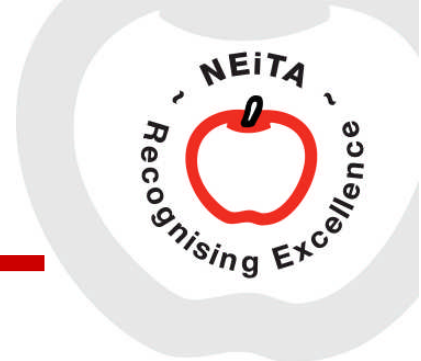


NEiTA Factsheet: Teaching in Australia



The education system in Australia

- According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Schools 2008* report [1]:
 - There are more than 247,100 full-time teachers working in Australia's schools.
 - Approximately 65.3 per cent of Australia's teachers work in the government sector and 34.7 per cent are found working in non-government schools.
 - Australia has 9562 schools.
 - Around 70 per cent of Australia's schools are in the government sector, which equates to some 6833 schools. There are 2729 schools in the non-government education sector.
 - There are 3,434,291 full-time school students in Australia.
- The Australian Government has put education funding back on the nation's agenda. Post-secondary education and training are a key part of the federal Budget for 2009-10, which includes funding for an additional 50,000 university places by 2013.[2]
- But primary and secondary schools are not forgotten. As part of the Australian Government's *Economic Stimulus* plan and its *Building the Education Revolution*, the Government has pledged to [3]:
 - Invest \$14.7 billion over the next three years in infrastructure projects for Australian schools.
 - Invest a total of \$12.4 billion in large-scale infrastructure projects for primary schools, which includes libraries, multipurpose halls, indoor sport centres.
 - Invest \$1 billion to build new science labs and language learning centres in secondary schools.
- A further \$1.3 billion is allocated to build or renew small-scale infrastructure projects for all school sectors, including; primary, secondary, government and non-government, urban, and rural.

The work involved in being a teacher

- On average, the OECD finds that Australian school students receive between 800 and 900 hours of teaching instruction per year. This equates to some 8000 hours a teacher will spend interacting with a student over the course of the student's primary and secondary education. But these estimates do not include the many extra hours a teacher might spend giving extra tuition during lunch breaks, after school and weekends.[4]
- On average, primary school teachers are found to spend at least 48 hours per week on school-related activities, secondary teachers spend 49 hours, and school leaders spend between 55 and 59 hours per week on school related activities. Whichever spectrum a teacher works in, the amount of time worked is substantially more than the average 38-hour week worked by many Australian professionals.
- Around 30 per cent of teachers surveyed by the Australian Government in 2008 were found to work in a supervisory capacity to entry-level teachers. In 98 per cent of these situations, their supervisory role was in addition to their existing school related activities.[5]

Why become a teacher?

- ❑ A recent Australian Government funded survey provides some valuable insights into why people choose to go into the teaching profession. The study found that primary school teachers selected teaching because of a desire to work with young people, were passionate about education, they met personal teaching fulfilment goals, and they believed the profession contributed positively to society. [6]
- ❑ Secondary school teachers held slightly different motivators, with the majority of survey respondents choosing secondary teaching because of their enjoyment of a particular subject area, personal fulfilment, and a desire to work with young people.
- ❑ Teachers and school leaders all agreed that remuneration, workload, employment conditions and status, were not key motivators for becoming teachers. However, these aspects are often the reasons given by those who choose not to become teachers.

***** ends *****

References:

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Schools 2008*, www.abs.gov.au
2. Australian Government, 2009-10 Budget, www.budget.gov.au
3. Australian Government, *Building the Education Revolution Secondary Schools factsheet*, www.deewr.gov.au
4. OECD, *Education at a Glance (2008)*, www.oecd.org/edu/eag2008
5. Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, *Staff in Australia's Schools January 2008*, www.qualityteaching.deewr.gov.au
6. As above.

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