatly increased, taking away from class preparation time. 6705652646

HSC, Prelim RoSA monitoring are the most onerous, time consuming, obviously upward tick-box paperwork changes I have seen in my career. 6723024147

Pressure to complete paperwork and sign offs has become more onerous. Completion of paperwork for VET courses has become unmanageable. 6708468923

Table 15: ‘The way this work is managed is too time consuming/cumbersome’

(i) Top 4
<p>1. Data collection, analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies</p> <p>Things like moving from the continuum to progressions, and dealing with time-sucking PLAN software only to gather non-mandatory data that isn't entirely reflective of the syllabus adds another layer of meaningless box ticking. 6703444817</p> <p>Lots more technology-based data input and output — e.g. PLAN, online PD, recording behaviours, projects relating to quality assurance etc. 6703446402</p> <p>In a digital world the paperwork has increased particularly since LMBR, particularly related to finances. Data collection and reports have increased — don't know why, when data can be extracted from so many sources. It shouldn't be the principal that has to write these reports. 6703465892</p> <p>We are all about collecting data and evidence, ticking boxes. Our focus is on paperwork and WHS rather than the kids' educational, social and emotional needs. All the support that was at district office is gone and schools are now responsible. There are no experts. Our director is more like a politician, all he wants is data but nothing changes in our schools except our increase in paperwork. Paperwork would have increased tenfold over the last five years. We focus on paperwork not developing quality lessons for our kids, only because we don't have the time. We spend an hour on paperwork for an hour lesson. (6703638992)</p>
<p>2. Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures</p> <p>See Table 13 Item (ii) 3</p>
<p>3. Planning and implementation of statewide policies (e.g. literacy/numeracy strategy)</p> <p>Introduction of new syllabuses and increased testing requirements — NAPLAN practice, NAPLAN, HSC Minimum Standards Tests and soon to introduce year 7 Best Start. Now [we must] also implement the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. Let's change from a continuum to progressions and, oh, apparently we need to start doing more about the bullying issue. We have PLPs, IEPs and Health Care plans plus PDPs for teachers. Add in accreditation and less money for in-school-time professional learning — you can do this online in your own time! 6749929313</p> <p>Policy change and demands for implementation without removing other workload have led to fatigue. 6703455485</p> <p>The reform agenda and the introduction of what feels like a million different policy requirements and obligations are having a heavy impact on my engagement with the profession. I have significantly less time to plan/resource my lessons and it is having a massive impact on my ability to be a quality teacher. My school is a high-achieving school with great NAPLAN performance and growth, yet we still constantly get the message “what you are doing is not good enough”. 6705724245</p> <p>I have seen a huge increase in the implementation of unnecessary policies so much so that each time we introduce a new acronymed policy the staff laugh at it. 6707644180</p> <p>More work in understanding, implementing and reporting in all aspects of school. The Department generates a policy or procedure and then requires staff to implement the change with very little support and no additional resources. Something has to give — teaching and learning, staff personal time or the policy implementation? 6707756216</p>
<p>4. Responding and dealing with NESA requirements in relation to curriculum, accreditation and inspections</p> <p>See Table 13 Item (ii) 1</p>
(ii) Bottom 4
<p>1. Finding opportunities to reflect on, and personally evaluate, your teaching practice both formal and informal</p> <p>All staff are stressed, all productivity is down, jobs, programs and new ideas are all done with a minimum of reflection and are squeezed into an already overcrowded curriculum. 6737015332</p> <p>Passionate teachers, who question, reflect, evaluate, collaborate and improve upon their practice, who respect and care about their students, make the difference. The very people who will be driven away from the teaching profession. 6737426791</p> <p>Lots of time is wasted in starting new projects with limited resources and later dumped. As a passionate teacher all I ask for is, please give us our teaching time back. Let us conduct our core function that is to teach children. Student results will only improve by allowing teachers to plan and prep effective lessons. This can only be achieved by giving teachers adequate time and resources. Let teachers teach. 6739959376</p> <p>I get less time and support to reflect on my practice and improve my teaching skill set, as most of my time is absorbed completing admin tasks/paperwork. Implementing the new senior science syllabus this year has been a nightmare — there is a lack of consistent information and support to really know what content to deliver and in how much detail. 6749980062</p>
<p>2. Communicating with students about their classroom learning</p> <p>See Table 13 Item (i) 3</p>

<p>3. Supporting and/or managing professional colleagues and/or other school staff</p> <p>Workload has increased massively with less and less support and time to discuss with colleagues. 6752791365</p> <p>Increase in beginning teachers requiring mentoring and senior teachers requiring additional support. Challenges posed with assisting and supporting staff in managing difficult student behaviours. 6781163333</p> <p>Support has become school based over the past few years. We see very few experts or consultants. A great deal of my time is spent on technology and supporting staff in this area. I have changed roles from a classroom teacher and moved into the teacher-librarian role. I have duty every lunch time and staff always require support during both recess and lunch time. They apologise for the disruption but still expect support. I never sit and relax and avoid the staffroom as this is a work station area where staff are delegated more work. 6721573586</p> <p>Satisfying accreditation requirements and supporting staff with the same. Increased students with specific learning needs, differentiating the curriculum and documenting changes for these needs. Increased student numbers over a number of years requires more work as a faculty HT in dealing with issues and supporting staff. 6724057790</p>
<p>4. Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals</p> <p>See Table 13 Item (i) 2</p>

Table 16: ‘This work is focused on compliance rather than teaching and learning’

<p>(i) Top 4</p>
<p>1. Reporting to parents and caregivers</p> <p>Parents and students have become more demanding — complaints to directors increased, and real support from directors to staff and schools decreased. 6703446526</p> <p>The amount of administration tasks, parent meetings, time spent on reports and collection of data has greatly increased. 6705697462</p> <p>Assessments and reports are becoming more complex and contain repetition of detail. 6705713815</p> <p>More admin tasks have been devolved to staff usually as a result of IT/computer tech changes, e.g. reports, correspondence to parents. 6708627491</p> <p>More paperwork, such as “progress reports” when parents are coming for meetings. Unfortunately these can come again within weeks of each other; FOR THE SAME STUDENT. 6711456336</p> <p>Written student reports are becoming ridiculous and disconnected to who the child is and more centred around “workload”. 6736121025</p>
<p>2. Providing evidence of implementing departmental policies and procedures</p> <p>See Table 13 Item (ii) 3</p>
<p>3. Data collection, analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategies</p> <p>See Table 15 Item (i) 1</p>
<p>4. Working on accreditation-related requirements</p> <p>There has not been any time provided to work on accreditation, prepare for registration, or fulfil other requirements expected of us. 6703495979</p> <p>Accreditation supports only academic teachers that can script academically, generally these teachers have poor classroom management. 6703567072</p> <p>Accreditation pressures have contributed to more stress and many wakeful hours during the night. 6703592855</p> <p>I feel that with the implementation of maintaining accreditation, my time is being taken up with courses, evaluations and paperwork in general. 6705798013</p> <p>It has become more about admin, especially now with the introduction of accreditation. 6707357435</p> <p>Too much time wasted on collection of evidence for accreditation and related administration work instead of having allocated “free periods” to use to plan engaging learning activities. So then after-work hours, which should be spent with family, or fitness/sports/hobbies, [time] is [spent] researching and designing lessons and activities that may be engaging for students to learn in school. 6711282667</p>
<p>(ii) Bottom 4</p>
<p>1. Engaging in extra-curricular activities with students (e.g. sports and cultural activities)</p> <p>Teachers are expected to take on more extra-curricular activities but not being given time off for administrative duties. 6726535347</p> <p>I teach three HSC subjects and am involved in the co-ordination of many extra-curricular activities for students for example, MUNA, study skill sessions, business week, university liaison for Aboriginal students. I get no period allowances and do all of these extra activities in my own time. 6740206900</p> <p>As someone who is now in my fourth year of teaching, I have found that my responsibilities in my school have increased. I suspect this is normal, but at the same time, when I began in the school as a beginning teacher, I was already given more responsibilities than some other teachers. I attribute this to the dangerous misconception of new teachers being more “energetic and enthusiastic”, as well as to my position as the sole Drama teacher at the school, thus I must program and run the subject alone. This includes all extra duties of running extra-curricular programs. 6771048056</p>

2. Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare) See Table 13 Item (i) 4
3. Communicating with students about their classroom learning See Table 13 Item (i) 3
4. Finding opportunities to get to know students as individuals See Table 13 (i) 2

Table 17: ‘Less time and resources should be spent on this work’

(i) Top 4
1. Data collection, analysis and reporting associated with statewide strategy See Table 15, Item (i) 1
2. Classroom work associated with external assessment (e.g. specific orientation and preparation) We have been forced to focus, give more of an emphasis [to], data and results from diagnostic tests and less emphasis on individual skills and learning styles of students ... [W]ith 28 students in a classroom plus support and Life Skills students with no aide, it is almost impossible to cover the content in class. We are made to embed NAPLAN in all programs through the disguise of Literacy and Numeracy. Students do not get the opportunity to succeed in their own individual way ... Lunch times are also taken up every day with student assistance with work and assessments as we cannot cover the content in the classroom because senior executive are pushing NAPLAN and HSC standards. 6703511563 The HSC Monitoring Folders dominate our working hours. 6705048730 Absolute overload — HSC compliance tasks take a ridiculous amount of time yet contribute nothing. 6705819240 Teaching for NAPLAN takes up way too much of our time. 6705871342 Too much ... NAPLAN prep. 6706162382
3. Communicating with students about their classroom learning See Table 13, Item (i) 3
4. Working on accreditation-related requirements See Table 16, Item (i) 4
(ii) Bottom 4
1. Engaging in extra-curricular activities with students (e.g. sports and cultural activities) See Table 16, Item (ii) 1
2. Communicating with students about issues outside of classroom learning (e.g. student welfare) See Table 13, Item (i) 4
3. Communicating with students about their classroom learning See Table 13, Item (i) 3
4. Finding opportunities to get to know students are individuals See Table 13, Item (i) 2

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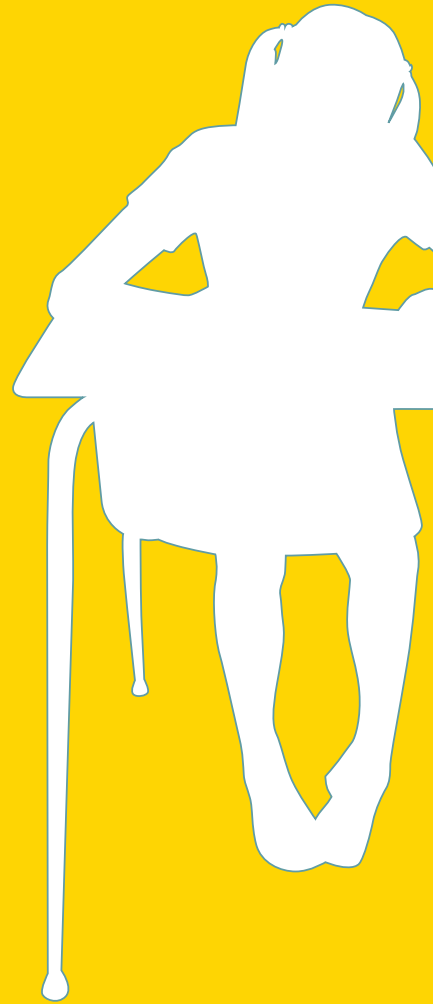
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