

Quality Teachers Youth Bill 2008

Explanatory Notes

Short title of the Youth Bill

The short title of the Youth Bill is the *Quality Teachers Youth Bill 2008*.

Objectives of the Youth Bill

The objective of the Youth Bill is to improve the recruitment, retention and quality of teachers in Queensland.

One of the major problems facing the education system in Queensland is the inability to recruit and retain quality teachers. We currently have teachers forced to teach subjects well outside their speciality area. There is also a lack of people entering the profession.

The *Quality Teachers Youth Bill 2008* aims to address the issues facing education in Queensland and remedy them by implementing several measures.

Under the provisions of the *Quality Teachers Youth Bill 2008*, all new teachers will be assigned a mentor to help and support them through their first year and a half of teaching. This will allow new teachers to adjust to being the sole full-time teacher of a class and for mentors to pass on valuable experience and knowledge to new teachers.

This Youth Bill will require higher standards of education for teachers of high-level subjects in years 11 and 12.

Teachers will no longer teach subjects they have little or no experience in. They will teach subjects in their area of expertise and for which they have passion. As a result they will provide an excellent educational experience for students in the critical final 2 years of schooling.

Increasing teachers pay will attract teachers into the profession, particularly to areas of teaching that are seen as challenging. Investment in education in Queensland is necessary to make the teaching profession

attractive and competitive. Far too many potential teachers are being lost to professions where remuneration is far greater.

Attracting quality teachers is not the only problem facing education in Queensland. Some teachers currently in the system are under-performing and letting students down. This Youth Bill aims to get tougher on teachers better suited to other professions. Under the provisions of the Bill, Education Queensland must set a benchmark for quality and teachers not reaching it will be removed. Queensland must strive for a first-rate education system, and anything less can not be tolerated.

Studies have shown that the biggest influence on a student's achievements at school is not how wealthy they are or where they live, but their teacher.

To build and maintain a 21st century school system the commitment and skills required to be a quality teacher have to be acknowledged. To do this it is imperative that teachers pay will have to rise substantially. An experienced, highly-qualified and effective teacher should earn as much as a lawyer. The practice of allowing poor quality teachers to continue to teach can not continue.

The *Quality Teachers Youth Bill 2008* is a step towards a better, higher quality education system in Queensland. Teachers are the most important part of education, and if we are unable to get quality teachers for students, any other measures to improve our education system will have been in vain.