



Australian Education Union

Federal Office

*Ground Floor, 120 Clarendon Street, Southbank, Victoria, 3006
PO Box 1158, South Melbourne, Victoria, 3205
Federal Secretary : Susan Hopgood
Federal President : Angelo Gavrielatos*

*Phone : +61 (0)3 9693 1800
Fax : +61 (0)3 9693 1805
Email : aeu@aeufederal.org.au
Web : www.aeufederal.org.au*

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Mr Glenn Ryall
Principal Research Officer
Senate Select Committee on School Funding
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Email : glenn.ryall@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Ryall

Re: Senate Select Committee on School Funding – Questions on Notice

I write in response to the Committee's request to provide answers to three questions on notice from the Inquiry Hearing on 13 March.

Senator McKenzie requested details of expenditure on the AEU's 'I give a Gonski' campaign.

In our response to Senator McKenzie at the hearing we indicated that we report, as is required under the Fair Work Act, our expenditure with audited reports that are submitted to the Fair Work Commission.

We provide the following further information as requested. However, we wish to put on record that we consider Senator McKenzie's request to be well outside the terms of reference of the inquiry, and question the motivation behind her reference to the expenditure of AEU members' money.

The AEU's 2012 and 2013 audited reports show total expenditure on our National Public Education Campaign (Schools and TAFE Funding Campaigns). Expenditure for 2012 was \$2,900,427. Expenditure for 2013 was \$4,396,574.

At this stage we are unable to provide details of our expenditure on the 2014 Gonski Road Trip. The activity has only been completed this week and final expenditure figures are not yet available.

Senator Back requested substantiation of responses by the AEU to his questions regarding the 'Teach for Australia' program.

Senator Back asked whether the AEU could substantiate its evidence that Teach for Australia is a costly program; specifically that an ACER report put the cost of a TFA teacher at \$216,000, compared to \$140,000 for a teacher who graduates through a comprehensive program meeting all the requirements.

The source for our information is the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) evaluation of the *Teach for Australia* pathway commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). Part 2 of the evaluation report (2012) provides a summary of the main findings emerging from ACER's ongoing evaluation of the pathway.

According to the ACER, "*the TFA Pathway is a relatively costly teacher education option for government.*" [Paul R. Weldon, Philip McKenzie, Elizabeth Kleinhenz, and Kate Reid (2012) 'Teach for Australia Pathway: evaluation report phase 2 of 3' Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). p.xiii]

The total cost of delivering a teacher through the TFA program "*is considerably more than for teachers gaining full registration through a standard pathway, even allowing for the time Associates actually spend teaching.*" [ACER Evaluation Report. p.53]

The TFA Pathway is estimated to currently cost approximately \$216,500 per Associate, based on figures for Cohorts 1 and 2, from published data and information provided by stakeholders. This includes the cost of recruitment, course delivery, mentor training, travel and accommodation, in-school and TFA support, the salary paid to Associates over two years and the indirect cost of the Associate filling a vacant position for 2 years at 0.8 FTE. It does not include the cost of the Alumni program, nor the administrative and national coordinating roles played by TFA.

Based on published data, a comparative Victorian post-graduate pathway is estimated to cost government around \$140,200 per fully registered teacher. This includes some living expenses such as Youth Allowance over a one year period, a scholarship for teaching in a hard-to-staff area and a graduate teacher salary over the year generally required for a teacher in Victoria to become fully registered...It also includes the indirect cost of the salary of a graduate teacher over one year while a trainee is not available to teach. [ACER Evaluation Report p.xiii]

The ACER evaluation further notes 2011 figures which show that recruitment to the program cost the TFA organisation approximately \$1 million per cohort, or about \$15,000 per joiner. This is in contrast to the Australian Association of Graduate Employers' figure of the median cost per joiner (Applicant accepting a new place) of \$10,100. [p.xiv]

Senator Back also asked for substantiation of figures on the high attrition rate from the program. The ACER report shows that of the 45 entrants in the first Teach for Australia cohort (2010-2011), 42 graduated in December 2011, and only 26 entered into full time teaching positions as of February 2012; under 60 per cent of the initial cohort. [p.vii]

By May 2012, it was reported that Teach for Australia's own data showed the number remaining in the classroom after two years was "about 20". [Caroline Overington, *The Australian*, May 5, 2012] This represents just 45 per cent of the initial cohort.

By contrast, the Productivity Commission's 2012 study of the teacher workforce shows a much smaller attrition rate of new teachers from the overall teaching workforce. Only about 10 per cent of teachers in New South Wales with less than five years of experience left the profession, with the separation rate of early career teachers in Queensland apparently even lower. [Productivity Commission, *Schools Workforce Research Report*, April 2012. p.63]

We trust that this provides the Committee with the information it requires.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angelo Gavrielatos'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'A'.

Angelo Gavrielatos
Federal President