

RESEARCH INTO INITIATIVES TO PREPARE AND SUPPLY A WORKFORCE FOR HARD-TO- STAFF SCHOOLS

Final Report – Prepared for



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Abstract

This project examines the notion of ‘teacher shortages’ within the context of the difficulties that some schools have in finding and retaining enough teachers, not only across rural, regional, and remote geographic contexts, but also across high poverty school settings and within key discipline or subject areas. Framing this broad issue as a workforce issue for *hard-to-staff schools*, the project sought to learn more about the reasons teachers accept or fail to take up the many vacant positions in these schools or prematurely leave the profession once employed in these complex settings.

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Executive Summary

This project examined the notion of ‘teacher shortages’ within the context of the difficulties that some schools have in finding and retaining enough teachers, not only across rural, regional, and remote geographic contexts, but also across high poverty school settings and within key discipline or subject areas. Framing this broad issue as a workforce issue for *hard-to-staff schools*, the project sought to learn more about the reasons teachers either fail to take up the many vacant positions in these schools or prematurely leave the profession once employed in these complex settings. In addition, the project aimed to shed light on why some initiatives appear to run successfully for many years while the lifespan of other projects are much shorter. We also focused on aspects of educational leadership that facilitate impact and success in this sector and the key lessons which can be passed on to policy makers regarding issues related to program design, recruitment, and retention. This project worked from the pretext that the hard-to-staff schooling context is both complex and under-problematised and hence we aimed not just to answer the following research questions, but to contextualise our responses through the voices of those most closely involved.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The project was divided into four phases, which began with a qualitatively analysed meta-synthesis of key policy documents, evaluations, and associated academic publications related to initiatives that sought to address the teaching workforce in hard-to-staff settings with a specific focus on the area of leadership. This first phase (*Audit*) involved the collation of information on a range of major Australian initiatives that specifically focused on teacher workforce shortages within hard-to-staff school contexts. There was an overarching focus on leadership and the scope of the audit was restricted to the past 20 years. The second phase (*Interviews*) involved in depth interviews and discussion with both those who have led the initiatives as well as teachers and school leaders who participated in them. These interviews allowed an examination of the conceptual and policy drivers at the time of their delivery and an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of their strategies and learnings, which might be applied to current and/or future policy. The third phase (*Analysis*) examined

both the implications and common themes identified across the *Audit* and *Interview* stages. This phase scrutinised whether these initiatives can be determined as having made short term, long term, and/or systemic change, the sustainability of the initiatives, and their transferability to different contexts. It also sought to identify other ways ‘change’ or impact might be determined. The final phase (*Dissemination of Findings*) takes form in this report, which has been delivered to government in order to inform the direction on addressing teacher workplace shortages for hard-to-staff schools.

KEY FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE 3 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How have Australian workforce initiatives over the past 20 years sought to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers within historically hard-to-staff schools/areas?

It clear from an analysis of both Phase One and Phase Two datasets that while specific strategies of how to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers vary between initiatives, there are the following commonalities and overlapping approaches:

- Most programs (107 of 147 audited) were administered by either Government (48), Universities (43) or collaborations between both Government and University (16).
- While there was a combination of Government initiatives across federal, state and territory sectors, most university-based programs involved non-G8 institutions.
- The focus of most programs (86) targeted pre-service teachers with either a regional, remote, or Indigenous focus.
- Many initiatives targeted mechanisms that incentivised teachers to move into, or stay within a hard-to-staff school location. These included rural/remote schools, LSES schools, the early childhood sector, and schools offering specific subject areas such as STEM.
- A smaller number of programs targeted mechanisms that incentivised distinct types of teachers to enter the teaching profession such as pre-service teachers/teachers who are Indigenous or who are from specific locations, teachers in specific subject areas and future school leaders.
- While approximately one third of all programs relied solely on financial incentives (48), many programs used a combination of enticements such as financial, professional,

enhanced career trajectories and superior working conditions in the form of salary loadings, subsidised housing, or extra leave loadings.

What impact have these initiatives had on teaching and how have school leaders perceived their impact?

Many of the hard-to-staff initiatives analysed lacked any formal evaluation. Of the 147 programs audited as part of Phase One, only 15 were identified as having been substantially evaluated. Hence it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from this first data set in relation to impact. The project was however able to utilise Phase Two to better understand impact across the areas of Program design and organisation, Preparation (i.e., Initial Teacher Education), Recruitment and Induction, Retention and Attrition, and Leadership.

- Impact of initiatives on teaching may be strengthened through centralised policy that aligns with specific hard-to-staff school contexts.
- Impact of individual initiatives on teaching is heavily influenced by the degree to which sustainable resourcing is available.
- School leaders raised the notion of stress points where a particular local issue or policy impacts on other untended areas of the hard-to-staff school setting. An example given being the ‘transfer’ or ‘points system’ in remote locations which leads each year to large numbers of experienced staff being transferred back to urban settings and these staff being replaced largely by inexperienced graduate teachers.

What policy lessons can be taken from these initiatives?

Those interviewed requested a desire for more sustainable resourcing and for more long-term support for successful programs. The interviews highlight that while different hard-to-staff locations present completely different sets of complexities, school leaders across different locations are often required to respond to centralised policy directives with little regard to localised context. Key policy issues raised by both leaders and teachers include:

- The need for targeted policy that overtly supports the recruitment process through promoting the benefits of teaching in hard-to-staff locations.
- Policies that ensure teachers’/leaders’ wellbeing and working conditions are supported in different ways depending on the context of the school.

- The need for centralised policies and procedures to embrace innovative approaches in terms of recruiting or retaining key staff, particularly convert high performing teachers from contracts to full time appointments.
- A strong preference amongst school leaders for a degree of school autonomy in terms of hiring.
- Recognition that changes in government and subsequent jurisdictional changes in policy, at times make it hard for school leaders to maintain momentum, consistency, and fidelity of specific strategies.
- Wellbeing and working conditions of all school staff as a core policy issue of major significance.
- Further research holds the potential to continue to inform policy of productive means of recruitment, retention, and attrition.

GENERAL IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

1. Robust evidence-based evaluations of existing programs may assist in better determining the effectiveness of individual initiatives and allow for the sharing of successful approaches of attracting, preparing, and retaining teachers in hard-to-staff schools.

The first phase (*Audit*) of the project examined existing evaluations and reports across a range of initiatives specifically focusing on teacher workforce shortages within hard-to-staff school contexts. This phase of the project found there were limited formal evaluations and in cases where there had been an appraisal, evidence for the effectiveness of the various approaches undertaken was generally weak and often relied on anecdotal, and or informal data.

2. Robust evidence-based understandings of teacher attrition and its impact in different geographic and socioeconomic locations may provide a more comprehensive appreciation of why so many teachers leave the profession prematurely.

A common theme across the second phase (*Interviews*) was the reality that many teachers choose to either leave the hard-to-staff setting and return to ‘easier’ urban or independent schools at the first opportunity, or choose to leave the profession all together. While the interviews provide a wide range of anecdotal accounts as to why this occurs, the exact

numbers and reasons for why teachers leave the profession are difficult to determine within the Australian context. This issue is exacerbated by a lack of national data collection on teacher attrition.

3. Understanding the retention of teachers at key ‘walking point’ moments would assist policymakers in designing longer-term, more impactful interventions to attract teachers towards hard-to-staff schools (especially when they are considering leaving the profession).

This point overlaps with the implication outlined above and suggests the benefits of a stronger evidence-based understanding of these ‘walking points’ and a more fine-grained understanding of just-in-time solutions.

4. While the area of financial incentives and bursaries is commonly used as a means of recruiting and retaining teachers in hard-to-staff schools, the underlying dynamics of using this form of compensatory enticement are complex and at times poorly understood.

Despite research on the success of financial incentives or bursaries being relatively weak, there was almost universal acceptance (particularly across at the remote schooling sector), that some kind of financial enticement is required to attract and retain suitable staff. The range, shape, and form these financial incentives takes varies (i.e., sign-on bonuses, salary loadings or subsidised housing) while also differing across states and jurisdictions in terms of implementation.

- The success of financial incentives appears stronger in terms of recruitment compared to retention.
- What is often missing in the discussion is the fact that if financial incentives are to be offered, especially in areas such as Mathematics and Science, there is a need for these incentives to be large enough to compete with the salaries from rivaling professions.
- It was suggested that some incentives such as rental assistance and cost of living loadings may potentially encourage relocation into hard-to-staff schools (i.e., for existing teachers).

5: The importance of non-financial incentives as a means of complementing established compensatory models.

The interviews unambiguously highlight how teachers feel rewarded when their knowledge and expertise is valued with the some interviewed suggesting that intrinsic (non-financial) incentives are an important aspect in retaining staff. Examples include, time-release for professional development, the opportunity for further study, time release for additional

curriculum development, being treated like an esteemed colleague and a member of the local community are all valued by teachers and serve as evidence of a supportive school culture.

6. The importance of continued support of existing successful initiatives

It was suggested that the sector suffers from a cycle of new initiatives often using similar concepts or models used in the past. Several leaders argued for continued support for ongoing initiatives, rather than recreating approaches already trailed before an existing program has a chance to develop or to be evaluated for impact.

IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

1. Teacher and school leadership ‘burn-out’ are increasingly seen as major factors leading to many teachers/leaders leaving the profession prematurely.

The report documents how additional resources enhance hard-to-staff school leaders’ capacity to:

- improve school culture (a major factor in teacher attrition),
- ease the challenging working conditions and workloads of teachers, such as providing reduced load/timetables for teachers in hard-to-staff schools,
- provide more administrative staff so teachers’ work can be ‘quarantined’ for teaching.

2. Multi-faceted benefits flow from increased opportunities for school leaders and university Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs to work more collaboratively.

The project documents several examples where strong partnerships between hard-to-staff schools and individual Initial Teacher Education programs produced long lasting and tangible impact via:

- co-designed mentorship for early career teachers,
- experiential on-the-ground professional learning opportunities for preservice teachers,
- targeted employment opportunities for graduate teachers.

3. Teacher recruitment, preparation and retention are all enhanced when the central role of both ‘context’ and ‘place’ are part of pre-and in-service teacher development.

Several interviews conducted in the project explicitly note the degree to which both Initial Teacher Education and school leaders of hard-to-staff schools develop teachers in ways that

- focus on the geo-social particularities of their schools, e.g., metropolitan, regional and remote,
- focus on the multidimensional nature of poverty and disadvantage to avoid deficit, stereotype and generalisations about students and their families,
- focus on diversity, such as including Indigenous education and cultural diversity,
- focus on additional high-needs areas such as contemporary classroom management strategies (i.e., restorative justice), trauma-informed learning and teacher/student mental health and wellbeing.

4. The crucial role leaders and mentors play in supporting teachers' feelings of belonging to a school-based community of practice and feeling professionally and personally supported.

The interviews included numerous anecdotes of the importance to teachers of belonging to a personal and professional community of practice and how this contributed to the degree teachers felt supported at critical times. For teachers in these hard-to-staff settings, there appears to be a clear correlation between job satisfaction and feelings of agency within their own classrooms, in school-based decision making and feeling connected to other education/teacher professional networks. Feeling connected significantly increases teachers' sense of well-being and likelihood of either accepting or continuing a position within a hard-to-staff school. Benefits include:

- teachers' sense of well-being, including their sense of being valued by the school,
- teachers' professional knowledge, and hence their confidence, enhanced by being part of professional networks,
- at least partly overcoming the isolation of teaching in remote and or regional settings,
- improved career prospects for school leaders and teachers who experience expeditious career trajectories and promotion.

5. While mentoring is perceived as key in supporting teachers in hard-to-staff schools, the consistency and quality of mentoring varies.

The research unearthed a degree of tension created by repeat cycles of large numbers of inexperienced teachers arriving at the start of each school year. A number of those interviewed noted, not only the high demand for mentors required to support these new teachers, but also the varied quality of mentoring available in some settings. School leaders would benefit therefore by:

- some form of additional professional development in terms of the selection, training, and support of mentors,
- mechanisms that empower or reward quality mentors through acknowledging the workload implications of the role.

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List of Abbreviations

ECEC = Early Childhood Education and Care

HTS = Hard-to-Staff

ITE = Initial Teacher Education

LSES = Low Socioeconomic Status

PD = Professional Development

RRR = Rural, Regional, and Remote

1 Introduction

1.1 REPORT OBJECTIVES

Teacher shortages within Australian hard-to-staff schools are not new, nor are attempts by governments and initial teacher education programs to address issues of recruitment and retention as well as ones related to teacher quality (Lampert et al., 2016; Halsey, 2018). Regional, rural, and remote locations often find it hard to recruit and retain teachers and leaders as do schools in Indigenous communities and those in low socioeconomic urban areas. There are also hard-to-staff issues linked to certain disciplines (i.e., STEM) and educational sectors (i.e. Early Childhood). Likewise, the persistent problem of teacher attrition in challenging school settings is well-acknowledged, including the impact this issue has on already vulnerable students and communities (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015; McKinnon, 2016). The reasons for recruitment and retention issues in these settings, along with the reasons teachers and school leaders leave the profession altogether, are complex. The underlying factors that are driving these staffing shortages cannot be captured by simplistic explanations provided by workforce supply and demand models. Instead, the issues at play within hard-to-staff school contexts are multifaceted and related to various stages of the teacher workforce shortage process.

The main objective of this report is therefore to provide a contemporary meta-synthesis of the broad range of Australian programs/initiatives that have sought to prepare, recruit, and/or retain teaching workforces within hard-to-staff schools. The report examines initiatives that have taken an overt focus on shortages defined in geographic, socioeconomic, place-based, and/or disciplinary terms as well as ones addressing leadership shortages in these hard-to-staff schools. The three key research questions that guided the design and operation of the project are as follows:

- How have Australian workforce initiatives over the past 20 years sought to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers within historically hard-to-staff schools/areas?
- What impact have these initiatives had on the teaching workforce and how have school leaders perceived their impact?
- What policy lessons can be taken from these initiatives?

1.2 SCOPE OF INQUIRY

The impetus for undertaking this research is the fact that much of what we currently know about Australian teaching workforce initiatives targeting hard-to-staff schools comes in a form that sheds little light on the degree to which these historical and current initiatives have made a difference. Individual evaluations and program reports do little to direct attention to how policy interventions work together. Critically reviewing and synthesising what is known about all of these initiatives will help define as well as track the long-term impact of these initiatives on teachers' themselves, schools, students, and communities. This will ensure governments and programs do not merely 'reinvent the wheel' and spend money on initiatives that have not previously made long-term change or impact. This is especially important in light of recent and post-COVID concerns about present and future teacher shortages.

This research project therefore provides a meta-synthesis of the individual and shared strategies that define how governments and initial teacher education institutions have initiated strategies to address teacher supply and demand for hard-to-staff schools. The report provides a thematic analysis of the nature of these initiatives and their mechanisms in context in order to determine what impact they have had and under what conditions.

The project consists of an audit and qualitatively analysed meta-synthesis of key policy documents, evaluations, and academic publications related to initiatives that address the teaching workforce shortages in hard-to-staff settings, with a specific focus on the area of leadership. The scope of this research spans a 20-year timeframe across all six states and two territories in Australia. Additionally, the project involves interviews with 'key players' in these initiatives, including those leading the initiatives as well as teachers and school leaders who participated in them. Drawing on the data gathered in the audit and interviews, the report identifies the impact of and gaps in initiatives designed to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers in hard-to-staff schools.

1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE

The report contains six chapters and three supporting appendices, all of which are summarised below:

- **Chapter 1 - Introduction:** This introductory chapter identifies the report's objectives and scope of inquiry.

- **Chapter 2 - Literature Review:** The next chapter, the literature review, documents existing research on teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools. It outlines organisational responses to this issue and specific mechanisms being used to address problems with recruitment and retention. It also identifies specific research on school leadership in relation to this problem.
- **Chapter 3 - Research Design:** This chapter maps the key phases of this project. It details the report's three research questions and the methodology used to respond to these lines of inquiry.
- **Chapter 4 - Audit Data Analysis:** Chapter 4 provides a thematic synthesis of existing hard-to-staff school initiatives in terms of location, duration, stakeholders, funding, target, focus (recruit/retain/prepare), mechanism/process, and evaluation.
- **Chapter 5 – Interview Analysis:** Chapter 5 provides a detailed analysis of the central issues and concerns that came out of interviews with a range of stakeholders involved in the effort to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers in hard-to-staff schools. It also provides a specific analysis of the interview themes around school leader shortages in these settings.
- **Chapter 6 – Implications and key findings:** The final chapter identifies a number of implications and key findings that can inform future policies and leadership in the hard-to-staff schooling sector.
- **Appendices:** The three appendices provide a summary of relevant grey literature, the interviews conducted for this report, and the hard-to-staff initiatives audit data.

2 Literature Review

2.1 BACKGROUND

There is an extensive, international body of scholarly literature on the ‘wicked problem’ of teacher shortages in hard-to-staff or ‘disadvantaged’ schools (Keltchermans, 2017). This literature includes programmatic descriptions of approaches for attracting, preparing, and retaining teachers as well as, to a lesser extent, some research and impact studies. The most comprehensive critique of the various strategies implemented to ‘solve’ the issue of an unprepared, overstressed, burnt-out, and transient quality teaching workforce in historically hard-to-staff schools is See et. al's (2020) U.S. meta-analysis of 120 programs and interventions, though these are mostly from the United States. Their analysis concludes that there is a dearth of strong research determining the effectiveness of any of the common approaches to addressing this issue; approaches which include financial incentives, alternative routes to teaching, induction and mentoring programs, professional development, and leadership support. Although there were aspects that worked in all approaches, See et. al's (2020, p. 5) main conclusion is that administrative support, a positive school climate, a supportive leadership culture, and fair working conditions are the most influential factors “associated with higher job satisfaction for teachers and a reduction in the odds that they would want to leave their school”.

This literature review chapter summarises some of the main points in the research around teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools but does not claim to be a comprehensive review of all existing literature on the topic. Instead, it aims to provide a brief overview and some background to explain how we selected categories and programs for the interviews conducted for this report. Alongside our interviews and reviews of policy and grey literature, this literature review also informs our recommendations.

It is useful to keep in mind that the US context where much of the research on this issue emerges from (and where hard-to-staff schools are usually discussed under the distinctly US-based term ‘urban schools’) is quite different to the Australian context where hard-to-staff schools can be urban/metropolitan or regional, rural, and/or remote. Thus, one main

consideration of any strategy addressing this issue is that the reasons that make a school hard-to-staff are unique and place-specific and due to this, so must be their solutions (Somerville et al., 2010).

Additionally, it is important to note that although there is a great deal written on the topic of teacher attrition and retention in the Australian context, it is mostly qualitative and anecdotal. Mason and Poyatos Matas (2015) explain that the Australian work in this area is still dominated by small-scale, qualitative exploratory studies and thus is still considered an emerging field of research.

The rest of this chapter offer an overview of the literature around workforce shortages in hard-to-staff schools in Australia (Section 2.2) and the broad organisational responses to this issue (Section 2.3). It also discusses specific mechanisms that are identified as tools for recruiting and retaining teachers in hard-to-staff schools (Section 2.4), including a review of the particular ways recruiting and retaining school leaders in hard-to-staff schools is addressed in the literature (Section 2.5).

2.2 THE ISSUE OF WORKFORCE SHORTAGES IN HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS IN AUSTRALIA

The persistent problem of both quality teacher preparation, recruitment, and retention, especially in hard-to-staff schools and vulnerable communities, is well documented (Lampert et al., 2016; Halsey, 2018). While reports are varied, the rate of loss to the profession in many countries, including ‘like’ countries such as Australia, the UK, Canada, and the US is often reported to be around 40–50% over the five years post entry into the teaching workforce (Gallant & Riley, 2014; OECD, 2006). In Australia, recent estimates about the levels of attrition vary amongst reports and differ between geographic locations. It is often estimated that around 25-50% of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of their career, although these figures are debated (Allen et al., 2019; AITSL, 2016). In Queensland, estimates of early career attrition rates range from 8% to 50% (Halsey, 2018; Niesche, 2019; Queensland College of Teachers, 2013) while in Victoria, where teachers are employed initially on short-term contracts, attrition rates are extremely difficult to determine as teachers whose contracts expire are not captured in the attrition data (Weldon, 2018).

While teacher and school leader retention issues and shortages exist across the board, especially in many regional and remote schools, such shortages particularly impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and certain subject areas including STEM (especially Mathematics and Technology) and Special Education. Teacher attrition and its impact on high-poverty, hard-to-staff schools and vulnerable communities is well documented (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015; McKinnon, 2016). For example, there is a high proportion of teachers teaching out-of-field subjects in low socioeconomic (LSES) schools. Du Plessis et al. (2015) note this requirement often falls on early career or novice teachers and has significant impacts on their self-efficacy, confidence, and desire to remain in the school. Following this, the students who are most likely to miss out on the benefits of a stable teaching workforce are far more likely to be from LSES backgrounds, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or from rural and remote communities (Hall, 2012; Holden & Zhang, 2018). This is a particular issue for Indigenous students as a stable, culturally knowledgeable teaching workforce has been identified as factors that assists with ‘closing the gap’ (Halsey, 2018; Luke et. al, 2013).

Additionally, the extraordinary COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated concerns that teacher attrition will, as always, have the most impact on disadvantaged and/or LSES schools in regional, rural, and remote locations, which were already identified as hard-to-staff (Cullinane & Montacute, 2020). As just one example of the speculative impact COVID will have on staffing in schools, Phillips and Cain (2020) observed that stress, exhaustion, and overload were newly exacerbated during the pandemic, noting some teachers were working 60% to three times more hours than in pre-COVID times. This leaves schools leaders with an exhausted, burnt-out staff, many of whom are considering leaving the profession (Ballantyne & Retell, 2019).

2.3 OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSES TO TEACHER AND LEADER SHORTAGES IN HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS

The effort in Australia to address employment issues related to hard-to-staff schools goes well beyond the scope of any simplistic workforce supply and demand model based merely on forecasting current and future staffing needs in relation to projected population growth. Despite teacher workforce planning at the government departmental level having the advantage of sophisticated population projections that can be used to anticipate aggregate teacher demand

many years in advance, the issues at play within hard-to-staff school contexts are complex, multifaceted, and directed at various stages of the teacher shortage process. This section therefore provides an overview of some of this literature in order to broadly map some the organisational responses to this issue.

Just as teacher shortages within Australian hard-to-staff schools are not new, nor are organisational attempts to target the relatively small number of willing and suitable teachers for such settings. These top-down responses come from governments, Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers, and other sectors including corporate, philanthropic/non-profits, and school systems.

Over many years, government initiatives have mostly taken shape around incentive schemes, which are generally structured around financial or other enticements, enhanced leadership opportunities, accelerated permanent employment status, extra leave/holidays, and/or subsidised accommodation. Government, as well as private industry and philanthropic foundations, have also supported alternative teacher certification programs and non-traditional pathways into teaching. In some cases, partnerships between and across these sectors have been developed to try to address the ongoing issue of supply and demand with regards to hard-to-staff schools.

Alongside these efforts, ITE initiatives have created programs designed to prepare and graduate teachers who are committed to teaching in challenging settings that they may be unfamiliar with, including culturally diverse settings, Indigenous communities, or regional towns. Over time some of these ITE programs have taken an employment focus, becoming involved in employment ‘match-making’ (Burnett & Lampert, 2019) or offering employment-based ITE programs. Core components of many ITE programs, such as Raewyn Connell’s earliest work in the Disadvantaged Schools Program (White et al., 1991), include facilitating understandings of social justice in an attempt to prepare often white, middle-class pre-service teachers for culturally, economically, and/or geographically diverse settings (Lampert et al., 2016).

It is important to note that although some of these initiatives have specifically targeted urban or metropolitan hard-to-staff schools, much of the recent attention has been on regional and remote settings where schools have experienced the most persistent long-term recruitment and retention issues, including problems with retaining high quality school leaders due to stress, isolation, and burn-out (Drummond & Halsey, 2013; Stephenson & Bauer, 2010). While some

of the reasons for stress and attrition are the same across geographical locations, staff in remote locations also report the stress of having to be accountable to policies they feel are geared towards metropolitan schools. For example, some school leaders in remote settings appear to leave the profession over what they perceive as ethical or moral issues, such as when they feel they cannot meet the needs of Indigenous families because they must respond to policies that do not recognise the uniqueness of their context (Guenther & Osborne, 2020). This example points to the broader fact that organisational responses to workforce shortages in hard-to-staff schools, including the specific mechanisms discussed in the next section, are setting out to address a highly context-specific, diverse, and multifaceted range of teachers, schools, and communities.

2.4 MECHANISMS FOR RECRUITING AND RETAINING TEACHERS IN HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS

Building on the overview of organisational responses discussed in the previous section, this section discusses the specific mechanisms identified in the literature that are used to recruit, prepare, and retain staff in hard-to-staff schools.

Alternative Pathways into Teaching

One key mechanism identified in the literature to address workforce shortages in hard-to-staff schools is bringing new, preferably high achieving people into the teaching profession. These include career-changers. One way this is done is by offering alternative pathways into teaching instead of traditional university-based ITE programs. Such alternative pathways into teaching are more common in other nations, such as the UK, are generally more school-based, for example teacher residencies and model teaching schools. In Australia, two current examples of alternative teaching pathway initiatives are Teach for Australia and Nexus; both of which are supported by the Federal government. Sometimes (though not in the case of Nexus) alternative pathways are faster than traditional ITE programs and attract different cohorts of future teachers, such as career changers (Varadharajan, Buchanan, & Schuck, 2020). Research suggests that these alternative pathways are highly varied in terms of their success and are sometimes designed in ad-hoc ways dependent on the government of the day but when supported over a period of time can be determined to be effective (Youens et al., 2018).

Although alternative pathways into teaching vary in quality and impact (Crawford-Garret et al., 2021), studies show that “the experiences and performances of teachers who entered through different pathways depended on the interaction of what teacher candidates brought with them, the features of programs and pathways as experienced, and the resources, leadership, and cultures of school contexts” (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2015, p. 16). Notably, in terms of leadership, there is no question that these sorts of initiatives have influence as leadership programs in the space of hard-to-staff schools. Though alternatively trained teachers may not stay any longer in the profession than other teachers, their leadership trajectories may make them influential in creating future policy (Rice et al., 2015).

University-School Partnerships

Both the alternative pathways model described above and traditional university-based ITE programs employ strategies to attract the ‘right’ sort of teachers into the profession. The focus on quality in ITE has gained prominence and is the focus of Australia’s current review into Quality Initial Teacher Education. Some ITE programs are specifically designed to recruit, prepare and graduate effective, well-prepared, and quality teachers to take up positions in hard-to-staff settings. Overall, a central feature of improving all three areas of need in these schools – attraction into the profession, preparation of quality teachers, and teacher retention – are genuine and sustainable partnerships between universities and schools (Zugelder & Shelton, 2020).

When teachers take up employment in hard-to-staff schools they are most effective when they are well-prepared by evidence-based training, hold practical knowledge of the context of their students’ lives, and are invested in their work (Glasswell et al., 2016). The teachers most likely to take up employment (and stay) are those who have spent prolonged periods of time in traditionally hard-to-staff settings, such as LSES schools, before they find themselves in front of a class (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). Dawson and Shand (2019) explain the importance of prolonged block placements or internships as a strategy to attract teachers to these schools. They believe the more familiar a teacher is with their setting the less likely they are to experience culture shock.

There are many benefits to school-university partnerships but one issue that is regularly raised is the gap between enthusiastic graduate teachers who generally begin with high

aspirations and the disillusionment that sometimes takes place when teachers begin their teaching careers. Although some reports lay responsibility on ITE programs in terms of needing to better prepare their graduates to be realistic about what they will encounter (Green et al., 2018), others cast their eye on schools that fail to transition, support, and induct new teachers in an effective way. These schools may appear to graduates as not demonstrating the best practice they learned at university and may not always seem to new teacher to be operating to best serve historically disadvantaged families and students (Kearney, 2021). Mentors and school leaders often express feeling discouraged when they are not empowered within their positions to make change within what they believe is a conservative institution (Rowlands et al., 2020). When school leaders and teachers are genuinely embedded in the communities in which they teach, the evidence is that they are more satisfied with their jobs, feel more committed to their students and families, and stay in the profession longer (Thomas et al., 2020; Ellis et al., 2016). There is some consensus on the value of university-school partnerships as a mechanism for recruiting and retaining quality teachers, particularly through longer block placements or internships that familiarise and prepare future teachers for hard-to-staff schools.

Financial and Other Incentives

Strategies around recruiting and retaining teachers also often focus on financial incentives for teachers that aim to entice them to come to or stay in hard-to-staff schools (Huat et al., 2020). For example, financial incentives are used to recruit and retain teachers in hard-to-staff schools in both Queensland and Victoria. Queensland's Department of Education established schemes ranging from traditional cash sign-on and salary bonuses to initiatives where staff receive 'transfer points' and extra annual leave (e.g. the Remote Area Incentive Scheme). In Victoria, the Department of Education and Training's financial incentives include scholarships for hard-to-staff schools (e.g. the Teaching Scholarship Scheme). There is a corpus of critique of the effectiveness of financial incentives. Financial incentives are well-acknowledged as one effective way to recruit preservice teachers or new graduates (Sinclair, 2008; Kline, White & Lock, 2013; Handal et. al., 2018) but unless they are substantial (See et. al., 2020) it only gets them in the door. Small financial awards are far less important than intrinsic motivations to convince teachers to stay. For instance, Brasche (2012) found that even when incentives were taken up for teachers to work in remote Indigenous communities there was no guarantee those teachers intended on staying. Ingersoll (2001) has noted for a long time

that financial incentives cannot compensate for organisational structures that make schools difficult to work in.

Targeted Professional Development and Support

While financial and other related incentives may have some impact on addressing recruitment difficulties and attrition rates, decisions around where to teach as well as those around leaving certain schools or teaching altogether are driven by more than just economic considerations. These often include disillusionment around such things as high workloads and increasing administrative demands on time (McKenzie et al., 2014) as well as a lack of on-going learning, support, and leadership (Queensland College of Teachers, 2013). Simon and Johnson (2015, p. 2) also identify “salary, professional status and the remoteness of geographic location” as factors that teachers consider in terms of their employment in hard-to-staff schools. The literature suggests that teachers are rarely ever ‘fleeing their students’ but rather early career teachers are leaving hard-to-staff schools due to negative experiences around things such as induction (Deakin University, 2013), mentoring (Schuck et al., 2011), leadership, collegial relationships, and/or school culture (Fuller et al., 2016).

Due to these diverse range of factors that may contribute to workforce shortages in hard-to-staff schools, it is clear that teachers in these settings require unique kinds of professional development and support (Burnett & Lampert, 2019; Cochran-Smith & Villegas., 2016). The evidence is that professional development that offers opportunities for teachers to learn more or be part of professional networks are intrinsically rewarding and do have some positive effect on teacher retention (See et al., 2020). In many cases the intrinsic rewards are more effective than the extrinsic rewards, such as financial incentives, which are successful in the short term but less successful in retaining teachers over time. This is an important learning for school leaders who wish to support their staff.

Other strategies advocate for specialised in-service learning for teachers who work in schools perceived as needing it, such as offering programs where teachers are invited to examine their own stereotypes (Burns et al., 2018) and programs for teachers to develop positive, strength-based beliefs in their students (Lavigne, 2014). Though these are designed as professional development, they are believed to support a high-quality teaching workforce

and there is some evidence that teachers who have opportunities such as these stay longer in their communities (Gore & Bowe, 2015).

In particular, there has been significant attention paid to the importance of professional development and support in high-poverty schools, whose teachers unsurprisingly have greater needs than those in higher socioeconomic status schools (Productivity Commission, 2012). The needs of these teachers, in part, are exacerbated by insufficient recognition of their work and the poor public image of teachers in challenging communities (Willett et al., 2014). Many teachers in these settings express that they would stay longer if they received more targeted professional development around poverty and disadvantage (Kelly et al., 2015) as well as more opportunities to reflect, be re-motivated, and feel their work was valued. Burns et al. (2018) found that the opportunity to reflect in a writing workshop was more rewarding and affirming for teachers than traditional professional development. Following this, substantive research indicates the importance of communities of practice, teacher efficacy, and the belief that one is ‘making a difference’, which includes regular opportunities for critical reflection amongst a safe, validating, and affirming group of professional peers (Burnett & Lampert, 2016). Freedman and Appleman (2009) note that this sort of extrinsic reward provides teachers with a ‘sense of mission’; something that can be reinvigorated for tired or jaded staff. In other words, there seems to be evidence of the value of programs that focus on teachers’ desire for stronger cultural and intellectual capital around the profession (Manuel & Hughes, 2006). That is, many teachers working in high-poverty settings strongly desire to engage more deeply and intellectually with their peers. Some recent research suggests that the use of social media platforms increases the retention of new teachers and are untapped as ways to build a community of practice (Mercieca & Kelly, 2018). Internationally, issues of teacher retention in such settings revolve around maintaining a commitment to teaching and ensuring teachers feel well supported at crucial ‘walking points’, both emotionally in terms of teachers’ own on-going learning (Gallant & Riley, 2014). This identification of emotional support alongside professional development and support points to the importance of considering teacher wellbeing when addressing issues of workforce issues in hard-to-staff schools.

Support of Teacher Wellbeing

Teacher wellbeing is receiving particular attention as a cause of attrition, especially in high-poverty schools (Freedman & Appleman, 2009); something Curry and O'Brien (2012)

refer to as a ‘wellness paradigm’. This is due to the fact that factors believed to contribute to teacher retention include teachers’ mental and physical health, feelings of safety, resilience, and personal and professional support systems. Decision making autonomy (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011) is also identified as a factor that influences whether teachers stay in these settings; as are factors such as “resilience, reflection, and responsiveness” (Buchanan et al., 2013, p. 126), intrinsic motivation (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Kelly & Fogarty, 2015), and teachers’ experiences of ‘success’ with the students they teach. One study, for instance, found male teachers were more likely to leave the profession because of management practices that impacted on their sense of agency (Gallant & Reilly, 2017). Additionally, Singh (2018) notes that teachers in LSES schools often experience stress and anxiety over their students’ performances on high stakes tests, which is reflected in the popular book *Teacher: One Woman’s Struggle to Keep her Heart in Teaching* (Stroud, 2018). As in Smith and Ulvik’s (2017) findings, Stroud sees her decision to leave teaching as agentic (taking control over her own life) rather than as a sign of a lack of resilience. As managerial practices become an increasing part of teachers’ work, teachers feel their expertise, creativity, and decision-making power is reduced. This is making teaching a much less attractive profession, especially in LSES schools where teachers very often enter the profession with a sense of mission.

Day and Hong (2016) confirm that emotional resilience is more important for teachers in schools located in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage compared to those in other areas. In their study, resilience was most strongly demonstrated when teachers felt professionally and personally supported, forming strong relationships with colleagues based on common teacher identity and enthusiasm for working in challenging schools. While some studies confirm wellbeing as crucial to teacher retention (Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014), almost all studies recognise that novice teachers’ capacity to network with and engage in healthy professional learning communities serve to mitigate some of the professional and emotional challenges associated with teaching in historically hard-to-staff schools (Keichtermans, 2017). Specialised professional development can meet the wellbeing needs of teachers in hard-to-staff schools in a variety of useful ways, such as offering restorative justice training for teachers to become more able to handle trauma behaviours (Lawson et al., 2019) or opportunities to improve teachers’ capacity in areas such as literacy and STEM (with the reward of becoming highly trained as a leader in the field). These are some of the ‘constellation of factors’ related to teacher wellbeing that impact whether teachers can be retained in hard-to-staff schools (Freedman & Appleman, 2009).

2.5 MECHANISMS FOR RECRUITING AND RETAINING LEADERS IN HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS

In the literature, leadership programs and incentives are identified as notable mechanisms in addressing workforce issues in hard-to-staff schools. This approach focused on leadership is premised on the idea that teachers will stay longer in schools if better career and promotion opportunities are made available to them. Barty et al.'s (2005) early study of why principals 'move on' from LSES schools noted an issue that still exists today; that leading a LSES school is often seen as a stepping-stone towards promotion or one that will be rewarded with a posting to an 'easier' school.

Leadership training is perceived as crucial to finding solutions to quality staffing shortages in disadvantaged schools. It seems evident from the literature that offering financial and other incentives alone is not enough to compensate for poor working conditions, issues with school leadership, and school climate (Geiger & Pivovarov, 2018; See et al., 2020). Some research has been conducted over the years specific to school leadership programs in terms of how to retain school leaders in hard-to-staff schools and to provide more guidance to school leaders on how to best support their teachers. These include studies of professional development programs (Rice et al., 2017), leadership training (Heffernan, 2021), and mentoring programs (Naidoo & Wagner, 2020). In general, these strategies have historically been designed to retain teachers once they are employed and to address the considerable teacher attrition that impacts particular schools. The research seems to indicate that the quality of induction and school-based mentoring varies and significantly, that the most effective mentoring can only take place when mentors are given adequate time-release to play this role (See et al., 2020). Otherwise, even with good mentor-training, mentors are unable to give attention to this role and are sometimes themselves unhappy with the support they receive. In other words, leadership programs are only ever as good as school climate, culture, and workplace conditions (Lynn & Nguyen, 2020).

Other kinds of leadership programs to support teachers in hard-to-staff school include those that provide opportunities for Indigenous or culturally diverse teachers to gain leadership roles in schools (Achinstein et al., 2010; Hall, 2019). The Stronger-Smarter Institute has been influential in providing leadership programs for school leaders and teachers to provide more

culturally safe and strength-based teaching to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Sarra, 2011). On a related note, despite what we know about the importance of teachers who come from the same backgrounds as the children they teach, it is not just difficult to attract Indigenous teachers into the profession but, because of the emotional toll these roles take on these teachers, it is also hard to retain them (Santoro, 2013). Important funded leadership initiatives such as the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative (MATSI) (Buckskin, 2016a) focused funding and energy on increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in schools as a priority. However, there are many barriers to attracting and supporting Indigenous teachers, not excluding their experiences with racism (Hogarth, 2019) and cultural obligations. There is an extensive literature that focuses on poor opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workers who carry out crucial roles in schools but many, because of their lack of university degrees, can never be paid as a fully qualified teacher (Price et al., 2018). There is support for recognition of prior knowledge (RPL) to properly reward Indigenous educators so they can be employed as teachers but to date this approach has not been adopted (MacGill, 2017)

Finally, some leadership programs aim to encourage the professional development and support of regional teachers who come from the communities in which they will teach, which are often called ‘grow your own’ programs (Versland, 2018). These leadership programs are perceived by teachers as being personally and professionally rewarding and appear to improve the quality of teaching in hard-to-staff schools though it is hard to know whether in and of themselves they improve retention.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Despite research on the multifaceted reasons for what the Australian Council of Deans of Education called 'teacher exodus' (Aspland, 2016) and others refer to as ‘the revolving door’ (Ingersoll, 2001), teacher burn-out (Rajendran et al., 2020), and teacher plateau (Meister & Ahrends, 2011), there remains a diversity of opinions and strategies on how to best address the issue. The wide range of organisational responses and mechanisms in place to address teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools reflects the difficult, persistent nature of the issues at hand.

While governments and other institutions in Australia and around the world have shown a commitment to a range of responses to improve teacher recruitment and retention, these

appear to have made little significant, systemic difference. The reasons why teachers leave the profession, especially in hard-to-staff schools, are far more complex and under-problematised than commonly believed (Gallant & Riley, 2014).

This review of the literature highlights the need for a more robust evidence base related to a range of issues impacting on teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools, which is a point taken up later in an examination of the implications for both policy and leadership. The issues of preparing, recruiting, and retaining an effective teaching workforce for hard-to-staff schools is ongoing, and many would argue increasing needed given the current climate of uncertainty.

3 Research Design

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PROJECT PHASES

This project is structured around three core research questions:

RQ1: How have Australian workforce initiatives over the past 20 years sought to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers within historically hard-to-staff schools/areas?

RQ2: What impact have these initiatives had on teaching and how have school leaders perceived their impact?

RQ3: What policy lessons can be taken from these initiatives?

To respond to these questions, the research for this report consists of a qualitatively analysed meta-synthesis of key policy documents, evaluations, and associated academic publications related to initiatives that seek to address the teaching workforce in hard-to-staff settings. Additionally, it involves interviews with the ‘key players’ of these initiatives, namely those leading the initiatives as well as teachers and school leaders who participated in them. The scope of the research spans a 20-year time frame across all six states and two territories in Australia. Drawing on this data, we will identify the impact of (and potentially, gaps in) initiatives designed to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers in hard-to-staff schools.

The project was divided into four phases:

Phase One: *Audit*

- Audit to collate information on major government initiatives that have sought to address teacher workforce shortages over past 20 years, specifically those focusing on the area of leadership.
- Collation and analysis of all evaluations and research papers related to the initiatives being examined.

Phase Two: *Interviews*

- Interviews with selected leaders of these initiatives in order to examine the conceptual and policy drivers of these programs at the time as well as to reflect on the outcomes of their strategies and learnings, which might be applied to current and/or future policy.
- Interviews with teachers and school leaders who participated in each of these programs to explore their perceived impact.

Phase Three: *Analysis*

- Analysis of recommendations and common themes identified within the initiatives.
- Analysis of impact, which may include considering whether these initiatives can be determined as having made short term, long term, and/or systemic change, the sustainability of the initiatives, and their transferability to different contexts. Analysis also to identify other ways ‘change’ or impact might be determined.

Phase Four: *Dissemination of Findings*

- Production of a report to be delivered to government to inform direction on addressing teacher workplace shortages for hard-to-staff schools.

3.2 OVERVIEW AND DESIGN OF AUDIT ANALYSIS (PHASE ONE)

Phase One of the research involved a policy audit of the programs and initiatives designed to address staffing issues in hard-to-staff school contexts. It was timely to critically review and synthesise what is known about existing initiatives for reasons documented in the literature review.

This first phase of the project aims to:

- Synthesise and review key information on strategies over the past 20 years that have been designed to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers in historically hard-to-staff schools/areas (with a specific focus on the area of leadership).
- Focus on initiatives that have taken an overt focus on teacher workforce shortages defined in geographic terms (i.e. rural, regional or remote), economic terms (i.e. LSES or disadvantaged) or disciplinary terms (i.e. STEM).
- Identify ways that the targeted initiatives and interventions have sought to address various factors contributing to teacher workforce shortages.

In all, the audit comprises 147 contemporary and historical programs, projects or incentives addressing the preparation, recruitment, and retainment of teachers in hard-to-staff schools. These were initially grouped under the following headings:

- Initial Teacher Education (ITE)
- Financial Incentives
- Leadership
- Early Childhood
- Government Programs
- Programs targeting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching workforce
- Miscellaneous

The audit (Phase One) involved two key methods. Firstly, a systematic audit of existing Australian programs and initiatives in hard-to-staff school contexts was collated. A compilation of publicly available programs and initiatives classified as addressing staffing in these schools was created with as much available existing information on the programs/initiatives. This information included location, key stakeholders, funding sources, and any existing evaluation work on the program/initiative.

Secondly, a preliminary library was collated, featuring predominantly grey (policy) literature and academic articles from the last 20 years. Many of these specifically focused on the programs found in the audit, while some policy works briefly described a range of programs and initiatives created to address workforce shortage. Snowballing was also used as search technique given the number of decommissioned initiatives. That is, when several relevant references had been identified, their bibliographies led to other references of other programs in a similar area. Given the number of decommissioned initiatives, this process included exploring the websites of organisations and including archived reports related to the targeted problem. In sum, two months was allocated for:

- Exploration of the grey literature
- Survey of the scientific literature
- Exploration of databases, including keyword searches
- Survey of publicly available websites of key institutions

The final library consists of conference proceedings (n = 15), grey literature (n = 114), journal articles (n = 60), and website captures and brochures (n = 31).

The preliminary exploration of the literature resulted in a selection of public initiatives and programs to be examined. During this in-depth documentary research, a detailed inclusion and exclusion criteria was applied as follows:

- Australia
- 2000-2020 years
- Program details publicly available
- Program exclusions: Three specific initiatives were excluded from interviews, namely Teach for Australia (TfA), National Exceptional Teaching for Disadvantaged Schools (NETDS), and Nexus. These exclusions are because some of the investigators or their

institutions are involved in delivering these programs and as such there could be a perceived conflict of interest.

Appendix A provides a snapshot of the ‘grey literature’ that was accessed while undertaking the audit. While the audit initially grouped the hard-to-staff initiatives chronologically under seven headings, it was decided to reduce this number to five themes as these more closely mapped back to the broad recommendations emerging from our analysis. The following discussion uses a reduced group of five areas consisting of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Leadership, Regional/Rural/Remote, and Miscellaneous (which was a broad amalgamation of various other categories). It is important to note that the ‘grey literature’ utilised in this appendix has been sourced from a diverse range of non-commercial sources and differs significantly from ‘black literature’ that takes shape within the commercial peer-reviewed publication sector.

Appendix C, the excel table of the audit, has been attached as a separate document.

3.3 OVERVIEW AND DESIGN OF INTERVIEW ANALYSIS (PHASE TWO)

The interview phase (Phase Two) of the project included semi-structured interviews with individuals identified as ‘key players’ in some of the hard-to-staff schools initiatives identified in the first audit phase. Ethic clearance was sought and approved through the La Trobe University’s Ethics Committee (HEC20500). Twenty-one (n = 21) targeted interview participants were identified using the following criteria:

- Location: Urban, regional, remote
- Sample population group: Program leaders or directors, school leaders
- Program goals: Preparation, recruitment, retention, leadership

Participants were identified and recruited primarily via emails obtained from public documents or identified by word of mouth. An email was sent first with information about the project to ascertain participant interest. Once interest was communicated, consent forms were sent along with arrangements for an interview by phone or Zoom. Participants signed consent forms ahead of or at interviews. All interviews were undertaken between February and April 2021. A semi structured interview scheduled was utilised to ascertain:

- Participant and program background: Participants were asked about their professional background, details about their involvement in the program, and their choice and motivation for involvement in the program.
- Program details: Participants were asked to clarify how the program addressed the recruitment, preparation, and/or retention of teachers in hard-to-staff schools/areas. Participants were also asked about the perception of how the program was received by people in schools.
- Partnerships and funding: Participants were asked details about partnership organisations as well as the applicable funding and resourcing of the program.

All interviews were selectively transcribed with all participants de-identified in the transcripts. Interviews were then analysed for themes in agreement with the three research questions with attention focusing on:

- Program Design and Organisation: The design and organisational parameters of specific programs and initiatives
- Preparation: Attraction into the profession and preparation of quality teachers in hard-to-staff school contexts, primarily through ITE programs.
- Recruitment: The recruitment and employment of teachers in hard-to-staff school contexts.
- Retention: The retention of teachers and the reasons why teachers leave hard-to-staff school contexts.
- Leadership: The recruitment and retaining of high quality school leaders in hard-to-staff school contexts.

Appendix B provides detailed de-identified interview transcriptions from all interview participants. Selected quotations mapped against central report themes are included. These transcriptions provide a more comprehensive picture of a selection of programs and initiatives as discussed by participants.

4 Audit Data Analysis

4.1 OVERVIEW OF AUDIT DATA ANALYSIS (PHASE ONE)

As described in the previous chapter, the data collection and analysis in the project was divided into two phases: Phase One, which was an audit of data pertaining to existing initiatives/programs, and Phase Two, which was a series of semi-structured interviews with stakeholders involved in addressing issues in the hard-to-staff school space. This chapter addresses the compilation and analysis of the audit data (Phase One).

When gathering the data for the audit that forms the basis of Phase One of this research, the heterogeneous nature of the hard-to-staff school programs and initiatives (quantitative, qualitative, descriptive, research-based, and external to research) became clear. Due to this, a thematic synthesis was utilised for this project. The data drawn from the audit was summarised in a structured manner and was classified under the various dimensions of an analytical framework based on the intervention logic (the chain of effects expected to link the policy under study to the targeted problem).

Below is an analysis of the audit data on hard-to-staff school programs and initiatives, compiled under the following themes:

- Location
- Duration
- Stakeholders
- Funding
- Target
- Focus (Recruit/Prepare/Retain)
- Mechanism/Process
- Evaluation

4.2 LOCATION

Location	Number of Programs
QLD	33
NSW	26
WA	20
VIC	17
SA	13
Multiple states	12
Not applicable	9
NT	7
Not identified	4
TAS	4
National	1
ACT	1
Total	147

Table 1. Classification of programs by location

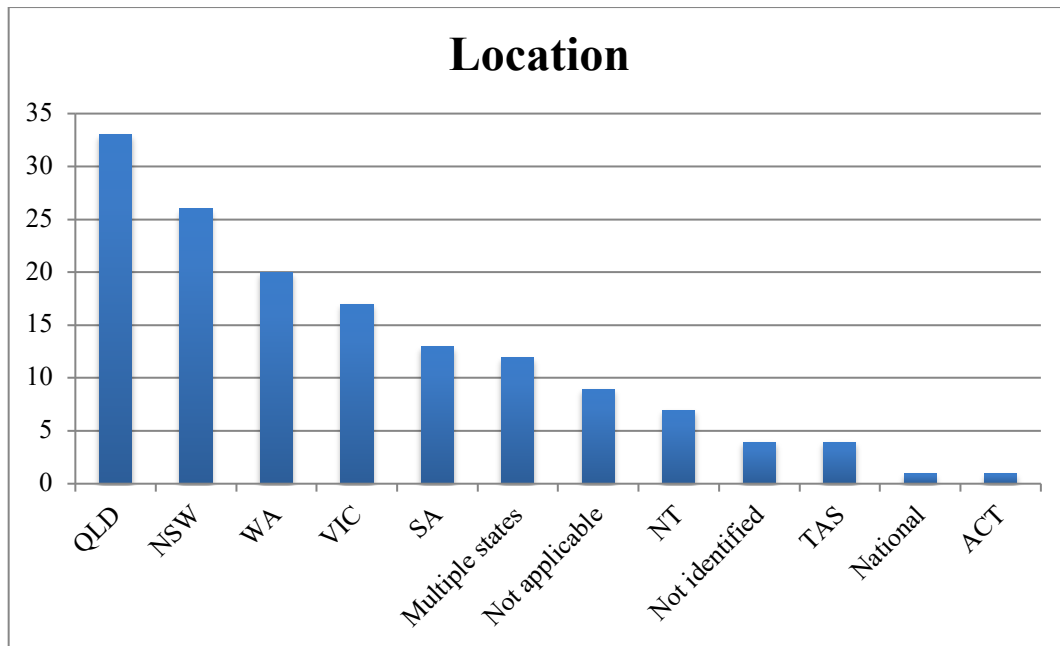


Figure 1. Classification of programs by location

In this study, location refers to the states and territories that a program is targeting rather than the location of the stakeholder organisation/s (although these are often the same). The largest number of programs were in Queensland ($n = 33$), which primarily represents the effort to address the staffing needs of the state's significant regional and rural areas. New South Wales had the second most number of programs ($n = 26$), followed by Western Australia ($n = 20$) and Victoria ($n = 17$), which again was largely a result of a focus on the needs of regional and rural schools. States and territories with smaller populations (South Australia, Northern Territory, Tasmania, and Australian Capital Territory) had a smaller number of programs.

There were also a number of 'multiple state' programs identified ($n = 12$), often run by interstate organisations (such as the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools (NARIS), which targets remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia, and New South Wales) or national universities (such as the Australian Catholic University's Away from Base program, which targets Indigenous students from multiple states). There were also one identified national program: the National Survey of Science, ICT and Mathematics Education in Rural and Regional Australia (based at the University of New England but with university hubs in each state and territory).

Finally, ‘not applicable’ (n = 9) primarily refers to programs identified as general reports and research projects that are not directly linked to a particular university or organisation. ‘Not identified’ (n = 4) refers to instances where the location of the stakeholder organisation/s administering the program was identifiable but the location being targeted by the programs were unclear and/or insufficient information was available.

4.3 DURATION

Duration	Number of Programs
Less than 1 year	0
Less than 1 year (ongoing)	3
1-3 years	10
3-5 years	11
More than 5 years	13
Not identified	107
Older Program	3
Total	147

Table 2. Classification of programs by duration

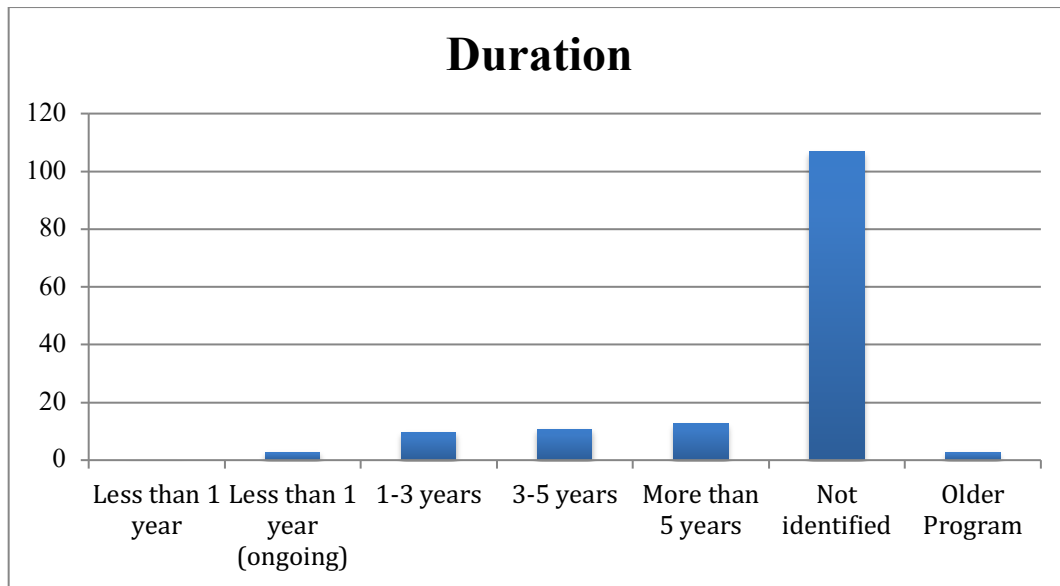


Figure 2. Classification of programs by duration

The duration of the vast majority of programs/initiatives in the audit were not directly identifiable due to insufficient information. Some of these programs in this category have ceased operation while others are ongoing. In both cases, however, the length of their existence was unclear.

A small number of programs did have identifiable durations. These were often government programs where funding was specifically given for a set time, for example the Kimberly Schools Project in Western Australia, which received 25 million dollars of Royalties for Regions funding over three years (2018 – 2020).

There were 13 programs that have run for over five years, many in an ongoing way. These programs are:

- The Pilbara Education Project in Western Australia; a corporate (BHP)-government partnership of over 15 years.
- The Tim Fairfax Family Foundation Rural and Remote Education Bursary; a philanthropic-university (University of the Sunshine Coast) partnership of over 10 years.
- The Melbourne Graduate School of Education’s Rural Education Field Trip; a six day trip begun in 1999 to showcase rural schools and communities to pre-service teachers studying in-demand subject areas, particularly mathematics, science, and languages.

- The National Exceptional Teachers for Disadvantaged Schools program (NETDS, formerly ETDS); a program preparing high quality teachers for the disadvantaged school sector, which originated at Queensland University of Technology and expanding to eight other universities in 2013.
- The Rural Teaching Program (formerly the Student Teacher Rural Experience Program) in Western Australia; a government program that financially supports professional experience placements for final year pre-service teachers in Western Australian public schools. The program commenced in its original version in 1999 and in its current version in 2008.
- Teach for Australia; a government-university partnership of over 10 years, which places high-achieving graduates and professionals with certain subject area expertise into disadvantaged (LSES and/or rural and remote) secondary schools.
- The Rural and Remote Training Schools (RRTS) project from the Western Australian government; a program begun in 2011 to provide supported placements for pre-service teachers undertaking their professional experience in a rural or remote school.
- The George Alexander Foundation Bursary; a philanthropic-university partnership for rural and remote students, which has supported students at 20 institutes since 2002 with 11 active university scholarship programs across multiple states.
- Beyond the Range Professional Experience Grant; a Queensland government program that has been running for approximately 10 years and provides funding to pre-services teachers undertaking professional experience placements in high priority regions and subject areas.
- Take the Lead; an ongoing government program targeting high performing teachers, leaders, and principals who aspire to higher level school leadership roles in rural and remote locations in Queensland.
- The Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATEP); a distance education program for Indigenous students run by the Queensland government in partnership with TAFE Queensland North and James Cook University.
- Coast to Country; a five day field trip providing pre-service teachers with an experience of both living and working in rural communities and schools, which has been running at the University of the Sunshine Coast since 2009.

- Kimberly Calling Program; a government-funded program run by Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) since 1998 that focuses on recruiting staff for the Kimberly region.

4.4 STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders	Number of Programs
Government	48
University	43
Government and University	16
Not identified	9
School System	7
Non-Profit	7
Philanthropic and University	3
School and University	3
School System and University	2
Government and Non-Profit	2
Government and Schools and University	1
Union	1
Government and Corporate	1
Government and School System	1
Non-Profit and University	1
Government and Non-Profit and University	1
Non-Profit and School System and University	1
Total	147

Table 3. Classification of programs by stakeholders

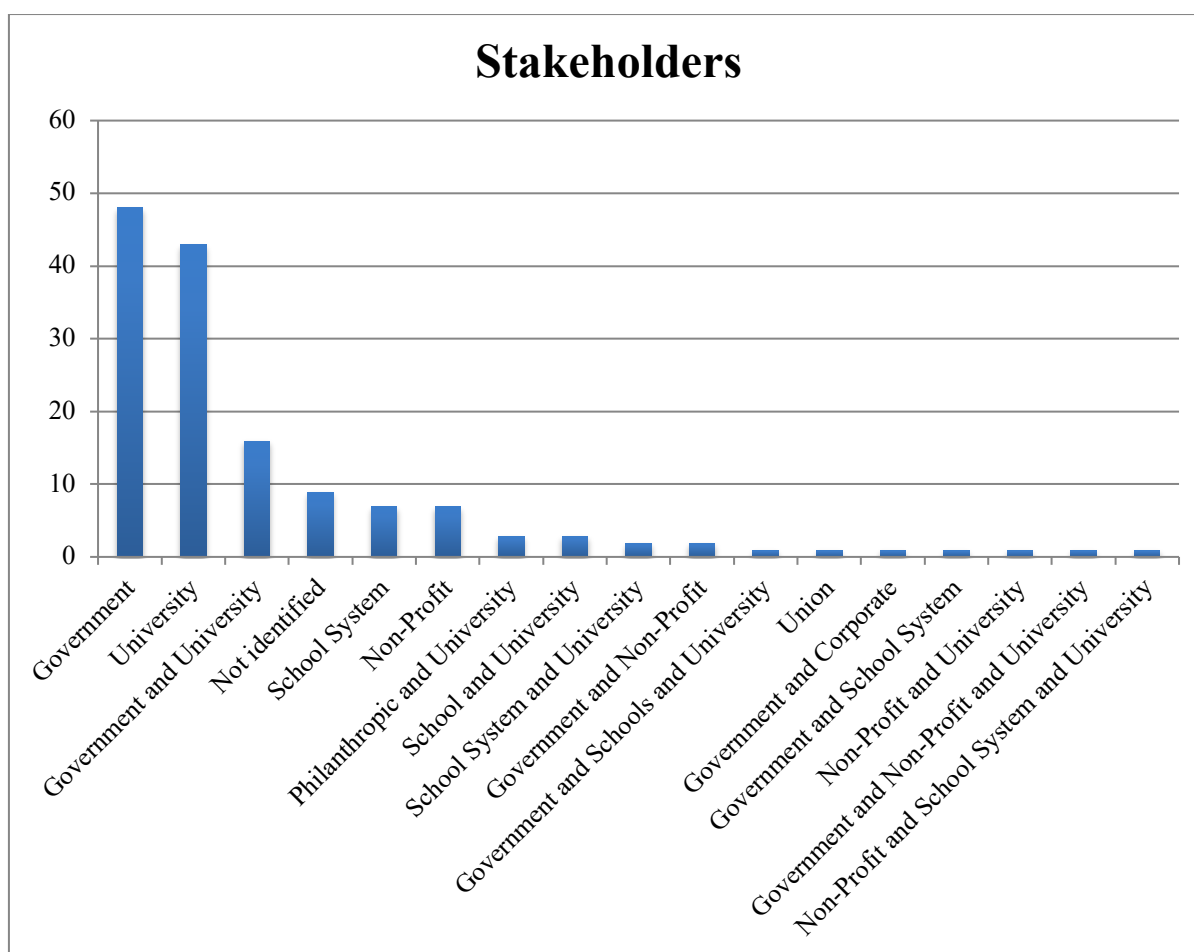


Figure 3. Classification of programs by stakeholders

In this study, stakeholders refers to the organisation/s that were involved in the creation and/or administration of the relevant program. Often these stakeholders are in partnership with one another, which is reflected in how they are identified in this section of the report. The most common stakeholders involved in the creation and/or administration of programs targeting hard-to-staff schools are governments ($n = 48$) and universities ($n = 43$) followed by partnerships between the two ($n = 16$).

In terms of government programs, there were both federal and state/territory initiatives with the latter being the far more common. Federal programs were largely created and/or administered through the Department of Education, Skills, and Employment (formerly the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations), such as Teach Next (announced in the 2011-12 Federal Budget under the Teacher Quality National Partnership).

State/territory-based government programs were connected to the respective education departments, for example the Queensland Department of Education and Training's Rural and Remote Graduate Teacher Scholarship and the Victorian Department of Education and Training's Early Childhood Aboriginal Pathway Scholarships.

In terms of universities, it is notable that the vast majority of programs (both stand alone and in partnership with other stakeholders) involved non-G8 institutions, including Queensland University of Technology, Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University, University of New England, Western Sydney University, University of Wollongong, University of Newcastle, La Trobe University, Macquarie University, Southern Cross University, Flinders University, University of Tasmania, University of Southern Queensland, Deakin University, University of the Sunshine Coast, University of South Australia, University of Canberra, Edith Cowan University, University of Technology Sydney, Federation University, James Cook University, Curtin University, Charles Darwin University, and Murdoch University. The significant representations of universities in this group from New South Wales and Queensland, and to a lesser extent Victoria, reflects the locations of the programs in this study as well as the distribution of universities across Australia.

There was involvement by all but one G8 universities (there were no identified programs associated with the Australian National University), which consisted primarily of internal scholarships for pre-services teachers at these institutions (e.g. University of Queensland's Rural Practicum Incentive Scholarships and University of Adelaide's Esther Burns/DECS Country Teaching Scholarships). It is notable that individual G8 institutions had less broad involvement across a range of programs in comparison to many of the non-G8 institutions listed above.

Other identified stakeholders included school systems (which in this audit refers to non-governmental education systems e.g. Catholic Education South Australia), philanthropic organisations (e.g. the George Alexander Foundation), non-profits (e.g. Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Associations), corporations (e.g. BHP), and unions (e.g. New South Wales Teachers Federation).

4.5 FUNDING

Funding	Number of Programs
Not identified	90
Government	43
Philanthropic	4
University	2
Non-Profit	2
School System	1
Government and Corporate	1
Government and Non-Profit	1
Government and University	1
Government and Non-Profit and University	1
Union (grant)	1
Total	147

Table 4. Classification of programs by funding

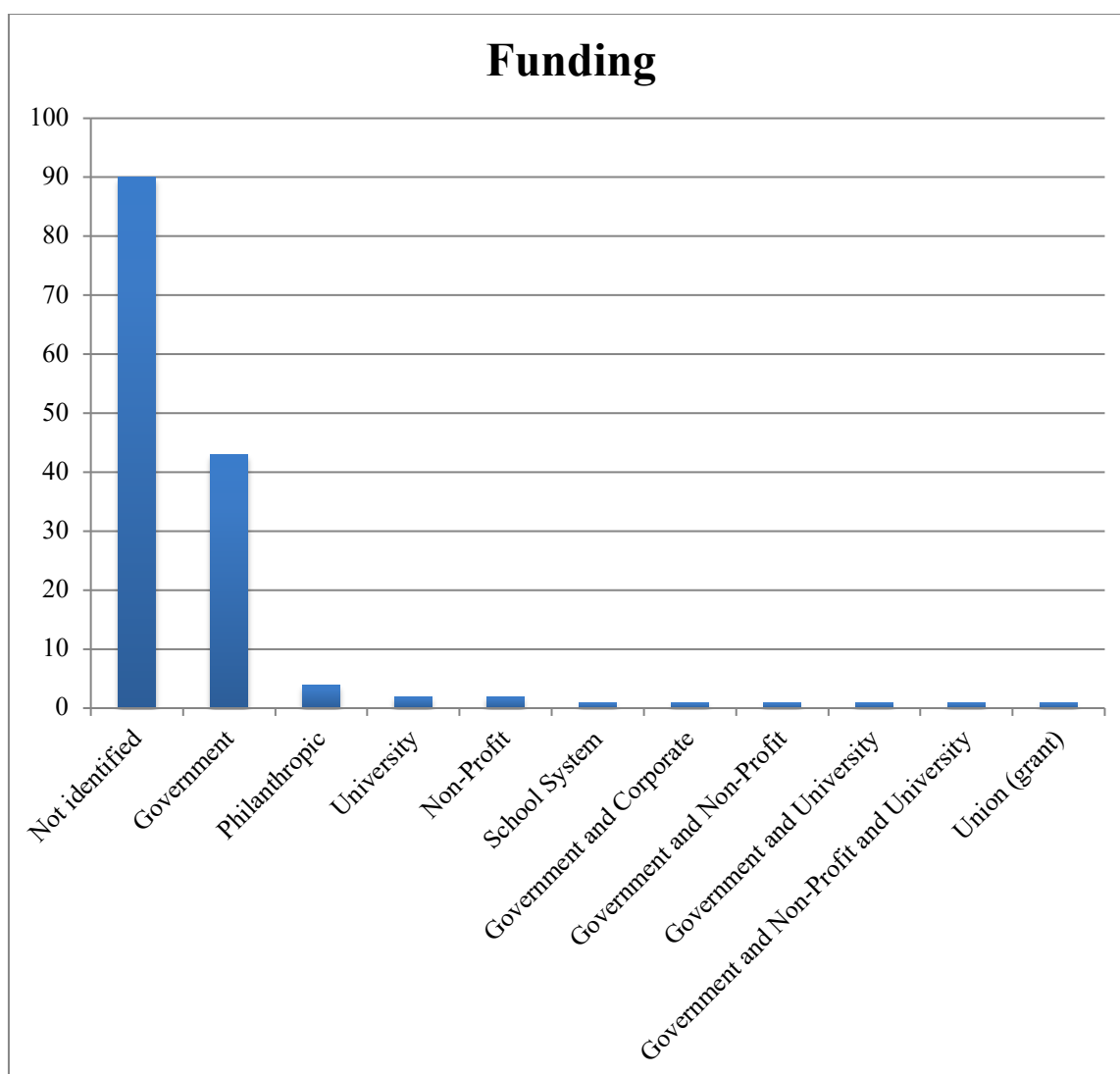


Figure 4. Classification of programs by funding

The largest identified funder of programs/initiatives was government (n = 43), which included a number of programs that governments created, administered, and funded such as Link and Learn from Education Queensland's Indigenous Education and Training Alliance and NSW Department of Education's Rural and Remote Leadership and Development program.

It is important to note that stakeholders and funders did not align in all programs, for example Kimberly Calling Program, which was funded by the Western Australian government and administered by a school system: Catholic Education Western Australia.

Additionally, there were a small number of other funding sources identified, most notably philanthropic organisations, universities, non-profits, and school systems. There were also some single instances of funding partnerships. Some examples of these hybrid funding models include government and non-profit (Pilbara Education Project funded by the Western Australian state government and BHP) as well as government and non-profit (Esther Burns/DECS Country Teaching Scholarships, which has matching funds from the University of Adelaide via a bequest and the South Australian Department for Education).

The largest number of programs ($n = 90$) did not have a readily identified funding source. At times, as with location, a funding source could be inferred but without direct identification it was not included. This lack of availability or clarity may be due to the fact that many of the programs/initiatives in this audit only had short term funding that did not support it in a sustained, long term way. Of particular note are the programs where universities were the sole stakeholders ($n = 43$) or stakeholders alongside government ($n = 16$). In these programs, the funding source was less often overtly identified, which was often a symptom of there being limited information about the program more generally.

4.6 TARGET

Target	Number of Programs
Pre-service teachers and Rural/Remote	57
Pre-service teachers and Indigenous education	17
Pre-service teachers	12
In-service teachers and Rural/remote and Leadership	5
Pre-service teachers and Rural/Remote and Subject specific	5
Pre-service teachers and Subject specific	5
Early Childhood	4
Indigenous education	4
Rural/Remote	4
In-service teachers and Rural/remote	3
Pre-service teachers and LSES schools	3
In-service teachers and LSES schools	2
In-service teachers and Pre-service teachers and Leadership and Indigenous education	2
In-service teachers and Pre-service teachers and Rural/Remote	2
Pre-service teachers and Subject specific and LSES Schools	2
Early Childhood and Indigenous education	1
Early Childhood and Rural/Remote	1
In-service teachers and Indigenous education	1
In-service teachers and Leadership	1
In-service teachers and Pre-service teachers	1
In-service teachers and Pre-service teachers and LSES schools	1

In-service teachers and Pre-service teachers and Rural/Remote and Indigenous education	1
In-service teachers and Pre-service teachers and Rural/Remote and Subject specific	1
In-service teachers and Rural/remote and Leadership and Indigenous	1
Leadership	1
LSES Schools and Rural/Remote	1
Not identified	1
Pre-service teachers and Indigenous education and Rural/Remote	1
Pre-service teachers and Rural/Remote and Indigenous education	1
Pre-service teachers and Rural/Remote and Subject specific and LSES Schools	1
Pre-service teachers and Subject specific and Rural/Remote and LSES Schools	1
Rural/Remote and Leadership	1
Rural/Remote and Subject specific	1
School students and Indigenous education and Rural/Remote	1
School students and Rural/Remote	1
Total	147

Table 5. Classification of programs by target

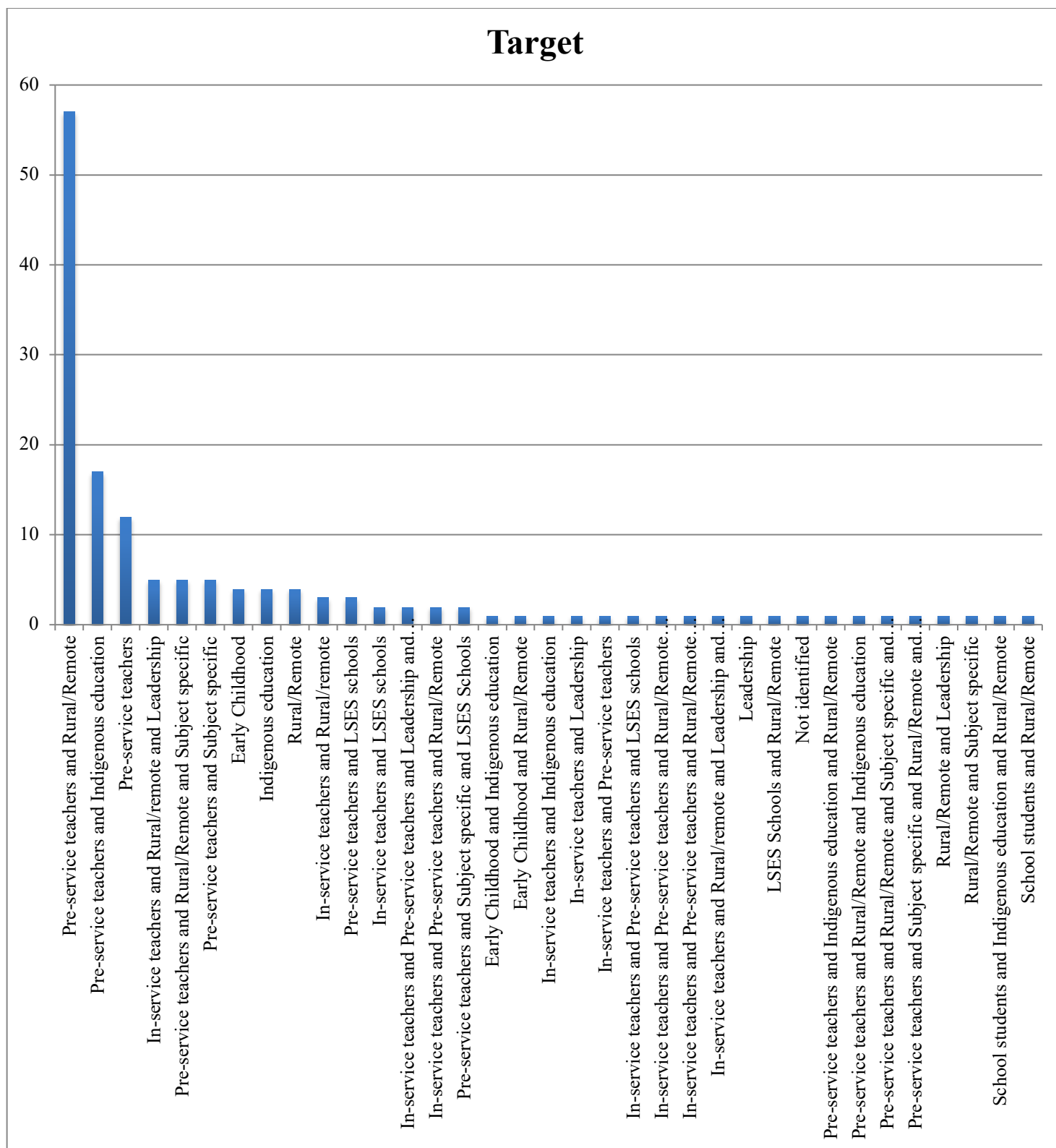


Figure 5. Classification of programs by target

In this audit, target is understood in two key ways:

1. About the types of schools/student populations/subject areas teachers are being incentivised to move to or stay in. This includes rural/remote schools, LSES schools, the early childhood sector, and particular subject areas such as STEM.
2. About the types of individuals being incentivised to enter or remain in teaching. This includes pre-service teachers, teachers who are Indigenous, and/or teachers who are from specific locations. It also includes teachers in specific subject areas, school leaders or future leaders, and high school students interested in teaching as a career.

Of the identified programs, the most common type in terms of target were those aimed at attracting and preparing pre-service teachers for rural/remote schools (n = 57). These programs often focus on supporting professional experience placements in these locations, such as Charles Sturt University's Inland Education Foundation Rural Professional Experience Grants. Other initiatives in this category include shorter terms programs aimed at exposing future teachers to these schools and study opportunities to develop their knowledge around rural/remote teaching. This category also captures the recruitment of students from rural/remote areas into teaching, for example the University of Queensland's Bid O'Sullivan Teaching Scholarships that assists Year 12 students from these areas of Queensland to pursue teaching degrees.

There were also a number of programs targeting pre-service teachers and Indigenous education (n = 17), which are largely about recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into teaching e.g. the University of South Australia's Anangu Tertiary Education Program. There were also a number of programs targeting pre-service teachers in a more general way (n = 12), e.g. the Logan City Teacher Education Centre of Excellence program that aimed to attract high achieving pre-service teachers to Logan City state schools.

While most programs were aimed at pre-service teachers, there were also some that targeted in-service teachers. These programs often relate to developing leadership skills and promoting leadership opportunities in hard-to-staff schools. One example of this is the Western Australian government's Country Teaching Program, which offers financial and professional incentives to encourage teachers to pursue long term employment and leadership positions in rural/remote schools.

4.7 FOCUS (RECRUIT/PREPARE/RETAIN)

Focus (Recruit/Prepare/Retain)	Number of Programs
Recruit	37
Prepare	49
Retain	1
Recruit and Prepare	18
Recruit and Retain	8
Prepare and Retain	2
Recruit, Prepare, and Retain	4
Not identified	14
Not applicable	14
Total	147

Table 6. Classification of programs by focus (recruit/prepare/retain)

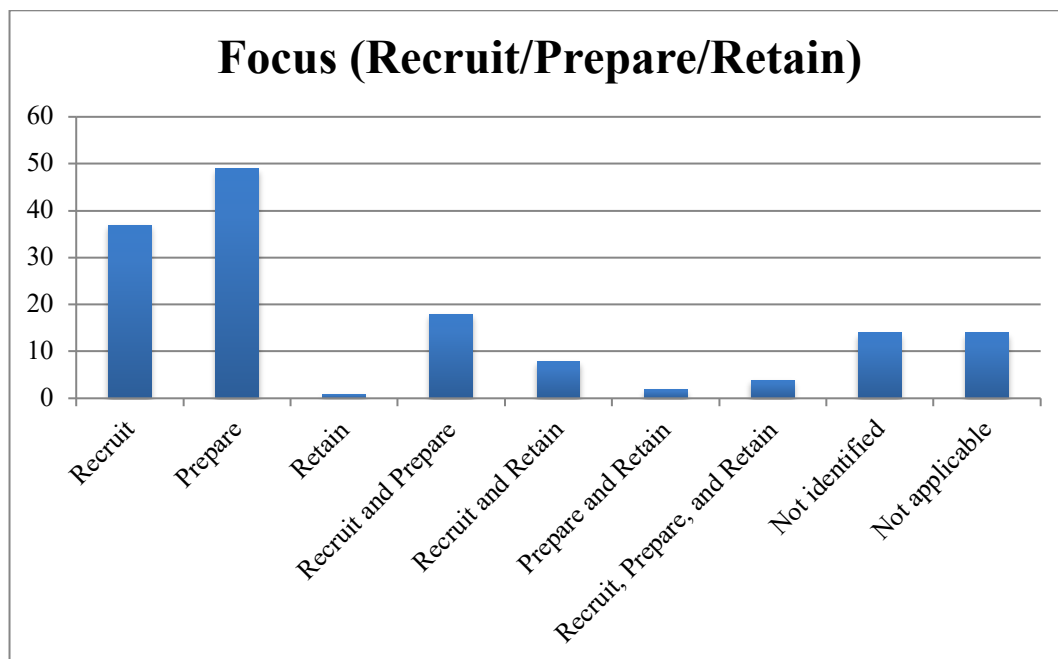


Figure 6. Classification of programs by focus (recruit/prepare/retain)

The focus or aims of the programs in this audit can generally be understood as about recruitment, preparation, or retention (or a combination of the three). The distribution of the audited programs in relation to these categories is as follows:

- Recruit (n = 37): Financial incentives (scholarships, stipends, relocation expenses etc.) and exposure (professional experience placements and trips etc.) were the key ways programs recruited teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools. These same mechanisms were also used to recruit certain types of future teachers into the profession. In terms of recruitment, pre-service teachers and recent graduates were most often targeted by programs although a small number of programs targeted in-service teachers (for instance leadership development in rural/remote schools).
- Prepare (n = 49): Professional experience placements and study options were the primary way programs gave pre-services teachers the opportunity to develop the knowledge, familiarity, and expertise to teach at specific types of schools/in specific positions. Some programs also sought to prepare in-service teachers for work in in demand schools, such as the Fair Go Project in New South Wales, which provided professional development around a student engagement pedagogy for teachers in LSES schools.
- Retain (n = 1): Only a single program was identified as focusing primarily on retention, namely the Bush Tracks Teaching Transitions project. This research project sought to understand issues of rural teacher mobility, especially in relation to rural in-service teachers' movements into leadership positions in these schools.

The focus or aim of the audited programs were also often a combination of recruitment, preparation, and retention. A number of programs were concurrently about recruitment and preparation (n = 18), such as the Enhanced Teacher Training Scholarship Program from the New South Wales Department of Education, which targets schools with high Indigenous student populations. Similarly, some programs focused on both recruitment and retention (n = 8), for example Western Australia's Metropolitan Teaching Program, which uses financial incentives and professional opportunities to attract and retain teachers in LSES schools.

Additionally, a small number of programs/initiatives (n = 14) fell outside/were less directly connected to the categories of recruit, prepare, and retain and therefore were coded as 'not applicable'. These programs were often awards, which are loosely about recruitment and retention (e.g. the Rural Education Award, which recognises the achievements and practices of teachers and leaders in rural and remote Victorian areas) and some research projects, which

again are broadly about the three main categories but in a much more indirect way in comparison to other programs/initiatives e.g. Katu Kalpa, a federal government report on the effectiveness of education and training programs for Indigenous Australians (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education References Committee, 2000). A further set of programs were coded as ‘not identified’ (n = 14) due to unclear and/or insufficient information.

Broadly, it is evident that the programs/initiatives in this audit largely aim to address workforce issues from the supply side rather than the demand one. The comparative lack of focus on retention, as opposed to recruitment and preparation, revealed in this data suggests an effort to increase supply but not necessarily one to maintain the long term impact of this supply. This lack of focus on retention is compounded by the fact, as discussed earlier, that the duration of many of the programs in this audit could not be identified, which suggests many programs suffer from a lack of ongoing funding or organisational continuity. These issues may be contributing factors that lead to ‘teacher churn’, whereby teachers (often recent graduates) are funnelled into hard-to-staff schools but only remain there for a limited amount of time.

4.8 MECHANISM/PROCESS

Mechanism/Process	Number of Programs
Financial incentives	48
Professional Development	27
Research	14
Financial incentives and Professional Development	14
Not identified	12
Financial incentives and Professional Conditions	9
Promotion of Opportunity	8
Financial incentives and Professional Development and Professional Conditions	6
Professional Development and Research	2
Professional Development and Promotion of Opportunity and Research	2
Professional Development and Professional Conditions	2
N/A	2
Professional Development and Promotion of Opportunity	1
Total	147

Table 7. Classification of programs by mechanism/process

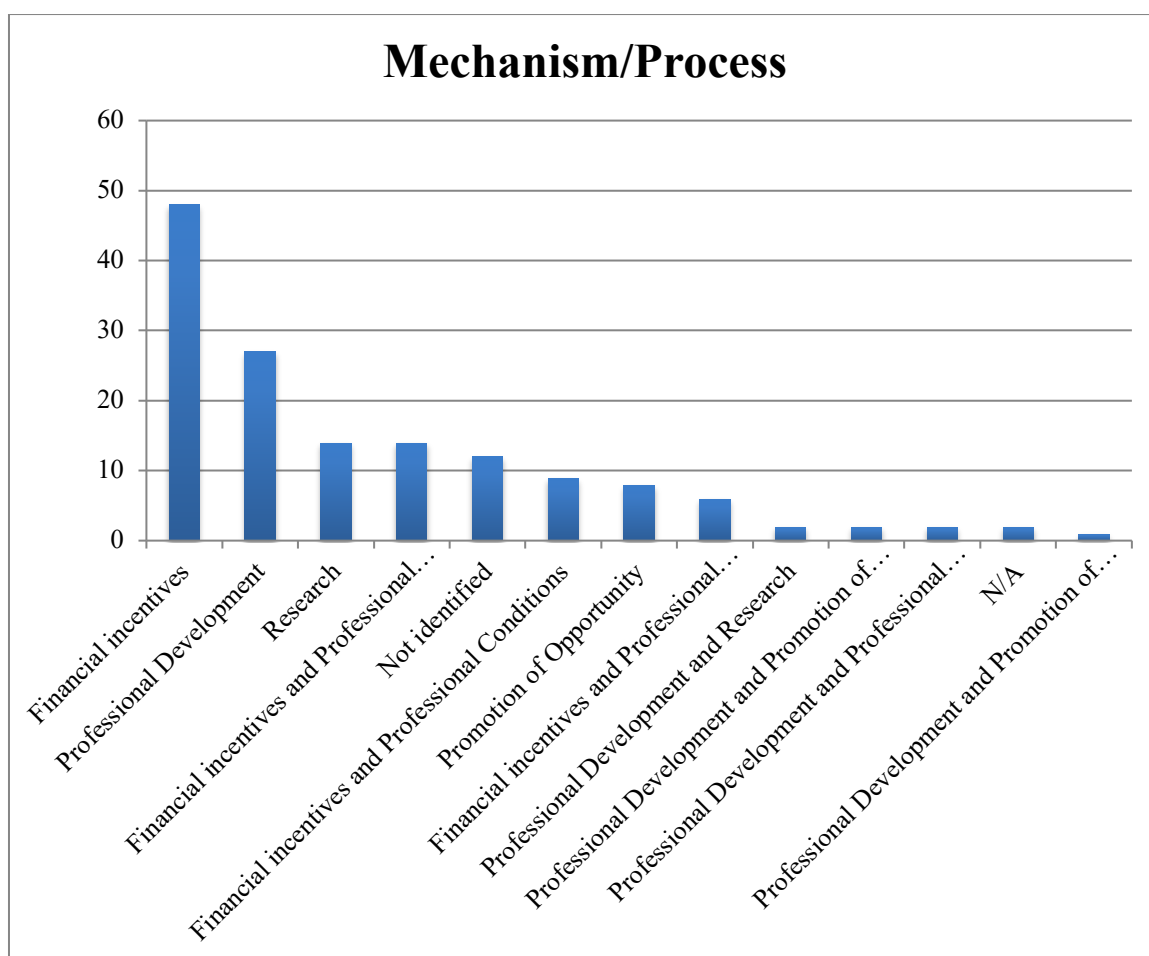


Figure 7. Classification of programs by mechanism/process

The mechanism or process used to address the issue of hard-to-staff schools varied across programs/initiatives although about a third relied solely on financial incentives ($n = 48$). The use of financial incentives took a number of forms, including:

- Scholarship programs to recruit individuals from target groups into teaching degrees, such as Indigenous, LSES, and/or rural/remote students (e.g. the Aboriginal Teacher Education Scholarship in the Northern Territory for Indigenous students).
- Scholarships and stipends to allow students to undertake professional experience placements in schools with particular staffing needs, often in rural/remote areas (e.g. the Esther Burns/DECS Country Teaching Scholarships for University of Adelaide pre-service teachers in maths or science to undertake a country teaching practicum).

- Scholarships and/or financial incentives to recruit teachers into positions in in demand areas, such as the early childhood sector, LSES schools, rural/remote schools, and particular subject specialities (e.g. the Kimberly Calling Program in Western Australia offers staff who take positions in remote areas relocation expenses, an annual service bonus, increased long-service leave, and Christmas vacation travel time).

Professional development was another key mechanism that programs used to address staffing issues in particular schools/areas. Twenty-seven programs solely used professional development as their mechanism. In these types of audited programs, professional development most commonly pertained to pre-service teachers being given the opportunity to undertake a professional experience placement in a hard-to-staff school (often in a rural/remote setting). Here, a placement functioned as professional development to provide future teachers with the knowledge, skills, and experience to teach in a similar type of school once qualified. One example of such initiatives is the Monash-Gippsland SCTE Remote and Rural Placement program, in which Monash University has partnered with 20 local schools to offer pre-service teachers a three week placement in a rural/remote school. This placement also included a weekend conference for the pre-service teachers to meet with principals for reflection and mentoring.

Professional development as a mechanism driving these programs also includes alternative pathways into teaching (e.g. Teach for Australia and Teach Next) and university-based units of study within teaching degrees focusing on issues connected to hard-to-staff schools (e.g. the elective unit Teaching in Rural and Remote Locations at the University of Tasmania). Additionally, a further 14 programs in this audit used professional development in tandem with financial incentives, such as financially supported study program (e.g. Catholic Education Western Australia's Aboriginal Teaching Assistants Study Scholarships).

Other key mechanisms included professional conditions (such as a guaranteed period of employment) and promotion of opportunities (short trips to expose potential staff to schools with staffing needs). These, along with financial incentives and professional development, were often combined by programs to offer individuals a range of incentives to prepare for, move to, or stay in particular locations and/or teaching areas.

Finally, 14 of the programs were research-based efforts to understand the reasons and potential solutions for staffing issues at a range of in need schools, for example the Katu Kalpa report from the Federal Government, which was an inquiry into the effectiveness of education

and training programs for Indigenous Australians (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education References Committee, 2000). Another is the Bush Tracks Teaching Transitions Project, which aimed to understand the transitions individuals experience when becoming teachers and school leaders in rural schools.

4.9 EVALUATION

Evaluation	Number of Programs
Yes	15
Limited	7
Pending	1
No	1
Not identified	123
Total	147

Table 8. Classification of programs by evaluation

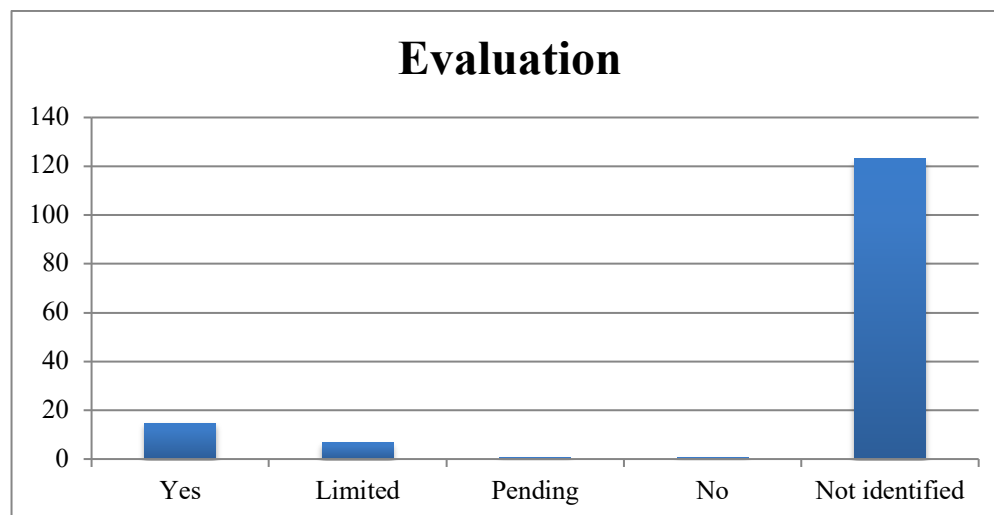


Figure 8. Classification of programs by evaluation

Of the 147 programs included in this audit, 15 were identified as having been substantially evaluated. The way these evaluations took place varied, including through academic journal articles (e.g. Locke (2008) on the WA DET's Student Teacher Rural Experience Program), internal evaluation reports (e.g. the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative's report, see Buckskin, 2016b), and external evaluation reports (e.g. the Australian Council for Education Research's report on Teach for Australia, see Weldon et al., 2013).

Programs that were identified as having 'limited' evaluation included those briefly engaged with in academic or grey literature, as opposed to in an in-depth or holistic way. For the vast majority of programs ($n = 123$), if they had been evaluated or not could not be determined due to insufficient information. Notably, the evaluations of the 15 programs where there was substantial material were all found via open access sources. Following this, there is the potential that some programs in the 'not identified' category here may have been evaluated but were not made available in the same open access way and thus were not captured in this audit.

5 Interview Analysis

5.1 OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEW ANALYSIS (PHASE TWO)

Following the analysis of Phase One in the last chapter, this chapter focuses specifically on the analysis of data derived from the Phase Two of the project, which involved interviews with 21 participants from 12 hard-to-staff initiatives. These interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed between February and April 2021. All discussions used a semi-structured interview style as this allowed the order and structure of questions to be slightly modified depending on the context and location of each program. A thematic analysis, in contrast to a more fine-grained discourse analysis, was then conducted with the final recommendations (see Chapter 6) emerging from a combination of the analysis in Phase One and Two.

The sections in this chapter begin with an overview of each broad theme, followed by a discussion of any subthemes that emerged. Importantly, responses from those interviewed demonstrated the complex and multifaceted nature of any attempt to apportion or allot responses neatly into pre-determined or pre-designated groupings. The participants, without promoting, would at times break-down our initial categories into a number of sub-themes. For example, ‘recruitment’ was broken down by some participants into the sub-topic of ‘incentives’ (both financial and work-related), which was then further broken down by others into ‘sign-on bonuses’, ‘salary loading’, ‘rental assistance’, ‘workplace conditions’, and ‘workplace culture’. The broad themes, however, which structure this chapter’s discussion are as follows: Program design and organisation, Preparation: Initial Teacher Education, Recruitment and Induction, Retention and Attrition, and Leadership.

5.2 PROGRAM DESIGN AND ORGANISATION

The most often discussed aspect of the preparation of new teachers for hard-to-staff school contexts was program design. The various programs and initiatives discussed by participants in this research have been developed and operated typically by university Schools of Education to support pre-service teachers to undertake successful professional experience placements in hard-to-staff school contexts. This includes the development of the knowledge pre-service teachers require to skilfully understand diverse school contexts, with the longer term view of supporting those students as beginning teachers to start their teaching careers in

those locations. The programs discussed in the interviews appeared to be most often operating within an overall pre-service teacher education program, however these programs were not generally part of the mainstream teacher education program offered by that university. These programs were structured as an addition to the mainstream degree program and contained smaller cohorts of students who were identified through some form of innovative program design, often in partnership with state Department of Education as well as individual regions and schools:

- “...to be able to do what I... I’ve been allowed to be very risky, well, not risky, I’m not really risking, but to be able to have some freedom to trial and do things that maybe break the norm a little bit. And being able to move forward a little bit. To create things. I guess that works, because I’m actually meeting the needs of the students and the schools”.
- “We don’t have high quality pre-service teachers; we have high potential pre-service teachers. People who have the right attitude. They have a good academic transcript that’s showing me that they’re learning, they’re growing. They may have had glitches along the way, but they got back up again. They’re resilient”.

In terms of project design, resourcing was identified as an ongoing issue. Whilst some financial support was provided by Schools of Education, most programs were operating by accessing additional resources from either government or philanthropic funding. The difficulty of maintaining the such things as high-quality mentoring or the necessary school partnerships to continue the work would appear to be closely connected to program funding arrangements which will be elaborated on in the following section. Program leaders wanted it known that high quality initiatives are by no means cost neutral.

Two further key issues were identified in the interviews in relation to project design: first, a general lack of targeted policy initiatives, and second, the subsequent issue of sustainable resourcing for programs:

- “I think what you will observe is that we’ve stopped so much investing in the undergraduate space, in terms of scholarships, and we’ve turned our mind much more – or the department’s policies moved a lot more to – investing in accelerated Masters, employment-based programs, and then initiatives to redistribute supply”.
- “I think you have to target the program. Policy is really bad at differentiating. But you do have to target. You do have to have a special role recruiting for these schools, and advertising and promoting, and what the benefits are to go to these schools. You do need

a targeted policy incentive scheme to get them there, you do need targeted retention policy to keep them there, you do need the housing. It has to be targeted across the board. And I think the departments don't do the targeted support very well".

Participants also discussed their views that funding partners often expected programs to produce measurable impact in too short a timeframe. The imperative to demonstrate short term impact is clearly connected to funding cycles, changing priority areas, changing governments. Capturing this, one participant stated, "you're a victim of those cycles of funding, government changes", while another noted:

- 'Look at return on investment – how much this costs to train someone in the program, how much does it cost to train a pre-service teacher to the XXXXX level, then how much cost it is for churning of first-year teachers, you know, having to replace staff'. And so that calculation was never done which is unfortunate. Because if they analysed 'where are we getting our bang for our buck?' That would be it. That rather than say they employ five graduates, five graduates say 'see you later' after three years, versus having graduates stay long term, where you're not re-training them, you're not spending resources, time, and money... it's just unfortunate that they didn't look at that".

Finally, participants noted the complexities of working between highly centralised government departments and the necessity of working closely with schools. Staffing needs varied greatly both by school and by context, and successful programs identified the need to work closely with the school. Importantly, the centralised recruitment processes made it difficult for schools to convert teachers that they have attracted to their school into full time appointments:

- "If you want a process that works, it varies from centre to centre, but it's a real contextual type situation. I think there's a really complex structure in regional offices with staff recruitment, and really the work often happens at the school-based level where teachers know people and we've made the contacts. So in our world, the best type of model is a very flat structure, where resources – whether it be money or staff – is sent to the schools on the ground to do a range of that promotion. Rather than having a fairly complex HR type approach. Regional office have attraction teams, they've got retention teams, they've got a whole range of teams who are really great people. But they tend to want to come to us, the kids do, the pre-service ones".

- “But the corollary of that is that we have less power over the schools compared to other jurisdictions...we can’t appoint a principal, for instance. The school council in conjunction with the regional executive appoints a principal. We can’t appoint a teacher. Even if I have this absolute rockstar teacher here, and I have a school that doesn’t have any teachers ...we can’t place that teacher in that school”.

5.3 PREPARATION: INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

In addition to program design and organisation, a broad grouping of themes also emerged from the interview data in relation to the importance of the preparation of pre-service teachers for hard-to-staff schools. Responses from those interviewed discussed notable models of preparation that included immersion programs, grow your own programs, and programs designed to target preparation for rural and remote school contexts. This list is in no way exhaustive of the programs that have developed in this area, but does go some way toward beginning to identify approaches that are currently being operationalised to support pre-service teachers prepare for careers in hard-to-staff schools. Other issues discussed include the importance of partnerships for the successful operation of programs as well as the increased diversity of pre-service teacher candidates.

Program Structure

Participants discussed a variety of innovative programs to support pre-service teachers in preparing for careers in hard-to-staff schools, such as:

Immersion models: These programs appeared to emphasise extended professional placement time in schools or an early placement experience with pre-service teachers often assigned to a specific hard-to-staff school. This approach appeared to work toward the development of a ‘pipeline’ of staff for hard-to-staff schools. Those interviewed spoke about having completed a placement at an identified school, having moved into casual teaching in the same school, and then moving straight into a permanent position at the same school. A key component of these programs was that the majority worked closely with universities to get placement students into targeted schools, and then proceeded to hire these same teachers through an accelerated ‘permission to teach’ in Term Four, with a subsequent fulltime teaching position offered in the school the following year:

- “When they started their first full year of teaching in the next year, they all already had 6 months experience. They knew the kids and they knew the community”.
- “The point of it was, I suppose, was to get teachers into the schools quickly. And so the school that I did my prac at gave me a casual job for Term Four and then I was a targeted grad, and I started there full-time the next year, permanently”.

Grow Your Own models: These programs focus on nurturing pre-service teachers from within communities rather than relying on a ready supply of teachers from other geographical locations. The rationale for this is that teachers who are from a certain community are much more likely to return once they have completed university education and stay in in that community with clear flow on benefits in terms of reducing teacher turnover:

- “It’s built around the idea that because recruiting outsider teachers is always difficult and because you’re pretty much guaranteed that most of them won’t stay that long, but that people who are part of a remote community are generally - you know it’s their own community, it’s their own place that they live, you’re not having to attract them to the location, they are already there, that’s where they want to be. So if you can train them to be teachers, the idea is then you’ll be able to retain them”.
- “Doing dumps and runs is not good enough... I hear constantly, oh we send out ambassadors, we go and talk to the universities, we do this, I said well one or two sessions of dumping and running of information doesn’t build confidence and there’s no relationship. So I guess the other thing is about relationships and mentorships”.

Rural/Remote models: One of the most discussed program design models to address the preparation of teachers for hard-to-staff schools focused on preparation for rural and remote contexts. Again, a variety of different approaches were discussed, but common to them all was the notion of familiarising pre-service teachers from metropolitan areas about life in rural and remote communities:

- “Our biggest problem we have is just exposing people to what it’s like. I couldn’t tell you the amount of times that I’ve spoken to pre-service teachers and they literally think it’s all dirt roads. And that it’s the wild west up where. So just trying to debunk those myths and move forward with some actual true understanding of what it’s like. And that you can be very successful and that its actually going to give you a pathway in your careers”.
- “I think a challenge would be moving away from home, like uni students moving away from possibly Brisbane where they know they’ve got access to shops and events and things

like that, so I think it's like what's available out in the rural/regional communities, I think that's probably something that might prevent people from coming out here".

The Importance of Partnerships

The importance of partnerships was identified by both those participants focusing on the preparation of new teachers (i.e., those working with pre-service teachers to prepare them for the profession) and those working on specific initiatives to prepare pre-service teachers for careers in hard-to-staff schools. The partnerships described tended to be between universities and government departments at an organisation level, but on a daily basis it was the individual university-school partnerships that made these programs work. This results in a need to simplify the process and reducing the number of different individuals who are working together to support a complex project or initiative, such as assisting pre-serve teachers to develop the knowledge and skills required to take up a career in hard-to-staff schools. For example, participants often commented on the difficulties and expertise required to sustain partnerships, and ensure programs were operational. This included the work required to develop common project goals across multiple partners as well as the impact of high staff turnover on partnerships:

- "Making sure that everyone whose involved keeps working together and that time is spent to ensure that you still have shared goals. I think that this sort of program involves so many different participants, the schools, the university...the educational bodies, as well as all the individuals in those. So just trying to keep everyone on the same page as you go".
- "Keeping schools and other team members on board. Because the program depends on having so many participants collaborating, if any of them are weak, it makes it really hard".
- "You give me 18 people I don't want to know about you. I really don't. I do not have time to work with 18 different people in 4 years".

Diversity of Pre-Service Teachers

There was also a view expressed in the interviews around a need for diversity among those undertaking pre-service teacher education courses as well as a need for this diversity to be reflected in policy initiatives targeting the preparation and recruitment of teachers. Staffing policies that are built on a supply of pre-service teachers who are all young school leavers with few economic and family commitments, and thus able to provide a highly mobile workforce

supply, was interpreted as no longer useful. Instead, participants in this project consistently reinforced the importance of having a diversity of people undertaking pre-service teacher education.

Participants involved in preparation programs targeting the development of pre-service teachers for hard-to-staff schools also commented on the complexities of asking these students to undertake preparation work on top of their standard university degree so they could be well prepared when they undertook placement in hard-to-staff school contexts:

- “Most of our students are mature age as well... that may or may not be part of its success. They have families, they have work, they have mortgages, they have community that they do community programs in their local areas, so they have huge commitments. So, this is a huge layer on top of their already heavy workload...”.
- “...looking to transfer me, that’s okay, I’ll do something else. We have got this different way of thinking, that they’re more transient between jobs, they’re not thinking teaching has to be there forever for them. Or permanency. We used to say, well if you come out West we’ll offer you permanency... ‘today a lot of younger people are happy for taking a 12-month contract 2kms from where they live and if they’re in an area of high demand such as Math, they can feel assured that they’ll be sought after by local schools. If a teacher believes they are higher quality, they know they’ll be picked up by metro schools. So high quality teachers in rural and remote becomes a pool of teachers who weren’t able to get a job in the metro region. So, offering scholarships means getting high quality teachers out into the regions”.

Finally, programs designated as supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to complete teacher education identified an additional goal; namely, that they could create new career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within remote communities. One person interviewed stated: “[i]t’s a really good chance to be part of a cohort of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students together working toward the same goals. Because you learn from each other, and you have quite a lot in common and you can support each other. That cohort support is super-duper important”.

5.4 RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION

This section begins by unpacking the dynamic nature of recruitment and induction through the lens of the subtheme of supply and demand, including the autonomy many leaders

in hard-to-staff schools demand in terms of selecting the type of staff they want to employ. The discussion then moves on to consider several commonalities leaders talked about when discussing criteria that should be used to determine the ‘right’ candidates. This includes the importance of creating a conducive professional induction journey that enables new staff to not only adapt to their new school environment, but to take advantage of opportunities in the form of time-release and specialised Professional Development.

The Importance of Supply and Demand

Several interviews overtly stressed the need for policy makers to move the scope of their discussion beyond the traditional ITE framework and its out-dated, Fordist predisposition to merely producing more teacher graduates. It was suggested that the problem for many hard-to-staff schools was not one of ‘volume’ but rather one of ‘distribution’ with one interviewee stating, “we might have enough teachers, but they’re not in the places that we need them to be”. Using a similar logic, others stressed:

- “We do have enough supply for most of our positions. Where we have trouble is distributing that supply to geographic locations and certain schools which are disadvantaged. But we do have some supply constraints in terms of specialised subjects. And those shortages have a lot of context in that, you know, Australia doesn’t have enough Mathematics graduates full stop, across all professions, so that flows through to we don’t have enough Mathematics teachers. And therefore, we don’t have enough Mathematics teachers in rural areas. And it’s those intersections of those challenges which create the biggest issues”.
- “It doesn’t matter what job it is, regional-remote, always hard to staff. Unless you’re mining, and you throw thousands of dollars at them. Then people can hack it”.

The Importance of Choosing the Right Candidates

While there was considerable discussion around the need for hiring decisions to be made ‘on-the-ground’ by leaders aware and attuned to local contextual issues, several participants stressed that some programs were forced to work within “a system that inherently disadvantages ... remote schools”. While it is clear that considerable effort and attention was devoted across all the initiatives examined in terms of selecting appropriate staff, how each program actually undertook this process varied considerably. There appears to be a continuum with at one end, a focus on the previous teaching experience and the pedagogical knowledge of applicants — described in one interview as “the science of learning, the science of teaching

— through to hiring only people who appear “to be in it for the long haul” and are “able to stay with a project” or have “a good handle on what is happening”. Common themes for school leaders in relation to the sub-theme of ‘choosing the right candidates’ suggest that it is, “very, very hard to ensure that people who come to our schools have come for the right reasons, and like their first questions aren’t ‘how much allowance do I get?’ and ‘how often do I get to go to Perth?’, ‘what’s my accommodation like?’ It’s more about ‘tell me about the community, how many kids will I have in my class, what would their learning styles be? What do I need to be aware of?’”

The Importance of Financial Incentives

Following this, while there seemed to be some broad agreement around the notion that “money is not the answer”, there was almost universal acceptance (across at least remote school settings), that some kind of financial enticement is required to attract and retain suitable staff. The range, shape, and form such financial incentives take varies from initial sign-on bonuses of up to \$20, 000 in some Queensland initiatives through to salary loadings that cover, for example, subsidised housing and even free rent and electricity in remote Western Australian settings. Some issues with such incentives were noted in remote locations where one participant stated, “we got 90% rental subsidy. But there was no incentive if you bought your own house there. So, there were local teachers who wanted to stay, but for them financially, they almost lost money, because they’re not using teacher housing... it’s too short-sighted and decomplexified”. Other themes included:

- “If you work for three years straight in a remote school you get three months off on full pay. If you work four years in a remote, you get 6 months on full pay. If you’re, say XXX remote community school, which is [many kilometres] south of Broome, you get \$15,000 a year allowance. Free housing, two trips to Perth, a trip to Broome, you don’t pay electricity, you don’t pay water, so there’s a number of financial incentives to be in a remote school. Plus, after two years, you get your permanency”.
- “If you get the incentive for three years, you stay for your three years, then you bolt. You don’t look to stay in the community”.
- “The fact that they were able to offer permanency and all the benefits that came with that including the paid move out, meant that it was no longer a burden for me to have a go out rural. I wouldn’t have to find my own place; I wouldn’t have to find a school or a job or pay for movers to go out there. To me, it looked like this was the perfect bridging

opportunity to get teachers out rural without having all those obstacles in the way – that’s what I believe the purpose of the XXXXX is and why it’s so successful”.

The Importance of Non-Financial Incentives

This somewhat loose grouping of incentives differs from those of a financial or compensatory nature in that they cover a range of inducements that share the underlying subtext that “[g]iving people more money doesn’t actually solve the problem. You need to give them other things ... [as] the new gen, they have a different view of what they see as an incentive”.

Workplace conditions: Incentives in this grouping include a conscious effort by leaders to improve some aspect of employment that goes beyond normal ‘award’ conditions. Included here are how some programs offer beginning teachers immediate permanency when they sign up/on or the more common policy of some kind of accelerated transition from contract to permanency after a much shorter period of time compared to urban settings. One long standing practice in the context of Queensland remote initiatives, is the established departmental policy of ‘transfer points’, which are accrued normally on the basis the degree of distance/remoteness from a major urban city.

In some remote Indigenous communities in Cape York Peninsula, teachers acquire the maximum number of transfer points, which was described as “the thing that gets teachers up in those remote schools in Queensland for two years is the transfer points system ... there’s an incentive to go, you kind of have to go if you want a permanent job. And then they [DET] do honour it, when you come back you get your first choice of schools... the problem is when you have 10 new teachers in a school in one go”. The problematic nature of a contracted workforce is particularly evident in remote Indigenous communities where one school leader frustratingly commented “we’re not interested in contract, contract, contract, contract, we want to know that you want to stay here. We want the community to know that you want to stay there. Because the first question that the kids ask these teachers when they go on their first holiday ‘hey Miss, you coming back here? Are you coming back here?’ ...it’s not fair on anyone, for the stability, for the culture of the school”.

Other notable comments from participants on workplace conditions included:

- “You can’t... to give someone a six month contract and think they are going to stay with you for four years is ridiculous. I know that from a teacher, because I’m an employer. So I get that. So, if I give a teacher six months I’ve already got teachers that I’m panicking about because they’ve been offered three private school jobs”.

- “I’m not prepared to put the lives, and we are talking about lives here, people do forget that we are talking about people and jobs and careers. We can’t work on 6-month contracts or two years of funding. I won’t. If I only had two years, I’d be looking for another job right now. Because most high performers will want ... to know what they are doing in a year’s time”.

Workplace Culture: In contrast to concentrating on workplace conditions, another grouping of comments from participants sort to focus on facilitating (and promoting) a school’s professional culture, with one school leader suggesting that “one of the key reasons the good teachers will go to a school is because there’s a principal there they want to work with, which is leadership”. Other themes in this grouping included:

- “One of the biggest things we’ve found, and we do a lot of work with beginning teachers, is they want to be recognised, they want to be connected, they want opportunities for career progression over ‘I’ll take \$5, 000 if I go over there”.
- Because for a lot of them, they don’t care about the corporate side of it. They really don’t. They care about okay, is the job permanent? Is it temporary? And do I get accommodation? They’re the big ones they worry about... their biggest concern is how the hell am I going to be supported when I get there? Who’s going to be my friends? Who can I rely upon?

Living conditions: Several of those interviewed stress the importance of teachers feeling comfortable and safe away from the school. With this in mind the benefits of recruiting couples and/or friends has been tried in several initiatives and it was suggested that “If people don’t have a good housing situation, they won’t stay. If they’re fighting with their roomies, they won’t stay. If it’s not secure, they don’t stay...That’s like bread-and-butter stuff, but really actually important to getting people to stay”.

5.5 RETENTION AND ATTRITION: THE IMPACT OF BURN-OUT AND TRANSIENCE

One phenomenon shared across most of the initiatives was a tension expressed between the importance of retaining staff on the one hand, and on the other, a pragmatic acknowledgment that there would most likely be high levels of attrition and staff turnover. As one interviewee bluntly stated, “[y]ou can’t just have an attraction strategy, you’ve got to have a retention strategy as well. And if they’re not married together, then all for naught. No good

attracting people if you haven't got a way of keeping them involved in what you're doing". Interestingly, none of those interviewed attempted to gloss over the reality that leaders must anticipate a high turnover of staff and therefore leaders need to plan accordingly. One participant stressed the fluid nature of working in these challenging environments suggesting that "things change at schools, things changed here at XXXXX, things changed at XXXXX, and so the expertise, the priorities, the beliefs, all those sorts of things change. Somewhere like the NT you're going to get that, ... as a territory, we have much higher turnover than other jurisdictions. So, you have to build in for change. You cannot anticipate that the same person will be doing a job in three years, five years, 10 years... that's why you have to build in that refreshing of goals and what it looks like in a really regular way. Otherwise, people come in - someone leaves, someone else comes in - and they're filled in only on the day-to-day operations stuff but they don't get filled in on the rest of it".

5.6 LEADERSHIP

Some of the initiatives where we conducted interviews directly identified leadership as an overt component or aim of the program, however across most initiatives, issues related to leadership were discussed in more generic terms. This generic framing of leaderships did not in any way detract from its importance for there was overlapping agreement that without strong school leadership none of the initiatives that targeted attracting, preparing, or retaining teachers could possibly have any lasting effect. In addition, there was strong agreement that leadership trajectories or accelerated pathways to positions of leadership were often an incentive in attracting teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools. Moreover, high-quality mentoring was commonly discussed as a key leadership theme closely aligned to the attraction, induction, and retention of the best teachers for the hardest to staff metropolitan, regional, rural, and remote schools. While it was difficult to separate leadership from the many other overlapping themes, it was clear that while the success and impact of the initiative may have been dependent on multiple factors, leadership had a fundamental link to them all.

In this section we attend to direct and specific points made by participants who identified themselves as having led, participated in, or designed what they themselves identified as leadership initiatives. Importantly, many of the points raised largely reiterate previous themes that arose throughout the research.

Program Leadership: Longevity, Sustainability, Budget Cycles and Institutional Knowledge

One specific issue that arose in several interviews concerned the transience of leadership across both government and ITE initiatives that had been designed to address teacher workforce shortages. It was indicated that sometimes when directors or program leaders left or changed departments, they were replaced with new directors or managers who did not have the same institutional knowledge, and in some cases lacked a similar passion for the work. Similarly, some participants lamented that key strategies which had taken considerable time to develop were regularly replaced after elections or some other form of institutional restructure and that this made it extremely hard for programs to maintain momentum, consistency, and/or the fidelity to particular strategies or directions.

In addition, such change often impacted on the ability of an initiative to collect evidence of the program's impact over time. In this respect, it was clear that those interviewed saw the leadership of some initiatives negatively affected by change, with one participant stating that the leadership role was:

- “Sometimes landed on people who took over programs. There is transience in who leads this work overtime, and both institutional knowledge and commitment can be lost”.

This was a source of frustration for another participant who said, “If you’ve got even three new people coming on board, that is a whole heap of time and effort that you’ve got to pump into those people to bring them up to speed”.

Interestingly, this same point was interpreted as an issue of accountability, with another participant maintaining that:

- “[g]overnance means there has to be sustainability of the people that are on that governance... I had 18 people in 4 years in those roles. Now most people wouldn’t be able to manage that. That means 18 times I had to tell people what I had to do, 18 times I had to tell them about the program, 18 times. And that is an unsustainable practice”.

Concerns were also expressed about inefficiencies and lack of forethought related to the short cycles of funding. In speaking about getting good teachers out into the regions and trying to get programs up and running, one participant said, “the potential of it was incredible, but getting the education departments to sign up to things like that are just incredibly difficult. Because what they’ll do is exactly what you’ve just outlined, they’ll be two year or four year

cycles of funding. Once that's gone, oh well, don't worry about that now, the problems not there anymore or the issues gone away. Well, that's just not true". Others repeated similar concerns:

- "And if the evaluation comes in with some good findings, you've got a fairly good chance of managing to get further funding. But not every budget bid has the same number of years attached to it, it can be variable".
- "The first year they're still working out what they're going to do so the money doesn't do anything for the first six months at least. By the fourth year, they're evaluating, or halfway through the third year and everyone is shutting shop and going home."
- "Some things have changed but I think departments by their very nature, they're big beasts that are very difficult to manage, the corporate memory doesn't hold onto the things that work well".

On a related note, there appeared to be some concern that new initiatives (designed around new and often 'innovative' labelled funding sources) were continuously replacing strategies that were already in existence, and that this was both confusing and disruptive rather than innovative. One program manager interviewed expressed concerns about what their own department was bringing in, saying that there were:

- "New initiatives tried all the time, new things brought in...Well okay we now have an Indigenous Coordinator, we've got a STEM Coordinator, we're offering programs for principals in this. So suddenly a lot of the things were happening all at once and that was their only complaint, was that 'wow, all these packages are coming all at once'. So that was a learning as well. How do we make sure we engage them fully in the conversation, so they have the ability to immerse [in] them and contextualise the programs, and not be bombarded with five or six programs at once?"

School Leadership: Quality Leadership, School Autonomy, and Wellbeing

School leaders are, unsurprisingly, the most passionate about the issue of 'leadership'. This is particularly the case in regional and remote locations where they experience teacher shortage on a daily basis. The transfer/points system in some remote locations was specifically emphasised as causing stress for school leaders:

- “Where we had, the first year I arrived, I arrived in July, I had 25 staff leave who had done their three years. It was just ridiculous, the whole school was ripped out, we almost had to start again”.

Essentially the school often felt they lost experienced teachers with the key local knowledge in favour of an assembly of new teachers with little or at times no experience in such settings.

One topic repeatedly raised was the issue of school leaders’ own stress and overload. For instance, school principals not only had to adopt a rolling series of new initiatives but were also having to adapt to working with increasingly constrained budgets and at times having to step in themselves face-to-face teaching roles. The wellbeing of school leaders was clearly a major theme with one interviewee framing it as “remote schools need a whole lot more money for PD...you should be able to buy extra teachers if you need” and that “[i]t’s the worst thing in the world to be Band 5 principal of a school that size and still meant to teach all day”. This was a theme picked up on by another participant who commented, “the principal role in a smaller school is – the principal is everything, as well as necessarily having a teaching load. So that can be quite daunting for many, trying to do two things at once”. The quality and consistency of leadership within schools also comes through in some interviews with one participant explaining that their school did not always even have an actual principal on staff, which resulted in “the deputy is stepping up all the time or someone else is having to run the school”. Another stated, “I would rank leadership as our number one issue with recruiting quality teachers. It’s equal. It’s not a competition, you’ve got to have both”.

The morale of school leadership appears to be related in part to how much leaders feel rewarded by their work, how long they stay in hard-to-staff schools and, consequently, whether they are able to both recruit and or support their teachers. A point raised earlier in this chapter has relevance to this current discussion as we were told that “one of the key reasons the good teachers will go to a school is because there’s a principal there they want to work with, which is leadership”. This particular participant makes the point about effective leadership in schools being closely tied to delegation and knowing where mentorship can be most effectively directed with the goal of keeping the school processes running smoothly. Such feeling of being rewarded included not only a feeling that their hard work is appreciated but also feeling their hard work is financially rewarded:

- “In terms of salary, principals of smaller schools are usually paid the same amount as an assistant principal. And yet an assistant principal has a network around them...

you're expected to be all things to all people, but you perhaps don't get the same remuneration".

There was some debate about whether initiatives should be national, state or local and school-based. Generally, there was a strong preference amongst school leaders for some degree of school autonomy in terms of hiring, if not also recruiting. The overall preference was for place or context driven initiatives that were not "run out of a central office" but were locally administered:

- "I think there's a really complex structure in regional offices with staff recruitment, and really the work often happens at the school-based level where teachers know people and we've made the contacts. So, in our world, the best type of model is a very flat structure, where resources – whether it be money or staff – is sent to the schools on the ground".

One principal explained that in his school governance is centred on a global school budget, saying:

- "Rather than funding particular activities in a school, we fund a school as a whole, and the principal has substantial devolved responsibility for using that money to deliver schooling to their student cohort. One aspect of such operations might be how leaders manage their teacher supply challenges and needs".

While departmental support was clearly considered important, one message was that "policy is really bad at differentiating. But you do have to target. You do have to have a special role recruiting for these schools, and advertising and promoting, and what the benefits are to go to these schools. You do need a targeted policy incentive scheme to get them there, you do need targeted retention policy to keep them there, you do need the housing. It has to be targeted across the board. And I think the departments don't do the targeted support very well".

Teacher Leadership Pathways

There is little question that accelerated leadership pathways are seen by some teachers as an incentive of teaching within hard-to-staff schools. The importance of advertising and making known that accelerated leadership pathways are possible was seen as critical for some program leaders and principals who believed that many teachers "want...to be identified as being on a projected career path with professional development to be able to help them grow

and develop – so that professional development was key to being out there. And then also the ability, once they’ve done some time out there, could they be promised a place of choice when they came back in. We called that boomerang”. There was nonetheless some concern about people at times being promoted or given leadership roles prematurely and the “higher likelihood in a rural area that people would go from a teacher to a principal role”.

While many of the interviews did not overtly link leadership to the loss of high achieving or quality teachers, there was a shared (yet seemingly not unexpected) concern that many teachers in hard-to-staff settings:

- “Don’t stay in the profession for very long. So, we’ve got retention issues, and it’s not that they just decide that teaching is not for them, they often move into policy style roles within education. Because of who they are, and what they can bring, there’s a huge demand”.
- “You can put lots of people through [a program] but it’s really then up to them whether they are going to stick their hand up to fill those positions”.
- “Once they are an effective teacher and they’re working well in a school ... obviously we would like these people to be in leadership positions. We want them in the future to be running schools.”

For some of those interviewed the notion of ‘teaching transience’ and its impact on school leadership was seen as a generational demographic change whereby teachers fail to stay in the same profession for the same lengths of time as in the past due to the fact that “has been a change in culture and thinking of younger people now, indications are that they don’t necessarily see it as the ultimate career pathway, that I’ll be a teacher and I’ll be a teacher for the next 30 years”...“I think one of the answers is... creating Master Teachers. And having that career path where you can stay in the classroom and earn a lot of money but also have a lot of respect. And also fixes the problem of having first year teachers spending six hours a night curriculum planning when they don’t know what they’re doing anyway... it gives people a career path for people who wouldn’t otherwise stay and also provides the support for beginning teachers who don’t have that support at the moment”. The relatively short period of time teachers who participate in pathway initiatives spend in schools is also discussed in some interviews in relation to programs that seek to recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers. As in other leadership programs a percentage of graduate teachers never choose the career path of teaching in schools, yet end up nonetheless working in TAFE, in the health sector or in some kind of community work. In some programs, such as those that focus on Indigenous

teachers or the ‘grow your own’ pathway, it was argued that there are often limited leadership conduits and hence, “for a whole lot of reasons some people have left teaching”.

Mentoring as a Leadership Activity

Lastly, the induction and mentoring of new teachers were topics mentioned across many of the interviews. It would appear that induction and mentoring are perceived as directly related to leadership, with an understanding that new teachers, no matter how well prepared, need time to learn the context-based knowledges and skills required to begin teaching in challenging schools. While there was little disagreement as to the importance of having a mentor, several of those interviewed directly raised the problem of the need to monitor the training and quality of the mentors. It was acknowledged that simply being assigned a mentor was not enough for many beginning teachers as these mentors themselves might sometimes be demoralised, ‘burnt-out’, or not possessing the requisite skill needed to effectively operate in a challenging school setting. One participant suggested the mentor system “didn’t quite work out for me, I had a mentor who ended up changing jobs mid-Term Two so I kind of lost that mentor because of that – but I know that other people developed a really close relationship with their mentor so they were going into a classroom every week for a day, if not more days”. Similarly, another participant stressed that “when you come into a community and it’s new to you, it’s crucial that your induction is done well. That the ongoing support is there. That you have mentors, you have coaches”. The notion of coaching appears to be used interchangeably with mentoring as there are “coaches for young staff, behaviour coaches, pedagogy coaches, upskilling leaders, psychologists be sent out regularly to attend to the emotional and mental wellbeing of the staff”. Interestingly, there was in some cases a suggestion mentoring and coaching needed to go beyond the school walls and that some form of ‘community of practice’ served as a means of bringing ‘isolated’ teachers together:

- “If you bring people together, there’s less isolation, which means a higher likelihood you’re going to have people who are wanting to go and work in those schools. Because it’s not as isolated as you would have thought”.

6 Implications and Key Findings

6.1 KEY FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE 3 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How have Australian workforce initiatives over the past 20 years sought to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers within historically hard-to-staff schools/areas?

It is clear from an analysis of both Phase One and Phase Two datasets that while specific strategies of how to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers vary between initiatives, there are the following commonalities and overlapping approaches:

- Most programs (107 of 147 audited) were administered by either Government (48), Universities (43) or collaborations between both Government and University (16).
- While there was a combination of Government initiatives across federal, state and territory sectors, most university-based programs involved non-G8 institutions.
- The focus of most programs (86) targeted pre-service teachers with either a regional, remote, or Indigenous focus.
- Many initiatives targeted mechanisms that incentivised teachers to move into, or stay within a hard-to-staff school location. These included rural/remote schools, LSES schools, the early childhood sector, and schools offering specific subject areas such as STEM.
- A smaller number of programs targeted mechanisms that incentivised distinct types of teachers to enter the teaching profession such as pre-service teachers/teachers who are Indigenous or who are from specific locations, teachers in specific subject areas and future school leaders.
- While approximately one third of all programs relied solely on financial incentives (48), many programs used a combination of enticements such as financial, professional, enhanced career trajectories and superior working conditions in the form of salary loadings, subsidised housing, or extra leave loadings.

What impact have these initiatives had on teaching and how have school leaders perceived their impact?

Many of the hard-to-staff initiatives analysed lacked any formal evaluation. Of the 147 programs audited as part of Phase One, only 15 were identified as having been substantially evaluated. Hence it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from this first data set in relation to

impact. The project was however able to utilise Phase Two to better understand impact across the areas of Program design and organisation, Preparation (i.e., Initial Teacher Education), Recruitment and Induction, Retention and Attrition, and Leadership.

- Impact of initiatives on teaching may be strengthened through centralised policy that aligns with specific hard-to-staff school contexts.
- Impact of individual initiatives on teaching is heavily influenced by the degree to which sustainable resourcing is available.
- School leaders raised the notion of stress points where a particular local issue or policy impacts on other untended areas of the hard-to-staff school setting. An example given being the ‘transfer’ or ‘points system’ in remote locations which leads each year to large numbers of experienced staff being transferred back to urban settings and these staff being replaced largely by inexperienced graduate teachers.

What policy lessons can be taken from these initiatives?

Those interviewed requested a desire for more sustainable resourcing and for more long-term support for successful programs. The interviews highlight that while different hard-to-staff locations present completely different sets of complexities, school leaders across different locations are often required to respond to centralised policy directives with little regard to localised context. Key policy issues raised by both leaders and teachers include:

- The need for targeted policy that overtly supports the recruitment process through promoting the benefits of teaching in hard-to-staff locations.
- Policies that ensure teachers’/leaders’ wellbeing and working conditions are supported in different ways depending on the context of the school.
- The need for centralised policies and procedures to embrace innovative approaches in terms of recruiting or retaining key staff, particularly convert high performing teachers from contracts to full time appointments.
- A strong preference amongst school leaders for a degree of school autonomy in terms of hiring.
- Recognition that changes in government and subsequent jurisdictional changes in policy, at times make it hard for school leaders to maintain momentum, consistency, and fidelity of specific strategies.
- Wellbeing and working conditions of all school staff as a core policy issue of major significance.

- Further research holds the potential to continue to inform policy of productive means of recruitment, retention, and attrition.

6.2 GENERAL IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

1. Robust evidence-based evaluations of existing programs may assist in better determining the effectiveness of individual initiatives and allow for the sharing of successful approaches of attracting, preparing, and retaining teachers in hard-to-staff schools.

The first phase (*Audit*) of the project examined existing evaluations and reports across a range of initiatives specifically focusing on teacher workforce shortages within hard-to-staff school contexts. This phase of the project found there were limited formal evaluations and in cases where there had been an appraisal, evidence for the effectiveness of the various approaches undertaken was generally weak and often relied on anecdotal, and or informal data.

2. Robust evidence-based understandings of teacher attrition and its impact in different geographic and socioeconomic locations may provide a more comprehensive appreciation of why so many teachers leave the profession prematurely.

A common theme across the second phase (*Interviews*) was the reality that many teachers choose to either leave the hard-to-staff setting and return to ‘easier’ urban or independent schools at the first opportunity, or choose to leave the profession all together. While the interviews provide a wide range of anecdotal accounts as to why this occurs, the exact numbers and reasons for why teachers leave the profession are difficult to determine within the Australian context. This issue is exacerbated by a lack of national data collection on teacher attrition.

3. Understanding the retention of teachers at key ‘walking point’ moments would assist policymakers in designing longer-term, more impactful interventions to attract teachers towards hard-to-staff schools (especially when they are considering leaving the profession).

This point overlaps with the implication outlined above and suggests the benefits of a stronger evidence-based understanding of these ‘walking points’ and a more fine-grained understanding of just-in-time solutions.

4. While the area of financial incentives and bursaries is commonly used as a means of recruiting and retaining teachers in hard-to-staff schools, the underlying dynamics of using this form of compensatory enticement are complex and at times poorly understood.

Despite research on the success of financial incentives or bursaries being relatively weak, there was almost universal acceptance (particularly across at the remote schooling sector), that some kind of financial enticement is required to attract and retain suitable staff. The range, shape, and form these financial incentives takes varies (i.e., sign-on bonuses, salary loadings or subsidised housing) while also differing across states and jurisdictions in terms of implementation.

- The success of financial incentives appears stronger in terms of recruitment compared to retention.
- What is often missing in the discussion is the fact that if financial incentives are to be offered, especially in areas such as Mathematics and Science, there is a need for these incentives to be large enough to compete with the salaries from rivalling professions.
- It was suggested that some incentives such as rental assistance and cost of living loadings may potentially encourage relocation into hard-to-staff schools (i.e., for existing teachers).

5: The importance of non-financial incentives as a means of complementing established compensatory models.

The interviews unambiguously highlight how teachers feel rewarded when their knowledge and expertise is valued with the some interviewed suggesting that intrinsic (non-financial) incentives are an important aspect in retaining staff. Examples include, time-release for professional development, the opportunity for further study, time release for additional curriculum development, being treated like an esteemed colleague and a member of the local community are all valued by teachers and serve as evidence of a supportive school culture.

6. The importance of continued support of existing successful initiatives

It was suggested that the sector suffers from a cycle of new initiatives often using similar concepts or models used in the past. Several leaders argued for continued support for ongoing initiatives, rather than recreating approaches already trailed before an existing program has a chance to develop or to be evaluated for impact.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

1. Teacher and school leadership ‘burn-out’ are increasingly seen as major factors leading to many teachers/leaders leaving the profession prematurely.

The report documents how additional resources enhance hard-to-staff school leaders' capacity to:

- improve school culture (a major factor in teacher attrition),
- ease the challenging working conditions and workloads of teachers, such as providing reduced load/timetables for teachers in hard-to-staff schools,
- provide more administrative staff so teachers' work can be 'quarantined' for teaching.

2. Multi-faceted benefits flow from increased opportunities for school leaders and university Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs to work more collaboratively.

The project documents several examples where strong partnerships between hard-to-staff schools and individual Initial Teacher Education programs produced long lasting and tangible impact via:

- co-designed mentorship for early career teachers,
- experiential on-the-ground professional learning opportunities for preservice teachers,
- targeted employment opportunities for graduate teachers.

3. Teacher recruitment, preparation and retention are all enhanced when the central role of both 'context' and 'place' are part of pre-and in-service teacher development.

Several interviews conducted in the project explicitly note the degree to which both Initial Teacher Education and school leaders of hard-to-staff schools develop teachers in ways that

- focus on the geo-social particularities of their schools, e.g., metropolitan, regional and remote,
- focus on the multidimensional nature of poverty and disadvantage to avoid deficit, stereotype and generalisations about students and their families,
- focus on diversity, such as including Indigenous education and cultural diversity,
- focus on additional high-needs areas such as contemporary classroom management strategies (i.e., restorative justice), trauma-informed learning and teacher/student mental health and wellbeing.

4. The crucial role leaders and mentors play in supporting teachers' feelings of belonging to a school-based community of practice and feeling professionally and personally supported.

The interviews included numerous anecdotes of the importance to teachers of belonging to a personal and professional community of practice and how this contributed to the degree teachers felt supported at critical times. For teachers in these hard-to-staff settings, there appears to be a clear correlation between job satisfaction and feelings of agency within their own classrooms, in school-based decision making and feeling connected to other education/teacher professional networks. Feeling connected significantly increases teachers' sense of well-being and likelihood of either accepting or continuing a position within a hard-to-staff school. Benefits include:

- teachers' sense of well-being, including their sense of being valued by the school,
- teachers' professional knowledge, and hence their confidence, enhanced by being part of professional networks,
- at least partly overcoming the isolation of teaching in remote and or regional settings,
- improved career prospects for school leaders and teachers who experience expeditious career trajectories and promotion.

5. While mentoring is perceived as key in supporting teachers in hard-to-staff schools, the consistency and quality of mentoring varies.

The research unearthed a degree of tension created by repeat cycles of large numbers of inexperienced teachers arriving at the start of each school year. A number of those interviewed noted, not only the high demand for mentors required to support these new teachers, but also the varied quality of mentoring available in some settings. School leaders would benefit therefore by:

- some form of additional professional development in terms of the selection, training, and support of mentors,
- mechanisms that empower or reward quality mentors through acknowledging the workload implications of the role.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Grey Literature

Introduction

This report provided an overview of an audit of initiatives targeting the hard-to-staff schooling sector. This audit provided the foundation for a more fine-grained analysis of how universities, governments, departmental jurisdictions, and local schools have framed various schemes around notions of how to better prepare, recruit, and/or retained teachers within the contexts of these hard-to-staff settings. The initial audit collated available information regarding each initiative and, where possible, accessed related evaluations, reports, and/or research papers. The audit grouped initiatives under seven broad headings (Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Leadership, Early Childhood, Financial Incentives, Government programs, Indigenous programs, and Miscellaneous).

This appendix provides a snapshot of the ‘grey literature’ that was accessed while undertaking the audit. While the audit initially grouped the hard-to-staff initiatives chronologically under seven headings, it was decided to reduce this number to five themes as these more closely mapped back to the broad recommendations emerging from our analysis. The following discussion uses a reduced group of five areas consisting of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Leadership, Early Childhood, Regional/Rural/Remote, and Miscellaneous (which was a broad amalgamation of various other categories). It is important to note that the following ‘grey literature’ has been sourced from a diverse range of non-commercial sources and differs significantly from ‘black literature’ that takes shape within the commercial peer-reviewed publication sector.

Grouping 1: Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

Demand and Supply of Primary and Secondary School Teachers in Australia. (July 2003). MCEETYA

http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/demand.pdf

Category: ITE (+ teacher shortages and leadership)

In September 1997, CESCEO established a 'Working Party on Supply and Demand for Teachers' to prepare a report on supply and demand for teachers in association with the then Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA). This appears to have been their last Demand and Supply Report (2003).

At that time, teacher graduations were expected to be sufficient to meet the demand for new teachers until 2005 and the national teaching labour market was broadly in balance. However, the report noted there were recruitment difficulties regarding several secondary teaching specialisations, including mathematics, science, information and communications technology (ICT), and to a lesser extent languages other than English (LOTE), as well as staffing needs in rural and remote areas. The report also identified specific challenges, including how to attract and retain the right 'types' of teachers e.g., those with particular specialisations or abilities. In addition, the report predicted teacher shortages due to an aging teaching workforce. This was also perceived as a leadership issue since principals were substantially older than the average teacher and their loss of skills and expertise posed potential leadership secession problems. It noted that the potential for retirement by a significant numbers of older teachers highlighted the need for better policies.

To understand the issues more fully the report called for improved qualitative and quantitative research, for example the kind the Department of Education, Science and Training undertook through the Quality Teaching Program, which involved surveys on factors that are important in attracting people to a career in teaching as well as factors that are important in retaining teachers in the profession and those perceived to influence teacher resignations such as job satisfaction.

The final section of the report lists some initiatives from each State that address teaching shortages; the initiative common to all States at that time were scholarships for pre-service teachers in subject areas where there were shortages, for instance, cash incentives to do placements in regional or rural towns and promises of employment. There is no detail in this report on the impact of any of the scholarships, either in the short or long term.

Committee for the Review of Teaching and Teacher Education - Australia. (2003).

Australia's teachers: Australia's future: advancing innovation, science, technology and mathematics: background data and analysis. Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training.

Category: ITE (+ STEM, teacher shortages, recruitment, and retention)

This report is the third volume of a three-volume report centring on the theme of strengthening recruitment, preparation, and retention within science, mathematics and technology education. Specifically, the report focuses on ‘Background Data and Analysis’ presented in a manner that identifies policies and approaches that potentially can increase the likelihood of a person with a science, technology, or mathematics background selecting a career in teaching. There are several recurring themes that are familiar within a contemporary context, such as recruitment (or being attracted to a new career in teaching for those with existing careers in science, mathematics, and technology), promotion of a culture of innovation, and whole school reforms that include a renewed focus on all areas of the curriculum. Other themes are clearly situated in the rapid advances occurring in the transition to the new Millennium (i.e., the time of publication - 2003) and the positioning of technology as a panacea for learning and new forms of school culture. Hence, there are calls for schools to shift to ‘outward-looking learning centres’ that facilitate innovation and the forming of new partnerships within the community through the integration of technology.

It is important to place this report within the context of a renewed focus and debate surrounding a national curriculum which was formalised five years later by the Rudd government and the establishment of the independent National Curriculum Board in 2008. Hence, it is possible to see how these influences impact how the report frames the need for schools/educational systems to adapt to structural change, such as many practicing teachers reaching retirement in the upcoming decade, the emergence of new and elevated sets of professional teaching standards for teachers, and an increased need for all teachers to undertake on-going professional learning and development. In short, this report can be seen as a call for schools (enriched by new waves of teachers in science, technology, and mathematics) to serve as nation-wide platforms of innovation. Importantly, the report stresses the need for systemic change at the jurisdictional level and what is interpreted as system-wide support that includes “leadership both for and within schools” (p. xvii).

The relevance of this report to our current project centres on the themes of making the career of teaching more attractive, the prioritising of science, technology, and mathematics education (not only in terms of more teachers but also more students who complete Year 12 studying physics, chemistry, biology and advanced mathematics), a renewed focus on both the

primary and secondary sectors, and a more fine grained understanding of teacher workforce-demand by region and specialisation.

Owen, S., Kos, J. & McKenzie, P. (2008). *Staff in Australia's Schools: Teacher Workforce Data and Planning Processes in Australia*. Australian Government, Dept. Education, Employment and Workplace Relations: Canberra ACT.

https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=tll_misc

Category: ITE

This report was commissioned by what was at the time the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and was part of the Australian School Teacher and Leader initiative. In a similar manner to many of the later national teaching workforce data collection exercises, this report attempts to make available a snapshot of the Australian teacher workforce in order to feed into decision around future teacher supply, in particular in terms of long-term policy as well as approaches to teacher preparation and recruitment. The data used in this report is based on a combination of 100 key stakeholder focus groups involving about 350 participants across all States and Territories.

The key points of interests in terms of our current project centres on the report's broad suggested priorities, which it recommends for Australian teacher workforce data and planning. The first is to promote a multi-factored and diverse, decentralised system of ITE and employment that ensures decisions are made on the basis of local data and circumstances. The second priority the report recommends is that there be more collaboration on teacher workforce issues at the national, state and local levels, due to the fact that many of the issues are shared both across sectors and across geographical locations. The example provided is that attempts that seek "to improve teacher recruitment in any one state or sector, will struggle to achieve satisfactory outcomes if not enough teachers have been trained or there are more attractive careers elsewhere" (p. 94).

In addition to these two broad recommendations, the report emphasised the need to improve decision and policy making in relation to the teaching workforce through access to accurate, timely, and relevant data as well as the critical nature of having teacher workforce data available at the national level. The report concludes with a call for workforce planning data to be a collective endeavour involving all stakeholders and that the data collected must be

used to make evidence-based decisions and actions in relation to improving the quality of education for all Australian students.

Patton, W., Lee Hong, A., Lampert, J., Burnett, B. & Anderson, J. (2012). *Report into the retention and graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in initial teacher education. More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative, University of South Australia, Australia.*

<https://eprints.qut.edu.au/57901/1/MATSITI-ACDE-2012-Report.pdf>

Category: ITE (+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teacher workforce)

Patton et al.'s (2012) report into the retention and graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in ITE made four recommendations based on their exploratory study of program and enrolment data as well as focus groups and interviews. Despite the availability of research on the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at university, the experiences of those enrolled ITE is less well documented despite the fact that university Schools of Education are still struggling to attract and retain students.

Strategies that contributed to student success emphasised support during the transition to university as well as support for both academic and social/cultural life within universities. Other strategies associated with success were financial support when required and cultural awareness training for non-Indigenous staff. The importance of Indigenous Higher Education Centers and their partnership with faculties were also identified. Identified barriers that were noted included common 'walking points' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These include during the first year, examinations, and placements experiences.

Areas of further exploration identified in the study included: the collation of longitudinal tracking of students to better understand the progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students from enrolment to graduation; identification of common 'walking points' for the development of more targeted support; the inclusion of exit views to better understand the experiences of non-graduating students; the development of institutional actions plans to guide strategic decisions making and program implementation; and professional development of all academic and professional staff in the areas of cultural safety.

Reid, J., White, S., Green, B., Lock, G., Cooper, M. & Hastings, W. (2012). *Teacher Education for Rural and Regional Australia, Volume 2.*

<https://eprints.qut.edu.au/109110/1/109110.pdf>

Category: ITE (+ teacher shortages, recruitment, and retention)

The TERRAnova project (renewing Teacher Education for Rural and Regional Australia) was a three-year Australian Research Council funded study of “schools and communities where sustainable practices around staff recruitment and retention had led to satisfaction from community members, parents, staff and bureaucracies” (p. 1). The project identified successful teacher education and recruitment strategies for preparing, attracting, and retaining quality teachers for rural and remote schools. It also provided identified and described staff retention practices that were successful in particular schools and communities to address the ‘staffing churn’ in regional and remote schools (p. 2).

Based on a national online survey and longitudinal follow up interviews conducted during 2008-2009, 20 case studies of rural schools identified as effective in retaining good teaching staff formed the basis of a publicly available report (Volume 2) archived through the Queensland University of Technology, Charles Sturt University, and Edith Cowan University e-prints systems along with multiple published peer reviewed journal articles. As part of the case studies, an overview of the community (with attention placed to the geography, economy, and demography) and overview of the school was provided. Observations, conclusions, and future challenges were offered as part of each individual case study, but not generalisable findings were offered. This would be in line with the conceptual framing of rural social space, which posits that “[r]ural social space, by definition, is not a generalised or universal concept – it is the particular set of events, or practices, performed in a particular place over time, that have produced the ‘place’ that we experience in the present” (p. 3).

Some of the successful approaches for recruiting and retaining teachers included: a supporting working culture within the school; positive formal and informal mentoring of staff; positive student teacher relationships defined by quality teaching and high expectations and aspirations within a particular school; high staff morale; and staff leadership opportunities.

Notably, in one of the remote school case studies in the report, a completely different set of approaches was taken in which a level of staff turnover was viewed as a good thing, particularly if it meant that teachers who were not committed to the community could move on. In this school, the attraction of the right the ‘sort of person’ was central to the recruitment

and retention of teachers. Thus, the report emphasised the ways ITE can better prepare beginning teachers for rural and remote contact and the renewal and integration of existing programs such as ‘Beyond the Line’ within ITE programs.

Teachers Matter: Models for Effective Teaching in LSES Schools. (2014). The Australian Council of Deans and Social Ventures Australia.

<https://www.socialventures.com.au/assets/Teachers-Matter-Report-web.pdf>

Category: ITE (+ teacher recruitment and retention in LSES schools)

The Australian Council of Deans’ report, supported by Social Ventures Australia (SVA), titled ‘Teachers Matter: Models for Effective Teaching in LSES Schools’ (2014) publicly disseminated findings through an executive summary that comprised a literature review and audit of current practices for preparing pre-service teachers within Australian ITE programs. Emergent findings in the report identified further work be done to understand ITE curriculum practices to prepare pre-service teachers to work in LSES school settings. This included the need for an online repository of resources for best practice teaching in LSES school settings as well as national communities of practice that could support cross-institutional stakeholders to share best practices.

Later work continued by SVA, ‘Growing Great Teachers’, produced 11 case studies initiatives aimed at improving the attraction and retention of early career teachers in LSES schools based on a review of literature and interview with 52 early career teachers, schools leaders, organisation, and key government personal. The case studies identified the key strategies in addressing this issue as induction, mentoring programs, professional learning across a variety of areas, targeted curriculum, and placement in LSES schools during ITE prior to taking up employment.

Weldon P. (2015). *The Teacher Workforce in Australia: Supply, Demand and Data Issues.* Australian Council for Educational Research.

<https://research.acer.edu.au/policyinsights/2/>

Category: ITE (+ teacher workforce)

This is a recent report that highlighted the severity of teacher shortages in secondary schools, with an oversupply in primary schools, especially in metro schools. The shortages in secondary schools impacted particular subject areas and regional and remote schools especially in Victoria, NSW, Queensland, and Western Australia. Shortages are predicted based on increased student numbers as well as the ratio of women to men, of part-time to full-time employees, and the replacement of those who leave the profession. As part-time roles increase, the number of teachers required to fill positions will also increase. This is one of the few reports that discusses gender disparities amongst teachers; not just fewer male primary teachers but lack of female teachers in subject areas such as Physics, Chemistry, ICT, and Maths.

The report also drills down in other areas of teacher shortage: the extent of out-of-field teaching comes from the Staff in Australia's Schools survey (SiAS), which the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) ran for the Australian Government for the third time in 2013. Out-of-field teaching in some subjects is likely to become more acute over the next 10 years if the forecasted rising demand for teachers is not addressed on the supply side. Out-of-field teaching is particularly an issue for smaller schools as well as for regional and remote schools and in the lower year levels because specialised teachers are often used for the senior years because of the importance placed on Year 12 results. This report also highlights some recent issues related to ITE: at the time of this report numbers for ITE were uncapped allowing ITE providers to enrol as many students as they wanted. Low ATARS or entry requirements are notes as potentially impacting the quality of graduate teachers.

Anderson, P., Rennie, J., White, S., & Darling, A., (2019). *Improving teacher education for better Indigenous outcomes - PREpared- Partnering for Remote Education Experience*. (Final report May 2019). Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Australia.

https://eprints.qut.edu.au/197729/1/SD15-5215_FinalReport_PREpared_Anderson_2019%2B2.pdf

Category: ITE (+ Indigenous schools in remote settings)

The PREpared – Partnering for Remote Education Experience project (formerly known as Improving Teacher Education for Better Indigenous Outcomes) – was an initiative seed-funded by the Department of Education (formerly the Office of Learning and Teaching) in 2016–2017. It aimed to respond to staffing needs of remote Indigenous schools by providing

an evidence-based ‘go to’ website for ITE based on a literature review and interviews. The project was aimed at initial teacher preparation; specifically producing highly trained and culturally responsive teacher.

The literature review specifically mentions the sparsity of programs designed to prepare teachers for regional or remote schools and ad hoc, unsupported practicum placements offered by mostly urban metro-centric universities. The authors cite financial and housing barriers to regional placements as well as professional and personal isolation.

The website materials that were the outcome of this project were designed to produce teaching graduates with a strong foundational understanding of remote Indigenous education grounded in professional teaching experience and strong theoretical and pedagogical knowledge, especially in terms of preparing teachers for work in rural, regional, and remote Australia. It was recommended that in the development of any remote education experience, the school and community should be central to the decision-making of the program. It is unclear if this project was evaluated or if its impact was determined since only two years later this website www.PREpared.com is no longer live. There is no information on how many or what types of people have accessed or used these resources.

Roberts, P. & Downes, N. (2020). Incentivising the Profession: A national mapping of incentives to attract and retain staff in Australian non-metropolitan communities. Rural Education and Communities research group. University of Canberra. Centre for Sustainable Communities Monograph Series No.2

https://researchsystem.canberra.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/41934762/Roberts_Downes_2020_Incentivising_the_Profession.pdf

Category: ITE (+ recruitment in regional, rural and remote areas)

This report confirms the long standing issue of teacher shortages in Australian rural, remote, and isolated schools and identifies the fact that most educational jurisdictions have in some way used various forms of incentives as a means of recruiting teachers. While financial incentives such as increased salary and relocation compensation are by far the most popular strategies, other incentives include enhanced professional conditions.

The report makes the case for greater compulsory units within ITE course that in some way support a pre-service teacher’s exposure and likelihood of accepting a teaching position

in a non-metropolitan location. The report is critical of an overreliance on incentivising a rural/remote teaching position through monetary motivational drivers as it is argued this totally ignores the unique professional context of teaching within these communities. The report goes as far as to suggest the current dominance of financial incentives as a policy arm of recruitment only intensifies and aggravates staffing shortages. The logic to this argument is that while in the short-term financial incentives may undoubtedly attract new teachers, “these same teachers remain highly vulnerable to leaving after their mandated duration of service is complete” (p. 4). The key points of interest in terms of our current project is a line of reasoning centred on a different calibration of compensatory professional practice incentives. In addition, the report makes the important point that the current model calculates perceived remoteness and adjusts the incentives accordingly, which produces a ‘compensatory’ mind set of perceived disadvantage across such locations.

Grouping 2: Leadership

Rural and Remote Education Leadership Development: A Pipeline Framework. n.d.

Country Education Project

<https://cep.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CEP-Rural-and-Remote-Education-Pipeline-Leadership-Project-Outline.pdf>

Category: Rural and remote education leadership (+ non-government organisations)

The 'Rural and Remote Education Leadership – A Pipeline Framework' program developed by Country Education Partnership (CEP) is an example of a specific program that addresses the recruitment and retention of education leaders across rural and remote communities. Country Education Partnership (CEP) is an example of a not-for-profit organisation working to support quality education within rural and remote communities. CEP single out “the complexity of an education leadership role within rural and remote communities often having to combine administration tasks with a teaching load, as well as high community involvement expectations” (p. 4) as being one factor contributing to the difficulties of attracting and retaining staff. CEP cites a lack of quality education leadership initiatives designed for rural and remote education leaders. In response they have developed a two to three year program that focuses on key areas identified as critical for quality rural and remote education leaders. The program uses forums, workshops, and action research cycles with mentor and support personnel from within the education system governing the region/diocese.

Productivity Commission (2011). Education and Training Workforce: Schools.

Department of Education: Tasmania

Category: Leadership (+ quality teaching and teacher shortages)

This report is somewhat unique as it argues that the aging workforce and retirement is by far the biggest contributor to teacher separations. According to this report, managing recruitment and retention strategies to ensure the appropriate skills are available for rural and/or remote schools remains as the biggest recruitment and retention challenge. Secondary and senior secondary sectors are mentioned as having particular shortages, as are relief teachers and specialist staff such as school psychologists.

At the time of this report, incentives in Tasmania included: Partnerships in Teaching Excellence Scholarships (PiTE) (study payment to alleviate student debt, grant permanency and provide mentoring and a laptop); Professional Experience in Isolated and Rural Schools (PIERS) (provide travel expenses and accommodation on placement); and Isolated Location Incentive (financial incentives). There is mention of leadership capabilities in this report which includes a small section about the expectation that principals will have expertise in times of systemic change, including further role development and training that is required to ensure these services are delivered in an efficient and economical way whilst maximising the principal's role in educational leadership.

Halsey, J. & Australia. Department of Education and Training. (2018). *Independent review into regional, rural and remote education : Final report*. Department of Education and Training, [Canberra, A.C.T.].

<https://www.dese.gov.au/quality-schools-package/resources/independent-review-regional-rural-and-remote-education-final-report>

Category: Leadership (+ regional, rural, and remote)

This report was commissioned by the Minister for Education and Training with the goal of independently identifying the key issues and challenges impact upon the learning outcomes of Australia's regional, rural, and remote students. The review was tasked with considering innovative approaches and mechanisms that could be used to better support entry/access to education, successful student learning while at school, and a more productive transition to

either further employment or further study. The usefulness of this report for our current project lies in the report's attempt to provide an aspirational, achievement, and opportunity raising blueprint that focuses overtly on non-urban students both while they are at school and also as they subsequently move into further study, training, or employment. The report makes 11 recommendations each linked to a key priority area:

- establishing a national focus,
- leadership, teaching, curriculum, and assessment,
- information and communications technology, and
- transitioning into and out of school.

Importantly, the report submits over 50 tangible examples of how the recommendations could potentially be implemented with the foundation of the recommendations, drawing both on an extensive literature review and 340 submissions from interested parties. It would appear that the while the findings and recommendations from this report are not controversial and can be found scattered throughout the rural education literature, the report did however highlight the stark disparity between rural and metropolitan student outcomes, and in doing so raised the profile of regional, rural, and remote education as a policy issue. The Australian Government subsequently accepted all 11 recommendations of review.

Education Council. (11 December 2020). National Initiatives to Support Teaching and School Leadership.

<http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/PDF/National%20Initiatives%20to%20Support%20Teaching%20and%20School%20Leadership.pdf>

Category: Leadership (+ supporting and retaining school leaders through national initiative)

This document aims to guide Education Ministers in commissioning work at a national level to support quality teaching, school leadership, and the teacher workforce. It responds to the National School Reform Agreements' commitment to developing a national teacher workforce strategy. It particularly notes the span of the teacher lifecycle, which includes teacher preparation and can extend through to leadership positions. This requires sustained effort with a long-term focus. The effect and impact of initiatives implemented today may not be fully felt for several years. It repeats the main areas of teacher shortage, which include regional, rural and remote areas, specific subject specialisations, and career stages. The status

of teachers is notes, with the report encouraging activities that recognise teaching to ‘bust the myths’ around teaching.

This document recommends a national collaboration where responsibility and levers are shared between jurisdictions and the Australian Government. It cites several arguments for this including:

- efficiency is gained from a national approach through reduced duplication of effort
- consistency in approaches enhances quality and/or equity of outcomes
- sharing of information will assist responses to key opportunities and challenges.

It suggests any initiatives should be based on meaningful, authentic engagement with teachers and the broader schooling sector as well as taking a robust and evidence-based approach rationale and considering whether a proposed action is a sustainable use of resources. The document supports the development of the Australian Teacher Workforce Data (ATWD) collection, which represent a major development in the collection of national teacher workforce data to create a longitudinal view of the career pathways of all teachers and school leaders across Australia.

This is also one of the few documents that identifies the need to attract a diverse teaching workforce with the capacity to adapt to Australia’s social and geographic diversity as well as incentives for the return of qualified teachers who have left the workforce which can be a key consideration in ensuring adequate supply.

Grouping 3: Early Childhood

New South Wales Government. (2013). *Rural and Remote Education A blueprint for action.*

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/media/documents/Rural-and-Remote-Education-Blueprint-accessible.pdf>

Category: Early Childhood, Leadership (+ rural and remote, quality teaching)

This document constitutes a NSW government policy document that has grown out the fact that students in rural and remote areas of NSW underperform across all educational indicators when compared to students in metropolitan locations. The document is the final

product of a review commissioned by the NSW government who asked the Centre for Educational Statistics and Evaluation to provide explanations for the lower educational outcomes of rural students and to review key initiatives implemented both nationally and internationally to address this challenge. The main pillars of the policy blueprint are structured around quality Early Childhood education, quality teaching, greater curriculum access and school community partnership and connections. In essence the document consists of a series of explicit actions linked to each of these objectives under an overarching notion of maintaining high expectations and developing local solutions.

Importantly, the document stresses that the geographical gap is not unique to NSW and the phenomena of rural students underperforming is evident on PISA and OECD benchmarking scales and tests. The key points of interest in terms of our current project is that the document stress that “there are many gaps in our knowledge about what works. Few programs are evaluated and, where evaluations are carried out, they tend to be of poor quality” (p. 4) with the report stressing the need for programs and their evaluations to address the long-term nature issues and to work within broader strategic policy directives of Government reforms.

Productivity Commission. (2011). *Early Childhood Development Workforce, Research Report*, Melbourne.

<https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/education-workforce-early-childhood/report>

Category: Early Childhood (+ quality teaching)

This report focused on the provision of quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) services to children with additional needs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children in rural and remote locations. Improving the quality of the early childhood workforce is noted as important because of ‘ongoing concerns that one quarter of Australian children enter primary school with vulnerabilities in one or more of five key developmental domains’. Its aim was to provide advice on workforce planning, development and structure. It identified early childhood worker shortages, ‘poor quality training’ and the need for more highly qualified workers through a National Quality Agenda (through the National Quality Framework). It recommends ways to alleviate regulatory burdens, including waivers to childcare centres that have difficulty meeting these proposed higher qualifications and resources for centres to enable appropriate training of their staff in the new regulatory arrangements and their effective implementation. However, there is recognition in this report

that requiring higher qualifications from the early childhood workforce would also potentially lead to shortages (the difficulty of supplying that more qualified workforce, especially in regional and remote communities). Recommendations are on the improvement of quality rather than on supplying a great workforce, and the report emphasises that ‘provid[ing] appropriate services for [the most disadvantaged] children must be prioritised so that the gap in outcomes between them and other children is minimised, not exacerbated. There is some acknowledgement in the report that the development of integrated early childhood development centres provided new opportunities for improved service delivery but may require additional leadership and cross-disciplinary professional development for staff for them to be effective.

ECEC wages are too low to attract and retain a sufficient number of skilled ECEC workers. The relatively low level of pay and conditions in ECEC, combined with limited returns to career progression, have been seen to cause recruitment and retention problems in ECEC. As a result, many workers find opportunities in other sectors more attractive, exiting the ECEC workforce. Retaining ECEC teachers is a problem as many leave to work in the primary school sector where they enjoy superior pay and conditions of tenure - turnover is also a problem for Indigenous-focused ECEC services and services in rural and remote areas where significant difficulties filling vacant positions and retaining staff are reported. These shortages reflect challenges unique to these services rather than challenges characteristic of the ECEC sector as a whole.

This report is an example of discussion papers over the past 20 years that have raised concerns about changes to the early childhood sector including issues related to poorly paid, under-qualified, under-valued workers. One issue raised is the disparity between conditions and qualifications of directors and teachers (university educated) and more poorly paid workers and the insufficient financial incentives to obtain the additional qualifications necessary for career progression. The report notes staff turnover and skills shortages as a significant issue in rural and remote areas as well as for Indigenous-focused ECEC services.

Grouping 4: Regional, Rural, and Remote

The State of Queensland (Department of Education). (2003). Queensland Government Rural and Remote Framework for Action 2003-2005.

Category: Rural and remote education

The Queensland Department of Education Rural and Remote Education Framework for Action outlined a commitment and strategic direction to improve rural and remote education services across Queensland. With more than half of all state schools in Queensland located in rural and remote areas and enrolling one third of all students, the framework recognizes the diversity of teaching and learning contexts across the State. The framework documented: “Teachers and principals in rural and remote schools face specific challenges including working with multi-age classes, increased administrative responsibilities, a high degree of graduate placement and teacher turnover, and adjusting to life in a geographically remote location” (p. 4).

Among the priorities and initiatives included in the report, was the improved recruitment and retention of teachers in rural and remote area, a central challenge for the framework was to address the recruit and retention of high-quality teachers for rural and remote students. Action items stemming from this challenge included:

- The continuation culturally appropriate teacher education programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students based in remote communities as part of the Teaching Education Program (RATEP) program.
- The continuation of scholarships for Year 12 students from rural and remote communities to study an Education degree.
- A proposed initiative to better prepare pre-service teachers for the challenges of teaching and living in rural and remote areas.
- The continuation of the first offers strategy to fill teaching vacancies in rural and remote schools.
- A proposed action of a business case for an integrated recruitment package for teachers and their partners.
- A proposed action of the development of rural and remote community induction programs in collaboration with local governments, local P&C’s and the Isolated Children’s Parents’ Association (ICPA) to design ‘meet and greet’ workshops and social induction programs to engage teachers in local community life.
- The rollout and evaluation of Principal induction programs comprising workshops, coaching and mentoring support for newly appointed principals in rural and remote areas.

Lyons, T., Cooksey, R., Panizzon, D., Parnell, A, & Pegg, J. (2006). Science, ICT and mathematics education in rural and regional Australia: the SiMERR national survey: a research report prepared for the Department of Education, Science and Training. University of New England, National Centre of Science, Australia.

Category: STEM in regional, rural, and remote contexts, Teacher shortages, Recruitment

The National Centre of Science, Information and Communication Technology and Mathematics Education for Rural and Regional Australia (SiMERR Australia) was established at the University of New England in July 2004 and supported through a Federal government grant. The SiMERR National Survey is one of the Centre's major initiative and is built upon a number of 'hubs' based in universities across all states with the aim of supporting regional, rural and remote teachers, students and communities in terms of improved educational outcomes in Science, ICT, and Mathematics. The overarching aim of the SiMERR survey was to examine factors impacting on improved learning outcomes in such non-urban contexts.

It is important to note that this survey specifically focuses on the teaching of science, ICT and mathematics education in contrast to more generic or broader issues and examines both supply and demand factors and quantifies (with an agreed framework) the disparate needs of teaches across different non-urban locations and states. Such differences include the proportion on Indigenous students as a total of the overall student cohort, varying impact of socioeconomic background and the clear link between geographic isolation, economic circumstances, and the ability to attract and retain highly trained teachers for these locations. Of particular interest in terms of our current project is the survey's nuanced understanding of educational issues specific to geography and for example the almost total lack of professional learning/mentoring available outside Metropolitan areas. The survey highlights the need for greater material resourcing and personnel support across regional, rural, and remote contexts.

Lyons, T. (2006). Science, ICT and Mathematics Education in Rural and Regional Australia: State and Territory Case Studies. National Centre of Science, ICT and Mathematics Education for Rural and Regional Australia. University of New England.

Category: Regional, remote, STEM

This report is not primarily about recruiting, preparing, employing or supporting teachers but it is an example of an early report identifying specific needs of regional schools in the hard-to-staff subject areas of Science, ICT and Mathematics. The researchers present case studies

from a total of 112 interviews which were held in 38 rural and remote schools. Their findings represent an encapsulation of the benefits and barriers for teachers in regional and rural schools.

One section of the report does address views on attraction and retention of good teachers in these subject areas. The authors provide the usual recommendations including financial incentives including fuel, rent and food and travel subsidies (e.g. for teachers in remote schools, two airline tickets to fly home annually). Staff reported they needed better availability of relief teachers to enable them access to professional development activities, as these usually involved being away from the local area. On a positive note, teaching staff note the benefits when they felt supported and included in the community (feeling part of the community encourages teachers to stay).

Some teaching staff preferred a model that developed a career path and then encouraged them to take on a mentoring role, sharing their expertise across a number of schools. Teachers reported two important factors in improving retention rates – a focus on improving behaviour management to make learning possible: and investment in the stability and reputation of a school as a positive learning environment.

Successful recruitment programs take a long-term view of staffing and are therefore linked to stability in leadership and teaching positions. There were significant changes in leadership and senior staff mid-term; schools' funding formulas are based on student numbers that fluctuate every year, resulting in a lack of security for specialist teachers and the school programs. This report also notes the specific lack of Indigenous teachers in remote schools and the need for better cultural training. Challenges essentially calls for increased long term planning and security, effective infrastructure and professional development across the spectrum of schooling.

Grouping 5: Miscellaneous

Education Workforce Initiatives: Report. (2007). If you think education is expensive... Ministerial Taskforce, Western Australia.

Category: Miscellaneous - teacher shortages in remote and some metro areas, ITE; specific subject areas (STEM, design, languages), Indigenous education and teacher quality (Western Australia); leadership.

This report of the Ministerial Taskforce WA addresses teacher shortages. It identifies major shortages in secondary schools; regional more than metropolitan locations; particular subject areas, most notably the physical sciences, languages (particularly English), mathematics, design and technology, and home economics. At this time of writing the report claimed, ‘it is currently only in Western Australia that the general pool of available teachers has been shown to be steadily declining. In a remote Western Australian context it states that it is hard to recruit good teachers because the conditions and lifestyle is not as attractive as for other employees in the same locations (e.g. mining).

The Taskforce implemented incentives to attract graduates; to rural and remote locations; incentives to attract retirees back into the teaching workforce; scholarships to; attract high-achieving students into the public education system; the announcement of the possibilities for outstanding teachers to achieve high level salaries; and publicity campaigns to raise awareness of and the status of a career in teaching. Many of these are the same issue present in all reports over the 20 years of policy and reports. These initiatives are entirely warranted, but the Taskforce believes they need to go further and that there are other areas which equally call for immediate attention and action Leadership incentives included supporting:

- A better system of career progression for all staff within schools and colleges.
- A comprehensive, merit-based scholarship system aimed at attracting intelligent, high-achieving.
- Individuals into teaching and lecturing.
- The need for a considerably greater number of student practicums in regional areas.
- A much greater number of paraprofessionals in classrooms to support teachers.
- Attention to housing and workplace conditions for teachers and lecturers in regional and remote areas.

The report is somewhat unique in focusing on quality teaching which was a common discourse at the time. It mentions salaries, allowances and conditions and controversially recommends merit pay. This report came at a time when merit-based teacher bonuses were being widely discussed (e.g. paying teachers bonuses based on performance). It also highlights the importance of mentoring teachers to become school leaders, including planned succession.

Like other reports it notes the low status of teachers as an issue, citing ‘low’ salaries, ‘poor’ working conditions, student behaviour, a ‘hostile’ press. Some recommendations in this

report include improved teacher salaries and allowances; merit scholarships; better practicum arrangements (including regional placement support). It also comments on a decline in entry standards (generally) to teacher education programs. This theme of low ITE standards (ATARS) is consistent throughout many reports.

McKenzie, P., Weldon, P., Rowley, G., Martin, M. & Macmillan, J. Staff in Australia's Schools. (2013). Main Report on the Survey (April 2014).

Category: Miscellaneous - National Teacher workforce data

Commissioned by the Commission led by the Australian Government Department of Education and conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), the Staff in Australia's Schools (SiAS) 2013 survey provided a comprehensive overview of the Australian teacher workforce along with an evidence base to support in future workforce planning. The survey was the third of its kind, with previous reports conducted in both 2006-2007 and 2010. Data was collected on a variety of areas including: demographic background, current teaching position and work, professional learning activities, career paths in teaching, early career teachers, activities outside teaching, future career intentions, views on teaching and leadership, school staffing issues and teacher appraisal.

The sample included 5,213 Primary Teachers from 619 schools plus 765 Primary Leaders from 516 schools and 10,349 Secondary Teachers from 511 schools as well as 874 Leaders from 435 school. Notable findings relating to: demographic background, current teaching position and work, professional learning activities, career paths in teaching, early career teachers, activities outside teaching, future career intentions, views on teaching and leadership, school staffing issues and teacher appraisal were collated.

In relation to staffing issues there were large numbers of principals who described difficulties in suitably filling staff vacancies.

“About 4% of primary principals and 8% of secondary principals reported major difficulty in suitably filling staff vacancies during the past 12 months. These proportions are quite similar to those reported in SiAS 2007 and 2010 and confirm that recruitment difficulties continue to be more acute in secondary schools. A further 17% of primary principals reported a moderate difficulty in recruiting staff as did 27% of secondary principals” (p. xi).

Common strategies for dealing with staff shortages included:

“require[ing] teachers to teach outside their field of expertise (13% of government principals, 11% of Catholic and 9% of Independent), combine classes across year levels (7% across all sectors) or recruit teachers on short-term contracts (11%, 6% and 3% respectively). These strategies are also commonly used by secondary school principals, although to a much greater extent” (p. xii).

Willett, M, Segal, D & Walford, W. (2014). *National Teaching Workforce Dataset: project report*, Department of Education, Canberra.

<https://docs.education.gov.au/node/36285>

Category: Miscellaneous - report provides a data snapshot of the teaching workforce)

This was the first National Teaching Workforce Dataset (NTWD) with Ernst and Young being commissioned to compile the on the basis of data supplied by teacher employers and teacher accreditation/registration bodies. The broad goal of this three-year project was to provide deeper understanding through an aggregate data snapshot of the Australian Teacher workforce. Given the scope of data connected to 440, 313 individual members, it is not surprising that the report covers considerable diversity in terms of demographics, qualifications and employment. In essence, the report provides an analysis of 45 data points which is analysed in depth across the six focus areas of Teacher age, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, Principals, Teachers in LSES schools, Teacher qualifications Registered teachers that are not employed. Key insights from the report include the need for data collection cooperation strategies between sector employers and regulators, and the need to balance what is an enormous dataset of Australia’s largest profession so that it allows for rich analysis yet protects privacy concerns. The report is relatively data/statistically intense and hence the area of most interest in terms of our current project is the final section dealing with supply and demand measures and factors with three key areas identified as requiring further study and consideration:

- Understanding the drivers of the proportion of students who commence but do not complete initial teaching education courses may provide insight into how to increase completion rates.

- Understanding students who complete but do not register as a teacher, is another area that may warrant further investigation. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the lower entry requirements and cheaper course costs means that a number of students see this as the path to a tertiary qualification, if preferred options are closed.
- Determining changes to the rate at which teachers exit the workforce and how this is impacted by internal and external factors, will be critical to understand – especially as the teaching workforce ages (p. 5)

Appendix B

Detailed Interview Summary

Hard-to-staff (HTS) data themes from interviews – Overview

The following are excerpts from interviews undertaken from February 2021 to April 2021. Transcribed and themed by Stevie Browne.

Quotations were chosen from this themes document by the research team and were then vetted by the interviewee/participant before being included in the report.

Programs interviewed (21 participants):

- XXXXXX – 1 participant (University coordinator)
- XXXXXX – 6 participants (Director, principals, deputy principals, head of department, and teachers)
- XXXXXX - 1 participant (University coordinator)
- XXXXXX – 1 participant (Manager)
- XXXXXX – 1 participant (CEO)
- XXXXXX – 1 participant (Project manager)
- XXXXXX – 1 participant (Education consultant)
- XXXXXX – Multiple programs – 3 participants (Director and associates)
- XXXXXX – 1 participant (Teacher, currently on leave)
- XXXXXX – Multiple programs – 1 participant (Project manager)
- XXXXXX – 3 participants (University coordinators and executive principal/manager)
- XXXXXX – 1 participant (Principal in residence)

Other programs mentioned in the interviews:

- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX
- XXXXX

XXXXX

XXXXX

XXXXX

Project/Program:

XXXXX

Participant role: University coordinator

Date of interview: 16.02.2021

Time: 01:01:50

Synopsis of the program

Paraphrasing/summarising:

XXXXX ran for about 10 years and wrapped up in 2020. It was a XXXXX funded project. Schools and organisations could apply to XXXXX in Queensland to become a XXXXX. XXXXX applied and they got the XXXXX assigned to them, who believed that the XXXXX would be most effective in partnership with XXXXX.

“The way that the XXXXX operated was that it would take in students at the beginning of their Masters of Secondary Teaching. So it was only Secondary, it was only Masters, and in the initial days, it was only Science. High-end Mathematics, and Science... that was the original criteria for the intake of students, that morphed over time to include the Arts...English, Economics, and students who were ticking the other areas, the Humanities-Arts areas, were allowed into the program”.

‘Day to day operation: during teaching trimester, students would spend three days doing uni stuff and a day doing XXXXX stuff (workshops etc). It was a value-added program, not meant to replace what was done here at university, but was meant to supplement and add on...a richer variety of experiences. Learning the administrative parts of the teaching job, how to run the databases, how to access XXXXX. Just all that little, technical administrative stuff, that is an extra burden for teachers who are in their first year, trying to learn the job, they’d learn those skills prior to getting into the classroom. So, theoretically, they are more effective...they would do prac, but would be assigned a XXXXX school and assigned a mentor who was specifically trained to uphold the standards of XXXXX students”.

XXXXX used a demountable classroom to run the XXXXX program.

Summaries of emerging themes

Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Impact	1	Support and mentoring	(00:02:24) “We essentially work together to nurture the cohorts through to the end”

		(00:42:00) “Another challenge is modern students’ lives are way more complex. They’re more likely to come in as a mature-aged student, more likely to be second career kind of people, so with all those challenges, trying to do a quite intensive program such as the XXXXX is a real challenge. Having to juggle kids, bills, and sometimes they were working as well. So having to juggle all that and meet the demands of the XXXXX, it think that’s another major challenge.”
	2 Quantity of graduates	“For a bit there, the XXXXX were under-enrolling. I think the department saw it as ‘we’re not getting bang for our buck’, because there’s not 100 people coming through the program every year’. But it was really short-sighted. Eventually there was a big review done on the program and no matter how we said ‘ look at return on investment – how much this costs to train someone in the program, how much does it cost to train a pre-service teacher to the XXXXX level, then how much cost it is for churning of first-year teachers, you know, having to replace staff ’. And so that calculation was never done which is unfortunate. Because if they analysed ‘where are we getting our bang for our buck?’ That would be it. That rather than say they employ 5 graduates, 5 graduates say ‘see you later’ after 3 years, versus having graduates stay long term, where you’re not re-training them, you’re not spending resources, time and money... it’s just unfortunate that they didn’t look at that. ” (end 00:35:05)
	3 Quality of graduates/teachers Cohort model	50-80 days of practice. (00:12:05) (00:47:00) “Extra time in the classroom. Another [success] was they really bonded together as a group. And, as a high-performing group, they kind of spurred each other on to greater and greater heights. There was almost a one-upmanship amongst them about who can get the best prac report... but it was kind of that level of competitiveness among the students.”
	4 Perception of graduates	“Phenomenal. And it’s because of the results. When it first started, no one knew about it... But once we entered our second and third years of operation our graduates were starting to get their name known and be rockets within their school. Then their reputation really started to take off.” “ Every year, it’s like seagulls and a chip. When the fresh batch of graduates come out, it’s very much a shit-fight trying to get hold of the best.... We not only have great feedback from hiring Principals and Heads of Department, but we also the retention rate is insanely high.” (00:24:20)
Supplying a workforce for HTS	5 Preparing for HTS	“ I think the whole teacher preparation should shift over to [this model]. It never will, because it’s time-intensive, it’s rigorous. We follow things up. It’s really quite rigid. But I think that’s the way teacher programs should be run. There needs to be much more time on court – to get better at teaching, you need to teach more. ” (00:39:00)

	6	Perceived challenges for supplying teachers for HTS	“It doesn’t matter what job it is, regional-remote, always hard to staff. Unless you’re mining, and you throw thousands of dollars at them. Then people can hack it.” (00:38:12)
	7	Relevance in the current context	(00:59:00) “The issues that we face are ongoing. Staffing regional and remote, still an issue. Indigenous, still an issue. ... These are perennial problems and the XXXXX are a perennial solution. I think in a perfect world, they’re the next stage of evolution for teacher preparation programs. But that’s la la dreamland.”
Status of the profession	8	Value of retention	<p>“it’s shocking to me that we tolerate this system where it’s OK if teachers burn out after two years, it’s like, that is such a dereliction of duty. Oh my god, that’s real people you’re talking about here. It like ‘can we prepare them any better?’ ... there are better ways to do this.” ... because the assumption is that “there’s thousands more that you can just burn through – that’s people! And from a workforce perspective, you can’t get traction with your team if it is constantly changing. If you’ve got even three new people coming on board, that is a whole heap of time and effort that you’ve got to pump in to those people to bring them up to speed.” (00:40:37)</p> <p>(00:48:00) My indicator of success was always retention. Always. Always. Always. Because, personally, the school that I went to – first started at and taught at – they were infamous for burning through <i>first</i> years. So they would burn first years, throw them away and get another one. And I thought, oh my god, this is a horrible practice. And goes against everything I learned in organizational psychology on effective businesses. And I thought okay, I am never ever going to be part of that or encourage that kind of churn. And so for me, [success] is always that 5-year retention.”</p>
Performance indicators (KPI)	9	Attraction and retention	<p>“I think one of the major downsides, failings(?), of the system is the KPI that Education Queensland use. Pretty sure they were using ‘bums on seats’ as their KPI for success of the program and that’s where XXXXX, I think, were underperforming. So, at our worst, we had four students. At our best, we had twenty. By way of comparison, I think XXXXX, they’re punching 100. And so, in the governments eyes, the XXXXX was kind of the poster child of the XXXXX program, and everyone else was ‘why aren’t you as good as XXXXX?’. But the real KPI I think they should have been using was 5-year retention rate. Because this extra time, this extra support, extra practice really builds more resilience and that’s where we are going to see real bang for buck. Not having to hire 10 new graduates every single year because you’ve burnt them out last year.”</p>

	10	Preparing them better for HTS	<p>(00:09:17) “more time in front of students, teaching. Because everyone is pulling back in terms of not only lectures and tutorial contact time, but also teaching contact time in our teacher preparation programs. So for example... we used to have an internship. So in the last trimester our students were pretty much full-time teachers – full time load, all the responsibilities. That was a 3-week block. While the state government has now said ‘nup, not happening. You’ve got to write another assignment. Because assignments make us better teachers’. So really, that amount of time on court, really is a unique feature”</p> <p>(00:12:20) No specific curriculum for teaching in HTS contexts, despite partnership with XXXXX. This XXXXX had a focus on low SES schools in the SE corner as it’s HTS element. They were meant to target HTS contexts.</p>
Funding uncertainty / precarious funding	11	Precarious funding as a stock-standard feature of these programs	<p>(00:21:06) “We had the same struggles [as other programs] of, like ‘oh no, it’s going to be defunded next year’. So that’s a stock-standard thing, I hear, for projects. So it wasn’t unique in that sense... pretty much every year, it was like ‘oh where is our funding going to come from?’</p> <p>(00:42:00) “One of the main challenges was ongoing funding. It’s a real shame that there was that time-limit on it. That’s the main threat. And it’s a shame that EQ didn’t do a proper study on it... A real missed opportunity”</p>
	12	Government changes	(00:22:00) “Funding sources changed over time, then EQ came back on board, and then the eventual death was a complete change of government. And, of course, if it’s the old government’s idea, well that has to go in the bin then doesn’t it?”
	13	KPI based funding	<p>(00:31:40) “While things were going well, the money kept flowing. It was only meant to go for a certain time, and we certainly went beyond that time. I think it was 2 years, then XXXXX found their own funding and EQ came back on board. So that chopped and changed over time.”</p> <p>““There was never any condition that the program would keep going if you meet these KPIs”, because eventually it got to the point where EQ drew the line where all XXXXX would stop receiving funding’. Other XXXXX kept going because they found their own funding.</p>
	14	Policy lessons	(00:57:34) “Funding. Funding. Funding. Certainty of funding. None of these programs, as much as ...’oh, is your program sustainable?’, screw sustainability, that’s not a thing. If you want a program to work, you’ve got to throw money at it. That’s just the way things are. Stop praying that things will work and under-funding them... Give students more financial support so they can worry less about the rent and the kids and focus more on their study. Because really,

teacher quality isn't going to improve until we can give them more opportunities to teach and one of the major roadblock of that is the business of the lives of students."

(01:00:00) "Great program, great results, it's just unfortunate that **the reality of politics and systems means that, you know, great ideas like this just get shot in the head and then that's it.**"

**Leadership and
management**

15 Leadership of programs

A theme that has emerged from several interviews is that those who manage, lead or coordinate the program are not always purposeful in their engagement with the program.

In this case, the coordinator of the XXXXX became involved in the project because the previous coordinator left and didn't have a real choice but to stay on at coordinator (07:30) – there was no one else to hand the program off to someone else and 'stuck' in it ("but stuck in a good way"..."if I lost it, no biggie, I have plenty of Other work to do")

16 Pipeline leadership

"The dedicated-ness of the students often led them to taking up increased responsibilities in schools and moving into management or leadership positions, including continuing into Masters level programs, but it was never a part of the XXXXX program' (end 00:57:00)

Project/program: XXXXX	Participant role: Director	Date of interview: 02.03.2021 Time: 02:07:16
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Synopsis of the program

Paraphrasing/summarising:

Major goal about 10 years ago was quality pre-service teachers with a GPA of 5.5 or higher and good professional experiences. In 2011, the Improving Teacher Quality and National Partnerships policy influenced its development.

It was initially designed to address HTS or hard to fill locations, in the SE corner of QLD. XXXXX was only for hard-to-staff locations as well as for building teachers' skillset and knowledge to help them become more prepared for their jobs as teachers.

The XXXXX is partnered as a state-school initiative, rather than a central office initiative, which is self-funded through schools. This XXXXX works with the XXXXX. There are 22 schools in the cluster across the state, who buy into a minimum 3 years into the program, and several universities which provide students. Primarily this XXXXX has run with XXXXX students, but also with XXXXX.

Mentorship, master classes, and best-fit professional experience placements define the approach of the program. Six years ago, the program started to shift with review cycles and changes in governance. Model of 'teachers teaching teachers, schools supporting schools'. The program became more targeted and achievable for student participants. Two hundred participants, recruitment starts 18 months prior to graduation. Twelve months before their final year, participants are given a mentor from one of 22 partner schools, who is never their supervisors. They spend two weeks with their mentor at the start of the school year, which is an immersion approach. This is a 'philanthropic' approach to prepare teachers before sending them out to do placement – the idea is to train them for systems and processes of schools before focusing on curriculum.

Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Preparing teachers	1	Complex students	(00:07:00) "We had to acknowledge very strongly that these final year pre-service teachers have one hell of a year. They have their final year, they've got families, partners, they work full time, they study full time, and I'm asking them to do another program. In essence, that's probably why a lot of the other XXXXX had fallen over or people dropped out, is because it wasn't a doable approach. "
	2	High potential	(00:07:50) "We don't have high quality pre-service teachers, we have high potential pre-service teachers. People who have the right attitude. They have a good academic transcript that's showing me that they're learning, they're growing. They may have had glitches along the way, but they got back up again. They're resilient. "
	3	Hidden art of teaching	(00:10:00) "The essence of the program is the hidden art of teaching that you don't get at university and you don't get on prac. And this is because I am at a school and I look after 13 new beginning

		<p>teachers so I actually do know what you need as a beginning teacher. So we bridge that gap from pre-service teacher to early career teacher.”</p> <p>They make note of the complexities of teachers fitting into rural and remote settings in that while the community might ‘love’ their teachers, there are some behaviours that teachers might show which the community might not appreciate. ((00:39:20) “if you’re going to go every weekend out of the community, then they’re going to see you as not committed to our kids and our community”)</p>
	4 Dump and run	<p>((00:37:37) “Doing dumps and runs is not good enough... I hear constantly, oh we send out ambassadors, we go and talk to the universities, we do this, I said well one or two sessions of dumping and running of information doesn’t build confidence and there’s no relationship. So I guess the other thing is about relationships and mentorships”</p>
Attracting teachers	5 Financial incentives	<p>((00:46:26) “So in the program, it started, I started that if you came to the program you’ve got a \$20,000 bursary and you’ve got a guaranteed return. These awesome incentives. Yet the numbers have exponentially grown without any of that. They have no incentives to join the program... but if you really talk about what they think is an incentive, the incentive is to work with people who know what they’re talking about” as well as ‘being supported to get a job and be a better teacher’.</p> <p>((01:28:00) regarding the bursary and 3-year return “That didn’t attract them. Some, yes. But it didn’t attract them for the right reasons.”</p> <p>She also makes mention of a STEM scholarship at a different XXXXX which provided the same bursary to teachers who remained within the SE region, just because they were STEM. So the political issues here with equity.</p>
	6 HTS placements and best-fit	<p>((00:10:40) “We have to be a flexible space, we have to understand my clientele, that they do work, they could have children, they could have families, they could have partners, they’ve got to work and pay for all these things. We really have tried in the past to place them at a school, at a best-fit school, somewhere that they’ve identified, that they know could work for themselves and possibly their families if they have partners or families. So this is a really critical component of the program about best fit. And best fit is that we mentor, we coach, with a neutral hat - you know, I don’t mind where you go – about that best fit for them and their families.”</p> <p>((00:40:40) “I’m a gay man going out to XXXXX or another area like XXXXX, and we talk about best fit. ‘Should we talk about best-fit, mate?’ you know, best-fit, is this the best fit for you and your partner? And we really embrace them and we work with HR about a community that embraces the LGBTI community, so should we be talking about that, no, but we need to make sure that you’re happy, you’re safe.”</p>

	7 Hiring environment	<p>(00:31:00) “knowing that it is not attractive for high potential students when they know they can get a job anywhere. If you’re a Maths, like myself, or Science teacher, I know I can get a job anywhere.”</p> <p>In relation to the need for responsive hiring processes and retention efforts for new teachers and pre-service teachers, they state that at times HTS schools will lose their teachers or potential new teachers if there are delays in offers or communication. (01:01:10) “We’re again morphing, I’m hearing HR say again to me, the human resources across the state, that they’re out of touch again with the new generation of pre-service teachers. I email them ‘why haven’t you got back to one of my XXXXX, it’s been two weeks’ ‘I’ll get back’ I say ‘no, you’ve lost them’. Because the new generation is responsive, they need an answer <i>now</i>, it’s got to be done within 24 hours if less, and I’m not saying that’s okay. But this is the clients we are working with and if we’re not going to be responsive to that client in the nature of what they’re used to they’ll go from Far North Queensland and come to my school at XXXXX in a heartbeat.”</p> <p>Note on risk-management (01:39:00) “you can’t... to give someone a 6-month contract and think they are going to stay with you for 4 years is ridiculous. I know that from a teacher, because I’m an employer. So I get that. So, if I give a teacher 6 months I’ve already got teachers that I’m panicking about because they’ve been offered 3 private school jobs.”</p> <p>(01:53:20) “I’m not prepared to put the lives, and we are talking about lives here, people do forget that, we are talking about people and jobs and careers. We can’t work on 6-month contracts or 2 years of funding. I won’t. If I only had two years, I’d be looking for another job right now. Because most high performers will want ... to know what they are doing in a years time.”</p>
Program design	8 Flexibility in program design	<p>(00:29:15) “I need to freedom and the flexibilities to grow the centre in how it needs to grow. And it needs to be from the needs of the schools, not in essence the guidance from central office”</p> <p>(01:51:20) “education as a whole, teachers as a whole, is very risk-averse. And to be able to do what I... I’ve been allowed to be very risky, well, not risky, I’m not really risking, but to be able to have some freedom to trial and do things that maybe break the norm a little bit. And being able to move forward a little bit. To create things. I guess that works, because I’m actually meeting the needs of the students and the schools.”</p>
	9 Sustainability of the project	<p>(00:52:00) “It takes 3-5 years to build something that is sustainable and that, if you’ve followed a very good review cycle and listen to your stakeholders, then you will have a successful program... This is a business model that I’m doing, not an education model. I’ve made that very clear. I’ve worked with a business coach as well to step aside from education, because we know a lot of projects aren’t sustainable... I work with a business coach to work with a stakeholder plan, so I</p>

	<p>have a business model, a very clear budget, I've got a stakeholder plan and engagement plan... it's a highly strategic nature."</p> <p>(00:56:00) "I was given permission to be stand-alone because, at that time 5 years ago, they wanted this to be replicate-able"</p> <p>Mention of KPIs and 'bums on seats' (00:59:00) "This is really what we're talking about what they're saying about numbers, yes it is, I can get numbers but don't lose sight of that care, that master class, that knowledge and care side of it. And that's what I think some of these policies are forgetting"</p> <p>(01:40:40) "Everyone knows, and I'm sure that everyone knows, it can't be new to people, that a project will only get legs after 4 years. You can only have true learnings after 4 years, and to be able to develop. I've done this too many times, projects and whatever, at school levels, and built schools and programs and so forth. It's the fourth to fifth year that it becomes embedded and the learnings are there. And now for me it's just band-aids, little tweaks, it's not the creation of a whole new.... Once the systems and processes are set up then it's quite sustainable."</p> <p>She sees this as easily replicated to EC and Leadership.</p> <p>(01:52:54) "When regions buy in it's for a 3-year, minimum of 3 years. Now, on start-up, if I could say for you on start up, it should be 5 years. 3 years is fine for me ... you can't grow, and exponentially grow, unless you have that funding... it takes 4-5 years to consolidate something and to embed something that works"</p>
10 Blocks or stumbling points	<p>Referring to partnerships and the capacity to get things done, they speak about EQ/DET being the main impediment to the program working well. (01:07:08) "The biggest blockers are my actual employers. So that's really frightening. But now being self-funded, the line of sight goes straight to the school level or the region level." ... She states [in essence] 'I'm not bagging anyone but' (01:15:30) "it is just a system that is not working and is blocking what needs to be done."</p> <p>(01:11:45) "I've got a good compass in navigating that space and having to jump through all of hoops and permissions. An example. You might see that in the back I've got a logo. Now, if I used, at the time, the XXXXX logo it would take 3 months in return to actually send out a letter to anybody. So I had to get permission to use the XXXXX logo and the letter permissions to use the PowerPoint, all that stuff. So, I got sick of that. By the way, that is actually un-doable to run a program. It's absolutely crazy. So, I went to Five and spend fifty dollars on my marketing. On my logo, on my message, my PowerPoints, all that sort of stuff. And that's been used for the last 5 years."</p>

	11	Funding model	(01:14:00) “We use the language of schools. So, by saying this, I don’t work in \$265,000 anymore, I work on what’s called FTE. A full-time teacher equivalent. Because if I want to buy into your program, I’ll say I’ll give you 0.1 of an FTE, it gets instantly transferred into my account through an FTE process which is very simple for schools to do. There’s no application, there’s no nothing. If I choose to give that to you, that’s my discretionary funding, I can do that with Principal approval, done. It is that easy to talk that language.”
Accountability / commitment to longevity	12	Personal vested interest	(00:27:30) Daughter who works in a central QLD school, belief that all schools deserve good teachers, and a passion project for that point in their career. Background in P-12 and experience in HTS schools and “a practitioner”. (00:45:20) “If I had to sum it up why we’re successful, well it’s probably two things actually, is that we’re practitioners, and we care.”
	13	Destination data and follow up	(00:51:00) “We can track every single one, we know where they are – every single XXXXX – where they are and what they’re doing. Because I belong to a school, I can type in to my own system and find out where people are and email them directly.” XXXXX uses surveys, with a 70-80% return rate of the survey. Over 70% stay in hard to fill regions for longer than their minimum service requirements. About 40% are in leadership roles. They use a constant review cycle, listening to principals and students about what worked.
	14	Governance of XXXXX	(01:24:53) “Unfortunately, I was part of a XXXXX program. So my KPIs – originally it used to be 25 and then it was 30 [students] in each individual program [the XXXXX]. But then we kept expanding and I wasn’t going to knock back anyone who wasn’t suitable. So that caused a lot of grief, if that makes sense. There were centres running where one year it was zero, and nothing happened. There were centres running with 5, and nothing happened. And you can imagine, I’m not shy, I was actually saying well why is that funding not being pushed over to the ...any business model suggests you close down the centre that is not operational or provide governance to support them to be successful. So two things: one, there was no accountability – I’m sure probably someone talked to them - one, there was no accountability that if you didn’t reach your quota and what were you doing about that, you’re going to close and that funding will be redirected to a centre that was successful; and secondly where was the governance to support that XXXXX that was failing?” (01:37:15) “Governance means there has to be sustainability of the people that are on that governance... I had 18 people in 4 years in those roles. Now most people wouldn’t be able to manage that. That means 18 times I had to tell people what I had to do, 18 times I had to tell them about the program, 18 times. And that is an unsustainable practice.”

	<p>She makes a strong point about hiring people who are in it for the long haul and will look after the project, and have ‘a good handle on what is happening in each of the locations’. (01:41:33) “you give me 18 people I don’t want to know about you. I really don’t. I do not have time to work with 18 different people in 4 years”.</p> <p>(01:38:55) “When the names of 50 people that want to go into a hard-to-staff school are lost <i>four times</i> in a central office capacity, there’s something critically wrong. Critically wrong.”</p> <p>(01:50:30) “Because when you’ve got the good governance you can make constant good decisions”</p>
15 Reviews	<p>In speaking about lessons, she talks about reviews and how they may be misused. She states that if reviews are done, and there needs to be change, there needs to be ‘adequate time to enact that change.’ When the bursaries were scrapped, she had to advocate for students to still get paid the bursaries even though the managers intended to remove the payment. Recruitment had happened months before, and needed to be honoured for that cohort.</p>

Project/Program: XXXXX	Participant roles: Principal (previously school teacher) and Deputy Principal at a Far North Queensland school	Date of interviews: 15.03.2021 Time: 00:51:14
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This interview was a general discussion about how a RRR school aims to recruit and retain teachers in their context. The interview was with the Principal and Deputy Principal of the school.

Synopsis of the program	Paraphrasing/summarising: XXXXX school has organisational partnerships with XXXXX, XXXXX and XXXXX to get pre-service teachers out in the Far North Queensland region.
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Attracting teachers	1	Visits to universities and schools / self-advocacy	<p>Significant time and wages investment to visit metro universities and schools to talk to them about the prospect of teaching rural/remote, advertising placements, working on promotional material and social media advertising. Participates in Rural Teaching fair.</p> <p>In speaking about these visits, (00:38:50) “I’m a bush bloke, I come down and go right here it is, this is what it’s like. If you’ve got – and this will sound very stereotypical – if you got the thin gym junkie guy, that sits there with the sharp shoes and the perfectly manicured hair trying to sell Thursday Island... you need someone who’s lived the experience. Because the pre-service teachers and the grads that I talk to, they want to talk to someone who’s done it, they want to know what it’s like, they don’t want the corporate spiel. Because for a lot of them, they don’t care about the corporate side of it. They really don’t. They care about okay, is the job permanent? is it temporary? And do I get accommodation? They’re the big ones they worry about... their biggest concern is how the hell am I going to be supported when I get there? Who’s going to be my friends? Who can I rely upon? That’s what they’re after more than anything else, because it calms their nerves. That’s what it needs. The department needs to learn that they’ve got to stop treating these people like a number, they’ve got to actually treat them as a person that we actually want to invest time into”</p>
	2	Handling their own hiring / self-advocacy	(00:10:55) “the regional office tend to have people who are bean counters and administrators on the front desk, and the talkers, who are lovely, but they can’t often answer the questions that teachers and pre-service teachers want to know. So they tend to put them through bureaucratic hoops,

	<p>which is needed, but we can virtually say to them we can find you a job and hand you over to HR”</p> <p>(00:11:30) “they [pre-service and new teachers] get a very corporate answer when they call the regional office person, or they get a very corporate response if they talk to someone who’s on the XXXXX organisation. Because they give them very blanket overview. Where we, in the process I go through, I tell them exactly what it’s going to be like, I give them a very real answer of what it could look like, what they need to be aware of... the answers that they give a lot of the time are very, very generic departmental answers. They’re not specific or real-world answers that give the first-year teachers an idea of what they’re coming to”</p> <p>(00:20:00) “the majority of what we do now comes out of school funds, we pay for it all, we see it as an investment into our future. I’ll be honest I’ve approached regional office, I’ve approached central office, to try and help support in some way shape or form. But the support they give is minimal.”</p> <p>They go on to say that regional office would support them with facilities, such as a car to use while in Brisbane to drive around and do their ‘leg-work’ visits, and that funding from regional and central office is ‘tied up’ in structures. Support needed would be someone to replace the DP when he is on these visits, which they currently can’t replace staff when staff are away on visits.</p>
3	<p>Misconceptions about rural teaching</p> <p>(00:16:10) “Our biggest problem we have is just exposing people to what it’s like. I couldn’t tell you the amount of times that I’ve spoken to preservice teachers and they literally think it’s all dirt roads. And that it’s the wild west up where. So just trying to debunk those myths and move forward with some actual true understanding of what it’s like. And that you can be very successful and that its actually going to give you a pathway in your careers”</p>
4	<p>Attracting a certain type of teacher</p> <p>(00:17:10) “I want to make sure we get good teachers up here for our kids, they deserve good teachers, they don’t deserve the leftovers”</p> <p>(00:17:20) “In the past, when schools have said ‘oh look we’ve got a couple of teachers for you’, they’ve generally been the ones that they don’t want. But like I said, we want to get a pick of some of the best teachers as well.”</p>
5	<p>Teacher shortages</p> <p>(00:26:30) “the biggest challenge I can see is there’s not enough grads. That’s number one. If they’re is not enough people coming out of the factory as such, and there’s more people retiring particularly as our workforce ages, we’re going to have a huge issue in the next few years. The next stumbling block that I come across is the areas that they’re studying whilst at uni, and the subjects that schools are still trying to offer. And a prime example of that would be Manual Arts or Special Education, they’re two very hard-to-staff areas and teachers within those particular subject areas can virtually pick and choose where they want to go. So we don’t even have a choice in that</p>

			<p>space, we just take what we can get when it comes to those spots or we have to retrain from internal, within the school”</p> <p>(00:33:10) “Graduates have choice now...I didn’t really have a choice, I just got told where I was going and that was the end of it. Because there was a lot more teachers available. Where now, teachers can be a lot more picky, so they’re going to pick something that they know because they want the familiar. Where it’s very rare you find someone that’s going to sit there and go well ‘I’m going to go somewhere I’ve never been before, and try something I’ve never done before, in a career that I’ve never had anything to do with before and be on my own and away from family’. It’s one of those things trying to debunk that it’s not doom and gloom it’s actually a really rewarding experience”</p>
Retaining teachers	6	Beginning teacher program	Deputy of the school ensures that schools teachers are placed at have a program to support beginning teachers.
	7	Support and best fit	<p>(00:36:20) “my motivation more than anything else is to ensure that we get good teachers, because if we get good teachers that are successful, they’re less likely to drop. And we all know the research tells us that graduate teachers fall off the perch after 5 years, they give it away in some way shape or form, a large majority. So, the more that we can support them and make sure that they actually have a quality experience, the more likely we are to keep them...by getting good people and giving them that experience, I see it as my job as the point in FNQ [Far North Queensland] with these people, of actually making sure that the school they go to is one that suits them. No two schools are the same”</p> <p>(00:41:25) “They want to know that they’re going somewhere where they’re actually going to be taken care of and listened to.”</p>
Program design	8	Flat structure model	<p>(00:14:10) “if you want a process that works, it varies from centre to centre, but it’s a real contextual type situation. I think there’s a really complex structure in regional offices with staff recruitment, and really the work often happens at the school-based level where teachers know people and we’ve made the contacts. So in our world, the best type of model is a very flat structure, where resources – whether it be money or staff – is sent to the schools on the ground to do a range of that promotion. Rather than having a fairly complex HR type approach. Regional office have attraction teams, they’ve got retention teams, they’ve got a whole range of teams who are really great people. But they tend to want to come to us, the kids do, the pre-service ones. That would be my perfect model is a flat structure based at school level in some way, and then resourced from above.”</p>

9	Over-staffing at the start of the year	<p>(00:22:50) “We use some other strategies too by the way. We over-staff at the start of the year. So, we over-staff significantly, taking into account that often over the holidays something happens. Someone gets pregnant, someone dies, someone gets another job. So you often lose them.”</p> <p>They also put people on permanent straight away, but that (00:23:20) “might bounce back on us one day when we heavily over-staff and I can’t pay for it”</p> <p>They also speak about employing people as permanent ensures that teachers are eligible for relocation funding, (00:25:50) “if I’m employing someone as a temporary they’re not entitled to relocation unless certain criteria are met, so hence why I employ them as permanent so they get that relocation, so it’s one less thing they have to fund themselves.”</p>
10	Competing priorities, systemic issues	<p>(00:45:30) “From a school’s point of view, if I just talk really candidly, if regional office don’t find a teacher to fill a hole at the school, it doesn’t make an impact on their day to day working. But if we as a school can’t fill that hole or find a solution for it, then we as a school are the ones who are going to be paying for it. And a prime example of that right this current moment is our school now, so we are currently five teachers down and one of the teaching positions we’re down is Manual Arts. So there’s people on my list, on my applicant pool that I’ve gone to. But they’re not suitable. And in regional office terms, or central office terms, they would say employ that person. But we’ve employed them before, and someone has employed them and the reference pool has come back so poorly, that we as a school are better off with <i>me</i> teaching Manual Arts than employing this person because we’ll have less issues and a better outcome for our kids. And ultimately that’s what we’re there for, is a better outcome for our kids.... A deputy principal is doing half the time in HR land, is now teaching a class that takes up virtually 4 hours a week again. Because it’s better for me to teach a class than it is to bring in one of these people who is a long-term teacher, don’t get me wrong, but they are just – it’s not worth the problems that they are going to bring with them. Which is why, I’ll be honest, we focus on graduate teachers more than anything else.”</p>

Project/Program: XXXXX & XXXXX		Participant role: Teacher, now HOD	Date of interview: 10.03.2021 Time: 00:34:48
Synopsis of the program	Paraphrasing/summarising: XXXXX - Designed for students who wanted to teach rural to get support in the final, internship year of Bachelor of Education degree. There were partnerships with XXXXX and the schools that they sent students to.		
	XXXXX – designed to retain leaders in the region. Applicants select where you’d like to be a leader, participant applied through XXXXX. Completed several acting HOD roles before returning as HOD in her original rural school (XXXXX). Offers some networking. Participant wanted to move into leadership position in the regions and saw this program as helpful in preparing her for this role. Accommodation and meals were covered for involvement.		
Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Preparing for HTS	1	Living rural	(00:04:00) “It did help me in terms of my networking, but in terms of, I guess, I think it was one of the first years that the XXXXX was up and running, it probably didn’t fully prepare me for what it would be like to live rural. But in terms of like, I met a lot of colleagues that then became friends that also were placed in rural locations around here, so it was good to network with them. ” (00:20:00) “I think a challenge would be moving away from home, like uni students moving away from possibly Brisbane where they know they’ve got access to shops and events and things like that, so I think it’s like what’s available out in the rural/regional communities, I think that’s probably something that might prevent people from coming out here.”
	2	Attractiveness of graduates	(00:11:30) “I think it was looked upon fondly if you were a XXXXX graduate. I think it showed that you were willing to work in certain locations and that you were willing to do additional, because it was additional mentoring on top of what was already required of a university student. We spent extra time or extra hours at XXXXX with a mentor teacher... so I think it was looked upon preferably by principals”
	3	Building confidence	Participant highlights that XXXXX provided help with CV and selection criteria and mock interviews, and in the XXXXX program, having the mentor and watching/observing their mentor teacher in the classroom, plus networking, were fundamental in these programs in supporting her development/preparation for HTS. (00:30:00) “I think it improves my confidence in terms of my ability to teach, my ability to work with staff and colleagues. And I think that just like any professional development, I think that if you

			<p>can take something away from it, it improves your confidence and therefore you feel like you're going to do a better job and you do do a better job."</p> <p>Referring to the relevance of the program, (00:33:00) "I wouldn't be out at XXXXX and I wouldn't be in a leadership role without either of those programs"</p>
Attracting to HTS	4	Hard to fill	<p>She describes the reasons why XXXXX came about, and highlights the issues which influenced the program's development, (00:08:00) including high turnover of staff every 3 years, teachers transfer out and beginning teachers starting, and that the XXXXX highlighted for students the benefits of rural teaching such as smaller schools, less staff, and more personal environment in which to teach.</p> <p>In speaking about the XXXXX school, there was a hard to fill position that the principal couldn't fill, so she was offered to take the role, (00:04:40) "rural placements though, I did get offered a permission teach out in XXXXX, so I never ended up doing an internship. But I just, from the XXXXX trip out here I was offered a position to teach and I took that up within 2 weeks of the XXXXX trip"</p>
	5	Incentives	<p>Promise of permanency in the regional or remote locations, offered a scholarship which changed. Participant qualified for an incentive but wasn't worried about how much this was. Participant has a vague memory of a contract committing to 'something like' two years. Bursary money came in at the end of her first year and was paid in her pay slip.</p> <p>(00:06:00) "I think originally it was meant to be, they offered I think it was \$10,000 tax-free money or something for when you actually secured a position. But then, I think then it dropped down to \$5,000 and then it ended up being like \$2000 or \$3000... that side of it wasn't very clear and changed over the course of the time that I was in XXXXX"</p> <p>(00:07:00) "I was wanting to go rural. The money wasn't the incentive for me, so that didn't worry me. And it was more about the permanency and the permission to teach for me."</p>
	6	Support networks	<p>(00:07:20) "I think it's my involvement in XXXXX and XXXXX that helped me to want to stay out here. I mean, obviously, it's got to be a bit personal too, because I've enjoyed my time out here. Probably because I did network with a lot of people in XXXXX and then because of my permission to teach I was able to make friends in the region as well pretty quickly, because I was just sort of thrown into it. And that's made me want to stay out here."</p> <p>(00:21:00) "this year we've had a bigger number of beginning teachers out here. I think that the drawcard to be closer to families means that people move back, because I think the distance is a big thing. Particularly for some people who really miss their families, you see them leave after 3 years. They do their time and then they go. But there is a number of people who meet their partners or</p>

		<p>whatever out here and you see them stay. So I really think it's the people that get involved in the community and find themselves in the community, they stay, and if they don't find themselves in the community then they go."</p> <p>(00:25:30) "Relationships with the staff out here, and relationships with the community and with the students, would be what's drawn me to stay. It's a really supportive school, really supportive community"</p>
	7 Personal motivation	<p>In speaking about XXXXX and the financial support provided, (00:19:00) "I think with me I am quite motivated and determined to become a leader, so I think I would have probably done it even if I had to pay for my own accommodation... but I think it could be a barrier for some people to have no monetary incentive there... but I would have done it regardless because I wanted to be a leader and I wanted to work rural."</p>
Retaining teachers	8 Facilitating wellbeing	<p>(00:27:00) "I think housing is a big thing. Making sure that they're with supportive housemates at home, we do get provided with government housing, so I think that's something that helps. And then I think having the support of the staff members here to talk to, even if it's not about school related things or work-related things, just knowing that someone is there to chat to. Wellbeing is a big side of it, and I think if you've got that right then it's easier to retain staff at a school that they've got a connection to and feel safe and supported in"</p>

Project/Program: XXXXX & XXXXX		Participant role: Principal, previously a school teacher in rural/remote schools, also co-designed XXXXX	Date of interview: 10.03.2021 Time: 00:38:01
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	Paraphrasing/summarising: XXXXX		
Synopsis of the program	XXXXX – innovative program at XXXXX, exposing high quality pre-service teachers to rural placements in a week-long tour of a range of schools, showing them what rural life was like. Sponsored by a benefactor (XXXXX). Co-designed with ex-regional director from Victoria, XXXXX, and ex-principal from Queensland, XXXXX, who were both working at XXXXX.		
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Leading HTS	1	Turnover	(00:05:00) “when I moved to XXXXX, I saw the opposite end, I saw a school, a community school, and we were one of the biggest rural schools in Australia at the time. 1000 or something kids, 500kms from Brisbane. Where we had, the first year I arrived, I arrived in July, I had 25 staff leave who had done their 3 years. It was just ridiculous, the whole school was ripped out, we almost had to start again. There had been no structures put in place to attract and retain people, there had been no what I would consider to be strategic planning of having staff and developing capability and structures. So, the school built up for 3 years and the heart was virtually ripped out across the whole P-12 college. Very few people stayed. So we were on an industrial 3-year cycle, so we set about doing some work in our demography, where we had people who had been there for 20 years, or we had people who had been there for 5 minutes.”
	2	Hiring best fit in an unstable school environment	(00:28:00) “we just wanted to make sure that we got the fit right. If we spent the extra time...so we used to say ‘what type?’. Can I give you an example of how this works? There’s a school called XXXXX ... it would be one of the hardest to fill schools in QLD if not Australia. Because of drought, it’s a P10 school, but it’s gone from 5 to I think there’s 2 or 3 staff there now. HR spoke to us about, we need someone who can teach French, and it would be good – now you ready, French in XXXXX don’t ask me why, but French – they need to teach French and it would be good if they could teach lower primary and run the kindergarten program as well. So we happened to have someone, because we knew our people on our base really well, we had someone who fitted that bill... we decided that we would give her the opportunity to see what she thought about it, so we

		<p>rang her up together... well, you would have thought I was giving her a brand new BMW, she was that excited that we were asking her to go to this place. She was just chuffed... if you're a really good principal in a 3-teacher school, and you've been there for a couple of years, where are you likely to be the following year? Not at XXXXX."</p> <p>He goes on to describe that the principal mentored this teacher for a year, and left the following year, which left the school without a principal.</p> <p>(00:34:00) "that person went from the best experience of her life, changing her life, from loving it and being vibrant. To the fact that she almost had a breakdown during semester 2 of that year"</p> <p>(00:34:20) "increasingly teachers want to work for principals, not just schools... never is that more relevant in a 2- or 1-teacher school, or a 5-person school."</p>
Preparing teachers	4	<p>Setting up new teachers for HTS</p> <p>(00:14:30) "we recognise the fact that what was happening, and what really worried me and I experienced myself, is that we had a really, we employed a teacher at XXXXX the first year I was there who had great reports. But when I looked at it, she had done her practicums in leafy green areas with an ICSEA of 4050 in Brisbane schools, whereas you're coming to XXXXX, away from your support networks, with an ICSEA under 1000, 950, where there's disadvantage. Some people aren't psychologically and mentally able to make the transition. So, we really, for want of a better terminology, wanted to expose people in a gradual immersion...great teacher, but just was never going to work in that environment."</p>
	5	<p>Field trips</p> <p>(00:26:20) "I clearly saw XXXXX as a, the first part of a soft introduction to rural life. That is, they would go on a supported bus trip for a week, and they would get a sense for it. And during that time, you could start to plant the seed about 'have you thought about doing this?' or 'what would it look like for you and your family if you moved out here?'. We saw it as a, for want of a better terminology, we saw it as planting the seed"</p> <p>(00:27:20) "I think we had something like 8 people on my staff who had been on XXXXX. And then we would take those people back to do talks at universities at the start of the year about have you considered this... so we marketed heads and hearts."</p>

Project/Program: XXXXXX	Participant role: School Teacher (placed in XXXXX regions), 5 th year of teaching	Date of interview: 18.03.2021 Time: 57:41
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Synopsis of the program

Paraphrasing/summarising:

Twenty-five person cohort, one of the first of the iterations with the new Director.

As part of the XXXXX program, the Director works with XXXXX and the regions to get teachers who want to go rural into those schools earlier. This teacher was offered permanency in June of their final year of teaching (i.e. one semester prior to graduating). Permanency was conditional on a three year commitment, and included incentives such as relocation allowance to and from the location. It's considered by the participant the bridge between university and getting a job.

There were criteria at the time i.e. 5.0 GPA, and an application process including a personal statement, academic transcript, practicum reports and, an interview. GPA seemed to the participant as a lesser criteria because the cohort was so small, even though she was nervous about being accepted because her GPA was about a 5.2.

Participants were directed to apply for Department funding to help them to get through their placement, they were also given a bursary on accepting a position in a regional area, approximately \$10,000 but \$6,000 after tax, paid in the salary/payslip. Participant believes that if you didn't complete your three year term, you'd have to pay back a portion of it.

Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Retaining teachers	1	Day-8 complexities	<p>(00:01:54) “I was at XXXX for just over 2 years, and actually had to transfer out as part of Day 8 numbers, so wasn’t necessarily by choice but I had been planning on leaving at the end of my third year anyway. I’m now at a Brisbane school.”</p> <p>(00:02:20) “We lost – it was such a transient community, which we all knew, but we did lose.. I think we only lost 3 families but it was enough kids that they actually lost allocation of 5 teachers. It was across the college. It was a P-12 college. The way it worked out, they could afford to pay for 3 secondary teachers and one SEP support teacher for the special ed program, but couldn’t make it work for the primary sector and due to the transfer system... if I wasn’t the one that left the school, another person would have to come back in after they left. So I was in my 3rd year and it was a 3-year school, everyone else was in their first or second year at the school, so if they’d left, they’d have to come back and complete their last year. Whereas if I left I wouldn’t have to leave and then come back. So I put my hand up to leave the school, for convenience for everyone else as well as coming back to Brisbane for my family.”</p> <p>Teacher made a deal with the Department, as she had 9 points ‘technically’, but her principal worked out a deal to take out one teacher and negotiate this teacher to go into a Metro school. In a normal case, “if a school loses day 8 entitlement you get bumped to a different school in the same region, but my principal managed to negotiate that I could be bumped to a school within Brisbane. It was a very complicated, difficult situation.” The teacher went on to teach at an XXXXX school, bypassing the transfer system. (00:08:55) “Obviously my case was a little bit different because of the day 8 transfer, but I believe because it was a forced transfer, it wasn’t – I didn’t apply for it, they kind of waived a few of those things and counted it as having done the 3 years.”</p> <p>This was a really interesting point made by the participant. In an ideal world, schools (and Education Departments) would simply preference retaining teachers who have spent more time in the school than preferencing keeping new teachers who aren’t yet acclimated to the school or the community. Essentially the school lost a teacher with the most experience in favour of keeping teachers with less experience, or in favour of having more teachers on staff and smaller class numbers.</p>

2	Teacher entitlement and enrolment quotas	<p>In speaking about the above example of having to leave after day 8...</p> <p>(00:20:00) “XXXXXX itself not only has a rural setting going against it, it’s also quite a tough context and so they do struggle to keep teachers for longer than 3 years that they’re out there but they also do have quite a - I’ve got no statistics to back this up - but they do have anecdotally quite a large number of teachers that don’t finish their term there. Because it’s too difficult, too rural, they can’t cope with not being close to their family and friends and things like that. So XXXXXX does have a lot stacked against it.”</p> <p>(00:21:00) “I think it’s important to note that XXXXXX only lost two or three families. But because of the way that the Day 8 numbers calculations work – I know it’s not like every 25 kids you get a teacher, I don’t know exactly what the formula is – but because of that formula, they lost quite a large number of teacher entitlement which had they had to lose all of those teachers, it would have had a huge impact on the quality of education the kids would have got in my opinion. Because your class sizes obviously would increase with less teachers, and in a context that’s already tricky to keep teachers in – be it because it’s rural, or because of the behaviour and the context – adding more kids into a class isn’t going to help.”</p>
3	Turnover, impact on students	<p>(00:22:00) “I believe one of the trickiest part of XXXXXX, where I was working before, was the fact that there was such a high turnover of teachers that the kids had been by the time they were in grade 3, they’d been there longer than most of the teachers. In my second year, I was the most experienced teacher in my cohort of middle primary. Sure, there’s only 3 teachers in that cohort, but as a second year, being the most experienced meant that there wasn’t an experienced teacher you could really go to... so that was a huge problem in my opinion, of why XXXXXX was such a tricky context. Because the kids had a lot of trauma, or I guess they have a lot of trauma in their home life, so it takes them 6 months to open up to you as a teacher and to trust you and then they would be going through, I guess you could call it a grief period when teachers would be leaving them, and it’s someone they’ve just come to trust. And it’s taken two years to trust them and all of a sudden, they’re leaving again. So it fosters a kind of resentful feeling, I believe, in kids, because they’re just having people leave them all the time.”</p> <p>(00:24:30) “Class size affects workload which is such a huge wellbeing concern, but you’ve also got to add in particular behaviour students and having such a young staff – and by young I mean, graduates, newly graduated staff – means there’s less experience to deal with those behaviours. So it snowballs.”</p>
4	Smaller class sizes = teacher longevity	<p>(00:23:30) “Having more teachers would mean smaller class sizes, which would mean teachers would have the time and the mental capacity to engage deeper with the student who would</p>

		need them to be there to do that. And would also be able to manage their own wellbeing so that they could do that for longer than the required three years.”
Attracting teachers	5 Work-life balance, sustaining teachers in rural locations	<p>(00:42:30) “The workload of the school I was at, as much as I loved it, as much as I loved those kids. It was immense. It was really taxing and there were a lot of bad days. So it’s really hard to not come back to a metro area when your friends and family and potentially an easier context, when everyday you’re battling in a place where you don’t have even a Woolworths or a Coles, let alone friends and family. Well, you’ve friends, they’re your colleagues. Let alone your family that you’re used to, and having really tough days at work without really an end in sight. It wasn’t like, oh it’s just one bad Monday but for Tuesday to Friday they’re fine, every day was really hard. And I learned a lot, and as I said I loved it, I would do it again.”</p> <p>(00:43:50) “Wellbeing and workload – which I think is something that I found from personal experience that workload and work/life balance that was something that was really achievable where I was living because there was nothing else to do. So of course you’re going to work on your Sunday because there’s nothing else out there to do, or you’re going to go for a drive on Saturday and watch the kids play sports and then come back and do a bit more work. And so the workload and the lifestyle isn’t as friendly toward wellbeing as, in my opinion, a metro lifestyle.</p>
	6 Peer influence / word of mouth	(00:10:30) “ I actually chose to apply for this program because my friend was applying for it. She kind of pushed me a little bit. ”
	7 Incentives	<p>(00:11:35) “For me personally, it took away the hurdle of the unknown. I wasn’t necessarily seeking out to go rural, it wasn’t something that I had had in my head. But there were a lot of benefits to the program, which included almost like a guaranteed job. Like we’ll find you a job if you come in this program, we’ll network for you, we’ll talk to principals and get you a job. So having the guaranteed job was a big perk for me because I didn’t want to go into the rat race that is metro teaching, not as a graduate teacher. The fact that they were able to offer permanency and all the benefits that came with that including the paid move out, meant that it was no longer a burden for me to have go out rural. I wouldn’t have to find my own place, I wouldn’t have to find a school or a job or pay for movers to go out there. To me, it looked like this was the perfect bridging opportunity to get teachers out rural without having all those obstacles in the way – that’s what I believe the purpose of the XXXXX is and why it’s so successful.”</p> <p>In speaking about moving back to rural or remote schools, given they currently work in Metro:</p> <p>(00:39:20) “I would have to say that I would probably only go back to rural/remote teaching if I would get something different than in a metro school. At the moment, like if I was going back to rural/remote teaching, if I was just going to a classroom without any added benefits to what I’m</p>

		currently doing, I would stay where I am. Purely because I have my family, my friends are around, I've got access to things that I would have in rural/remote. So to get me back out West or up North, it would really need to be a promotion of some description, or experience in different areas, or something that I couldn't get in a metro school. Because now that I have this permanent position, I can do the exact same thing that I could do out West in Brisbane, but be with my family and friends. And that's something that really hard to battle against.... I do believe I would always go back to a metro area"
	8 Disincentives	(00:33:30) "There's certainly the normal day to day teacher challenges, like workload, parents, behaviour, things like that. You've still all got that in those tough to staff areas. But on top of that you have the difficulty of being away from your support system, being away from local services, potentially being in a school that has a very young staff so there's not many opportunities for mentorship, or maybe there's no relief teachers so there's less PD's that you can go to to develop your skills. I think also in the first instance of sourcing graduate teachers, or teachers in general to go out there, for me personally, I found it looked like something that was too difficult to achieve by myself. Which is why the XXXXX was so good for me. "
Preparing teachers	9 Practical knowledge / Life of teachers	<p>(00:13:10) "The way that the program was set up is it kind of gave you an insight into the practicalities of teaching, and the day-to-day life. So we would have workshops every week."</p> <p>(00:14:00) "We also did weekly workshops where you would go in and (the Director) would have organised someone from the department, someone from different regions, or a teacher, or a beginning teacher, or an experienced teacher, a HOD or a Deputy to talk to us about the practicalities. So we would have sessions on how do we do a timetable? How do you set up a classrooms daily timetable? And they separate it into primary and secondary. Just the practical things of day-to-day classroom life, which you don't get at university"</p> <p>The participant also goes onto provide examples of being prepared to talk to students and parents, how to deal with particular student behaviours, how to have particular conversations, and 'admin behind the scenes' such as practicing using XXXXX (00:15:30) "So we were actually able to be familiar with this program before we'd even been accepted into a school, or even had a position ready for us. So when we came into teaching for our first year, that wasn't another hurdle that you had to get over to be able to teach your class." i.e. 'I already know how to mark the roll and get straight into class'</p> <p>(00:18:20) "I don't know if I would have gone rural if the XXXXX hadn't been around purely because it would have been so foreign, so unknown, so many different people and places to talk about, and even things like we would have a session ...about what is life like in a rural town? So people would come and say, well this is the house that I live in, this is the kind of furniture you get</p>

		as part of Department housing, this is the things I do with my school. So it took away that fear of the unknown hurdle , that you're like, oh, I could go out there because it's going to have this, this and this there"
	10 Mentorship	(00:13:30) There was also a mentor system in place – it didn't quite work out for me, I had a mentor who ended up changing jobs mid-Term Two so I kind of lost that mentor because of that – but I know that other people developed a really close relationship with their mentor so they were going into a classroom every week for a day, if not more days, if that's what they negotiated with their teacher. So you could see the first day of term, and a last day of term and what does reporting look like, and all those practical sides of things. You had your mentorship program with an experienced, specifically selected teacher, to help you through that."
Commitment to RRR schools	11 Commitment to teachers	<p>(00:45:00) "There needs to be a real look at why rural and remote areas or tough contexts are hard to staff. And if it is because it's a really tough behaviour context, then money needs to be put into easing the workload of those teachers and so not only are they facing the difficulties of day-to-day teaching – because it's not an easy job – but also on top of that, the context and things that make it even harder: the workload, the context, the constant difficult behaviours. That needs to be addressed as well as having high quality educators to go out there. Because if you're just putting all of your money into having high quality educators go out West and rural, you're going to burn them out before they choose to stay there longer...it's hard to tell yourself to stay at a place that you're constantly having workload and wellbeing difficulties with"</p> <p>The participant suggests things like coaches for young staff, behaviour coaches, pedagogy coaches, upskilling leaders, psychologists sent out regularly to attend to the emotional and mental wellbeing of the staff.</p> <p>(00:47:33) "I don't think there'll be a one size fits all solution, I think it really needs to be targeted at why that particular school or context is really hard to staff, or why staff are leaving that school and context, and then fixing those problems. Because you're not going to fix the transience of teachers before you fix why they are moving...money doesn't fix everything".</p> <p>They do go on to speak about money, but that the use of the money could be better targeted and used creatively to address real problems that teachers are having at these schools. A needs-based funding model, but also something that prioritises wellbeing of staff and sustaining current staff.</p>

XXXXXXXXXX

XXXXX

XXXXX

Project/Program:
XXXXX

Participant role: Manager at XXXXX

Date of interview: 15.02.2021
Time: 59:36

Synopsis of the program

Paraphrasing/summarising:

Funds providers for travel, meals, and accommodation to attend compulsory residentials (face-to-face component) on campus. They run three or four times a year for a week on campus. Students are from remote, very remote, regional and urban locations across Australia. Providers can spend 10% of the funding to cover staffing. Providers can also send teaching staff out to student locations to deliver residential blocks.

Courses often provide exit points, such as a Diploma, so that students who need to exit early still leave with a certification of some kind.

Designed as an access program rather than explicitly addressing HTS contexts. The aim is increasing Indigenous representation or access to higher education. In some ways, there is a XXXXX element to XXXXX as students are often from HTS locations. It allowed people living in far-away locations to access higher education while still living in their home communities.

Indigenous Education Targeted Assistance Act 2000 was a mechanism to fund these programs and XXXXX sat under that act. Previously delivered by XXXXX and XXXXX.

Summaries of emerging themes

Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Funding	1	Demand-driven funding	(00:34:00) Functioned under Indigenous Education Targeted Assistance Act and was legislated as “demand-driven funding – however many students needed it, that’s how much funding they got. As long as they met all the criteria, that’s what they got. That’s what the providers got. Whereas now, the XXXXX sits under a different appropriation called the Indigenous Advancement Strategy, but it still operates as a demand-driven program... It’s a more limited bucket of funds but still delivered as demand-driven.” (00:48:00) “There wasn’t any way for government to cut those funds”
Attrition of teachers/graduates	2	Access to HE	Goal is to create a career pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in remote communities – so they can study in their own communities Like many other programs (even XXXXX) a percentage of graduates never go into teaching in schools (end up at TAFE, in health, further study, community work) – successful in that they get a degree or diploma but doesn’t necessarily aim towards filling teacher workforce shortage

Accountability / commitment to longevity	3	Cohort support	Like many other programs, the cohort model (close-knit group of pre-service teachers) is seen to be the most important factor as they support each other. (00:15:00) “It’s a really good chance to be part of a cohort of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students together working toward the same goals. Because you learn from each other and you have quite a lot in common and you can support each other. That cohort support is super-duper important. ”
	4	Lack of destination data or follow up	An important program in that it recruits, prepares Indigenous teachers – ‘grow your own’ to supply workforce for regional and remote areas (again, not sure how many end up teaching)
	5	Staffing	(00:48:00) “I really think that it’s the education providers that employ people that really care about the students and really care about the program. From what I’ve seen, there’s people that work in these organisations that work there for a long time. There was one lady who I worked with who had been working on the program for 10+ years. So she knew all about it, she knew how to train the other people up ” (00:49:00) “ It’s not easy delivering a government program, the bureaucracy and all the paperwork, the reporting and all that you’ve got to do. But if you’re really passionate about it and you really care then you just keep it going. Being in the education area, you get some really good personal satisfaction because you can see what a difference it makes in people’s lives.”
	6	Relationships and commitment to success	(00:52:00) “Some autonomy to meet the needs of students. That’s super important. And I think having good relationships with government staff and the people who are delivering it is really important. And having enough staff to deliver it as well. Not just writing a proposal and saying ‘hey we’re going to deliver this national program and we’re only going to have one person from DESE to deliver it’ when you really need 10. That’s going to fail. ”

Project/program: XXXXX	Participant role: Originally Primary school teacher, currently coordinating XXXXX program Australia-wide (since 2019) at XXXXX.	Date of interview: 08.04.2021 Time: 58:28
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Synopsis of the program	<p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>Running for 30 years at XXXXX from XXXXX (NSW), via XXXXX, offering the same degree in intensive mode using residential blocks. Students usually complete this within a four and a half to five year period. Originally was an Associate Degree and there has been some trailing. All students pay HECS unless they get a separate scholarship. Every student gets \$500 at the start of the program.</p> <p>Issues with retention in the program led to a Diploma of Educational Studies pathway, which articulates them into the mainstream degree. Not all students need this pathway and this is determined in the interview phase.</p> <p>Cohorts are usually about 80 students, with a drop to 65 within the COVID context. Mid-year intake the aim is 13 students but they're not worried about numbers. During COVID, all students received a WIFI dongle, some provided with headphones and others provided with computers with no cost to the student.</p> <p>It's a face-to-face intensive program, students (00:17:00) 'can't miss anything'.</p> <p>There is meal allowance, travel and accommodation, plus tutorial assistance (an assigned person who supports in the academic components, via Zoom or locally, and often are school teachers).</p>
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Preparing teachers	1	LANTITE	(00:04:00) "the other layer for these particular students. And it's unique to these particular students at XXXXX, is that they are coming from all over Australia. And because they might be in rural or remote parts of Australia, the testing centres are either too far away, or if they do choose to go to a testing centre, it takes so long that they're exhausted and then they're sitting a 2-hour exam. Or they're sitting it from home via remote proctoring... XXXXX, where the internet is not consistent, that's another hurdle, where should the internet drop out, they've instantly failed the exam. So, we're dealing with a whole lot of additional layers that are not considered for LANTITE and students who are in rural and remote parts of Australia"
	2	Culturally relevant education	Speaks about the XXXXX program providing 4 units in the degree that address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, and topics.

	3	Face to face teaching, community	(00:43:20) “to become a primary school teacher, you can’t engage in an online degree. As a primary school educator, I model practice, so what it’s offering is an opportunity to be face to face, to see a teacher model teaching, to be present in a room, and to learn in a social environment. Rather than an online environment. These students can go and do a degree at XXXXX online, or Open Universities online, however, they don’t choose to do that, they choose to come together as a community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.”
Attracting teachers	4	Local teachers in RRR	<p>(00:08:00) “the reality is that these students are already going to be working at the schools that they are employed at already, so it’s not like we’re filling another gap, where there’s a need to demand”</p> <p>(00:38:30) “I’m not going to say that we’re servicing the remote parts of Australia, I can certainly say rural, yes, but not remote. Our students, many of them don’t come from remote parts of Australia...we haven’t got students who actually live in remote communities, so the chances of them doing a placement there or teaching there is pretty slim. However, those in the rural parts, they do there, they’re employed, we’re servicing that space, we’re not servicing the other.”</p> <p>In reference to staffing remote schools, (00:51:00) “I just cannot see how we’re going to staff other schools that these students are not already employed in”, and the challenges in getting these students onto campus for residential blocks, that its already hard enough to get rural student off Country, adding remote to that is another layer.</p>
	5	Word of mouth	<p>(00:09:00) speaks of primarily advertising via word of mouth, plus social media and Indigenous media organisations., plus high schools with high numbers of Indigenous students.</p> <p>(00:10:00) “we also go on Country, so we actually go and visit spaces around Australia, where we do promote the program” They do this with XXXXX at XXXXX, and interview students during these tours.</p>
	6	Mature age students	(00:15:00) “most of our students are mature age as well... that may or may not be part of its success. They have families, they have work, they have mortgages, they have community that they do community programs in their local areas, so they have huge commitments. So, this is a huge layer on top of their already heavy workload, so we’re very conscious of that, however they still have to meet the expectations that our mainstream students meet. It’s exactly the same, there are no exceptions.”
	7	University climate	(00:21:35) “how it’s perceived with mainstream students is probably something I could talk to. So, we have had opportunities where students have merged, so they’re not just exclusive classes. We’ve had mainstream students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. And we’ve had to really think through the dynamics because we have some challenges there and some perceptions that need

			to be changed"... (00:25:00) " We had some issues around race where we had to go in and intervene. Whiteness is one of them. We've had to really think about the education we have for our mainstream students around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowings."
Retaining teachers	8	Secondment, career pathways	(00:08:30) "They also don't stay in the profession for very long. So, we've got retention issues, and it's not that they just decide that teaching is not for them, they often move into policy style roles within education. Because of who they are and what they can bring, there's a huge demand"
	9	Training local teachers	In speaking about students predominantly staying in their local communities on graduating, (00:12:00) "sometimes we do get the odd student who decides to go somewhere else, a town that's not connected to their family or their Aboriginality, and they choose to teach there. That sometimes happens, but it's not a regular occurrence"
		Token teachers	(00:47:00) "One of the questions posed to me was ' should I tell the school that I'm an Aboriginal man? ' ... I think the reasoning behind that is often when a school finds out, they feel that they can tick that box, and say that I've employed somebody whose an Aboriginal person, or we're embedding Aboriginal perspectives into the learning... one thing they do talk about, the students talk about, is they're sick of being the token Aboriginal person at the school that does all the Aboriginal 'stuff' ... sometimes they just want to teach"

XXXXXXXXXX

MULTIPLE PROGRAMS

Project/Program:
XXXXX

Participant role: CEO

Date of interview: 19.02.2021
Time: 01:21:28

**Synopsis of the
program**

Paraphrasing/summarising:

Non-for-profit organisation, owned by XXXXX in Queensland, working across all three sectors. The company has no boundaries, and this enables them to collaborate across the country, in any system, and work for education departments in any state or territory. Focus on Leadership Development and Leadership Development for Rural and Remote areas, working across Australia. Some international work in New Zealand and the Philippines. XXXXX relies on the systems, departments or sectors for funding, and they tailor programs to suit the context and the needs of their client. Some partners who select XXXXX's open programs off-set or subsidise people for the cost of accessing the program (\$1500-\$5000). More often, systems contact XXXXX to offer a program for a set number of cohorts for a specified timeframe (18 months or a year), price would be something like \$120, 000 for a cohort of 30 people in a 18-month program. XXXXX then works with the client for selecting participants, but often the client is mostly or fully in charge of selection, promotion/advertising etc.

Big programs run deliberately with a sector (Education Queensland, Independent sector including Catholic Education), influenced/stimulated by XXXXX at the time who had a strong interest in developing leadership out in the regions:

- XXXXX program, equity program, targeting metro and non-metro aspiring leaders, often people currently working as teachers in schools. Focus on capability building. Included five cohorts of 20-25 participants per cohort, running over three years.
 - XXXXX programs, initially called 'high potential future leaders', aiming to grow leaders across the state, focus on metro and rural/remote leaders. Teachers moving to middle-leaders, and middle-leaders moving to principalship (i.e. filling in the next leadership position). Two year program, 100 participants. Started with 50 participants but success and demand led to increasing number. Selecting of high potential leaders, selection process wasn't just best fit or high performing, but focusing on high potential.
 - Teacher training centres – scholarships (\$10000) for high-performing teacher graduates to project them out into the regions.
 - XXXXX – XXXXX helped initiate it, but don't have much involvement now. Cohorts of about 20 people. Taking the lead in your future leadership role in rural and remote schools. Smaller program than XXXXX.
 - Pipeline program – focus on the outer 4 regions in Queensland which have rural/remote schools. Teacher leader, middle leader, deputy principal and principal pipelines. Built up with XXXXX. Tailored for different regions depending on their strategic directions. Running over the last 3-4 years. Some regions approach XXXXX to run these programs, and include 20-70 participants.
 - Kindergarten training with the Early Years branch in XXXXX.
 - XXXXX, equity program.
-

XXXXX perform evaluations , and ‘pulse checks’ during, immediately after, at three months and six months following the program. XXXXX performed a literature review for XXXXX which informs their leadership framework across five domains. XXXXX considers their work research and evidence based, with a strong monitoring, needs analysis and data collection process.

Whereas a company like XXXXX, which is part of the department and doesn’t have to go through procurement, gets \$30m to run an instructional leadership over two years, XXXXX ‘live or die off every contract’ (01:19:00) and get a couple hundred thousand to complete a project.

Summaries of emerging themes

Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Attracting teachers	1	Financial incentives	<p>Regarding XXXXX (00:07:00) “The interesting thing there we found in the data is dollars wasn’t a significant factor in many of these students’ applications or wanting to be part of the program. We found overwhelmingly, in terms of when we did that program, in surveying students that might be likely to go out in rural and remote, that their main factors were: they wanted to be identified as being on a projected career path with professional development to be able to help them grow and develop – so that professional development was key to being out there. And then also the ability, once they’ve done some time out there, could they be promised a place of choice when they came back in. We called that boomerang. So, do some time out there for a reasonable amount and come back in. And then came dollars.... But certainly the learning for me was that it wasn’t all about dollars, it was about professional learning and identification of their future career path and opportunities.”</p> <p>(00:08:00) “And obviously complexity was always around making sure they had good housing, and other good networks around them.”</p> <p>(01:14:16) “One of the biggest things we’ve found, and we do a lot of work with beginning teachers, is they want to be recognised, they want to be connected, they want opportunities for career progression over ‘I’ll take \$5000 if I go over there’ ... how do you make them feel that out there is actually better than they do in the centre”</p>

	2	High potential teachers	(00:16:56) “In the XXXXX program, and that was particularly unique, we learnt a lot about selecting what we call high potential leaders. So, part of this selection process was not just a ‘best fit’ or applicants showing us that they were high performing, we were actually focused on the research behind high potential as opposed to high performing. We did a lot of research around what’s the difference between a high potential and high performing person, which they may not have shown their high-performing-ness at that stage. So that’s a different way of selecting future leaders. Normally we see high performing people and they get selected for programs but often they have a ceiling, high potential people have still more potential to go...it was very forward-thinking in terms of getting ahead of the curve, how do you find these people that aren’t yet visible in your system and pull them out to grow them.”
	3	Incentive equity	(00:27:00) “hard to fill was anywhere that hadn’t had a teacher – or rather, a position that a principal couldn’t fill in their school for more than 6 months or a year. That’s how we picked up that they were target areas. ... They didn’t care about whether we were giving them bursaries or not – however, we had to work through some union issues, which is: why would I give [this person] a bursary to go to XXXXX and you’ve just landed there and the only difference between us is I’m Maths and you’re English? So, why would I get a bursary when you’re not eligible for it? So we had to work through some heightened environments around that as well.”
	4	Generating a pool of applicants	(00:30:45) “it was interesting, the program wasn’t to go into a program and be placed, it’s not that. It’s: go through the program, and now you’re identified, you’ve done the program so the regions can then go through a normal process to select, but what we’re hoping is that they’ve been heightened, they’re aspirational now, they’re prepared if they get tapped on the shoulder. So the outcome wasn’t to place them in there and see if they retain, it was actually to prepare them and their willingness to go.... To generate a pool... Obviously, open transparent recruitment processes are: advertise a job, whoever goes in we’ll select them through that. That’s very authentic. So, it’s not so much that we’re building them and they get the position, it’s about generating that pool.” This seems to be the general model of the work that XXXXX does – (00:38:00) there won’t usually be a goal or outcome required to getting a certain number of applicants or filling a certain number of positions, the goal or outcome is just targeting areas of need, getting people into better jobs/positions, or improving their leadership skills or behaviours. Commonly clients ask about impact, such as impact on student outcomes, but XXXXX can’t really provide this.
Rural and remote staffing	5	Stimulating rural/regional staffing from XXXXX	(00:20:30) “[XXXXX] at the time had a very strong interest in developing leadership across the state, and rather than that happen out in the regions, he had a very strong context of we want to

	<p>stimulate this from the support and stimulate from the centre... so it was a very senior level of 'we're going to respond to the needs of our rural and remote schools and what are the levels we're going to do that, from staffing them, building capabilities, to getting leadership out there'."</p> <p>However, the issue that they faced in actually achieving staffing out in these contexts was that even if they trained a cohort of 30, there was no guarantee that these participants would actually apply to go and teach/lead out in these contexts (00:53:00) "you can put lots of people through XXXXX or XXXXX but it's really then up to them whether they are going to stick their hand up to fill those positions. Hopefully we've formed a pool that's ready for that, because that's the incentive, but it doesn't guarantee that we're going to populate the school that we want to populate."</p>
6 Issues of equity	<p>XXXXXX response to issues of equity – culminated in the creation of the XXXXX and XXXXX program. XXXXX had a number of portfolios in it and was a big project, XXXXX was caught up in that, which aimed to raise the perception of the profession.</p> <p>(00:23:30) "The minister was very interested in that, when she came in, she sat with a range of stakeholders – school principals in rural and remote areas were just pulling their hair out saying I'm having to run all the classrooms myself because I can't get a teacher in or they're here for two weeks then they're gone – so she was very heightened around that. At the same level, it was why aren't we high quality leaders in our schools? We had Principals going in, same sort of equivalence as teachers, sometimes they didn't have a principal that was there so the deputy is stepping up all the time or someone else is having to run the school. Or they'd go there for a short term and then try and get out. So there was a needs-driven, stakeholder-driven – from parents, families and principals themselves – saying we've got to do something to encourage people out."</p>
7 Overwhelm of new programs	<p>(00:29:00) "there wasn't many glitches, sometimes the regions themselves – the next level down from central but above schools is the regional systems – suddenly they were getting told that we're doing <i>with</i> you but doing <i>to</i> you, giving you lots of different opportunities. and it sort of overwhelmed them. Well okay we now have an Indigenous Coordinator, we've got a STEM Coordinator, we're offering programs for principals in this. So suddenly a lot of the things were happening all at once and that was their only complaint, was that 'wow, all these packages are coming all at once'. So that was a learning as well. How do we make sure we engage them fully in the conversation, so they have the ability to immerse them and contextualise the programs, and not be bombarded with 5 or 6 programs at once?"</p>

	8	Partnering	(00:33:00) “The university piece was a really important partnership. There’s no funding exchange there but there were lots of connections we could do to enhance their programs, and then enhance our opportunities to try to fill them in schools”” ... “Our partnership with the department is where all the funding comes from. We don’t have money as a non-for-profit to be able to fund big programs.”
	9	Assimilating teachers	(00:50:30) “ You can’t take a graduate teacher, or anybody really, from metro and take them straight out to rural and remote. You’ve actually got to do a bunny hop. Which is, metro, we’ll take you to Townsville or somewhere there, where you can experience a bit more, and from there after a year you’ll be more assimilated, so we’ll get you ready to take you out a bit further. The A-Z thing doesn’t work. Often. You need a transiting thing to assimilate them and get them ready. ”
Commitment to HTS	10	Longevity of the program	(00:28:30) “ It’s a shame that sometimes the projects only last two years, so then we’re disconnected from keeping engaged with them [the teachers/participants]. So, that on-going connection, that promise to connect and be with them, especially if you’re placing people, but not only them, other people in the school as well, that really focused agenda needs to be long-term. ”
	11	?	(00:46:46) “First thing to think about is probably quality teachers. If we particularly look at – more likely the people which are going to be able to move out to rural and remote, or hard to fill schools, are generally your early career teachers. Because most systems, and if I talk about the department, we have an agenda of ‘in the first couple of years know that you’ll be transferred because that’s how our state works’. So in my day, when I started teaching, I knew that if I did one year at XXXXX and then I was out at XXXXX for three years. And I knew it was going to happen so I just accepted that, that was part of going into that workforce. There has been a change in culture and thinking of younger people now, indications are that they don’t necessarily see it as the ultimate career pathway, that I’ll be a teacher and I’ll be a teacher for the next 30 years.... And so if they’re looking to transfer me, that’s okay, I’ll do something else. We have got this different way of thinking, that they’re more transient between jobs, they’re not thinking teaching has to be there forever for them. Or permanency. We used to say, well if you come out West we’ll offer you permanency... ‘today a lot of younger people are happy for taking a 12- month contract 2kms from where they live and if they’re in an area of high demand such as Math, they can feel assured that they’ll be sought after by local schools. If a teacher believes they are higher quality, they know they’ll be picked up by metro schools. So high quality teachers in rural and remote becomes a pool of teachers who weren’t able to get a job in the metro region. So, offering scholarships means getting high quality teachers out into the regions’.

XXXXX

Project/Program:
XXXXX

Participant role: Manager of XXXXX,
previously school Principal in XXXXX,
Chair of the XXXXX panel for 5 years

Date of interview: 03.03.2021
Time: 01:02:50

**Synopsis of the
program**

Paraphrasing/summarising:

XXXXX, emeritus professor, was the architect of the program. Funding is \$25m over five years (to 31 December 2022). Initially it was three years but this was extended through applications made by the project team.

Came about from the XXXXX initiative via XXXXX, provided to the education department as the only entity that could employ teachers under the Education Act. Groundwork came about in 2017 with four pillars to the project which focus on Early Literacy:

- Targeted teaching (synthetic phonics, letters and sounds, explicit instruction) between Kinder and Year Two
- 0-3 or better Early Years Learning Care (honouring families as first educators)
- Improving regular attendance
- Increasing community engagement

XXXXX supports schools and service delivery partnerships with schools. In the first year of the program there was 10 schools, 19 in the second year, then 23 and now 24 schools. Schools could opt-in to the program, with buy in by the Principal and the teachers at that school and other staff (board, chair, community). Schools have to do the targeted teaching pillar (non-negotiable), but the other three pillars were optional. Funding is provided to offset school participation, such as teacher relief and travel.

Contract (funding) for the services of XXXXX (XXXXX) – preparing teachers for early years literacy, preparing them better for HTS schools.

Participant currently works with a team of 20 educators drawn from XXXXX.

Oversight from the minister of primary industry and education minister. Partnerships include XXXXX, cross-sectoral partners including Association of Independent Schools WA, Catholic Education WA, Department of Education WA plus XXXXX, plus some intensives run by private organisation XXXXX.

There was some trepidation due to the legacies of initiatives such as XXXXX.

Summaries of emerging themes

Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
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Attracting teachers	1	Choosing candidates	Speaking from experience at XXXXX “When we went to staffing to do our workforce profile, and we looked at people’s CVs, whether they were established teachers or graduates, we looked for certain things. They were around the pedagogical knowledge of how to teach, what that looks like, the science of learning, the science of teaching. Because what – and I’ll use this term very loosely – sometimes in the past XXXXX or the more remote locations of Western Australia have been a place for, perhaps for people to hide.... I can go and hide in the bush... type of thing... and to me that’s the racism of low expectations. It’s about well I can go and do that because it’s alright, I’m just teaching in a remote school, no one really cares that much about those kids or those locations ”
	2	Hiring culture	(00:12:00) “ I’ve worked very, very hard to ensure that people who come to our schools have come for the right reasons , and like their first questions aren’t ‘how much allowance do I get?’ and ‘how often do I get to go to Perth?’, ‘what’s my accommodation like?’, it’s more about ‘tell me about the community, how many kids will I have in my class, what would their learning styles be? What do I need to be aware of?’”
	3	XXXXX	In speaking about their role as Chair of the XXXXX panel, (00:14:40) “ I had one person who missed out on a job who said ‘but I’ve got two mortgages, what am I supposed to do?’. I don’t really care about your mortgages, this is about the education of the most vulnerable and most at risk in our community. And that’s what we cared about and still care about today” Currently doing an overhaul of the XXXXX as they’re not attracting sufficient teachers for country service. (00:54:00) He stresses the importance of trying to re-frame remote teaching as first choice rather than last choice.
	4	Financial incentives	(00:15:40) “if you work for 3 years straight in a remote school you get 3 months off on full pay. If you work 4 years in a remote, you get 6 months on full pay. If you’re, say XXXXX, which is XXXXX south of Broome, you get \$15,000 a year allowance. Free housing, two trips to Perth, a trip to Broome, you don’t pay electricity, you don’t pay water, so there’s a number of financial incentives to be in a remote school. Plus after 2 years, you get your permanency.”

Challenges in HTS	5	Turnover	In thinking about 60-80% attrition of teachers in these remote schools, (00:23:01) “As a principal, it was about how the school’s culture and a number of other factors, and about whether people had done their time. If people have done 4 years and got 6 months off and they were permanent, and that was the end of their time in XXXXX, then they return to Perth or went to another region in country WA.”
	6	Attracting a certain type of teacher	(00:50:30) “convincing people to come to regions for the right reasons. We used to use a term, loosely, we used to call them the M&Ms. The medicated, the mull heads, the missionaries, the mercenaries and the misfits. And I didn’t want any of those 5 in my school. Now, I shouldn’t have used that language and I haven’t used that language for a long time. But we didn’t want people who thought that this was somewhere that because I didn’t fit into a Perth school, I’m going to go to XXXXX. We don’t want people coming, missionaries, to- And I, when I say that about people who come and want to push either Catholic or Protestant or whatever religion onto communities. And being saviours. We’re not riding in on our white horses to save Aboriginal people. You have to have an element of empathy but you also have to have a huge element of practicality.... You have to be practicable. Because you have to think about what can I do and what can I influence in the time that I can as a teacher, a principal, a deputy or whatever at that school. You’re not there to save people. That’s not our role. Our role is to encourage people to come to school, feel that they are welcome, that their families can be engaged with what goes on at the school and that they have a say in what happens in their school and their community, and that the two co-exist. ” (00:52:30) “I always talked to people about standards. The standards you walk past is the standard you accept. If you allow things, if you allow that, you’re teaching people that that’s okay. ”
	7	Getting high quality teachers in remote schools	(from 00:55:00) He emphasises the need for high quality education for the vulnerable populations of remote communities, and the challenges of poverty and racism in these regions. (01:02:00) “we have to make sure we give these little kids the best possible opportunity to succeed. And to make the

changes so that they can be justifiably proud of who they are and where they come from. And that's what we have got to continue to do, and I see XXXXX as being able to do that."

**Accountability /
commitment to
longevity**

8 Program timeline

In speaking about the application to extend the program from 3 years to 5 years, and the intention of the program to increase literacy in the early years, (00:36:22) **"a 2-year period is not long enough, a 2- or 3-year period is not long enough to be able to do that. And all of the research, and all of the data shows that you need, for this to be able to be measurable... it has to be over a 5-year period. And that's why it was increased to 5 years."**

XXXXXX

Project/Program: XXXXX		Participant role: Previously school principal, currently working as an education consultant with remote schools to recruit teachers and principals	Date of interview: 11.03.2021 Time: 00:58:12
Synopsis of the program	This was a general conversation about HTS attracting, preparing, and retaining. The participant was involved with XXXXX, but this was not the focus of the interview, more of an information/expertise seeking interview.		
Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Attracting teachers	1	Status of the profession	(00:10:55) “they’ve got a problem now, we can’t staff schools in Cairns. Cairns is not a bad place to live, let me tell you. But you can’t get teachers to come here. Rents are high, and teachers can pick and choose. And we have departments that make stupid decisions, which actually, excuse the French, they fuck it up so badly that it takes years to recover from.” (00:12:30) “the bottom line is at the moment, I think, we’re in a supply that doesn’t meet demand. And in a context of that, two things happen. Hopeless teachers thrive, because they can just go and get a job anywhere they want, they can write any bullshit they want and get a job. And the second thing that happens is, the more undesirable hard-to-staff schools and centres, they suffer first. It’s not the green leafy suburb schools that suffer... when you create a system that inherently disadvantages your remote schools – not intended to do so but has done so – that’s very difficult to repair. ” (00:49:50) “I would rank leadership as our number one issue with recruiting quality teachers. It’s equal. It’s not a competition, you’ve got to have both. ”
	2	Incentives	(00:09:18) “ money is not the answer. Giving people more money doesn’t actually solve the problem. You need to give them other things. I think young people, I mean, the gen, the new gen, they have a different view of what they see as an incentive. Lifestyle, cultural interaction, opportunities to work in a different environment, opportunities to learn different things.”

	<p>(00:19:00) “the systems just don’t get it, they still think you can do the same to get teachers to go remote that you did in 1970 for 2020. You just can’t do that. These young ones are fucking savvy. They’re smart, they’re not gullible idiots.”</p> <p>(00:34:15) “in our schools, in our two schools, we don’t do 6-month contracts or 3-month contracts. You’re given a permanent job. But we do a very rigorous interview, we do a 3-part interview process. We do a face-to-face, we do like this [online], and then we bring them together for three days and we do a program with them, and then we offer them a job...that’s the only way you can, we can’t compete with the Brisbane schools, because the Brisbane schools can offer them a permanent job straight away, that’s what these independent schools can do now. And I think it’s the right thing to do to people, I think people deserve the security, they want to get a bank loan or whatever it might be, they should be saying yeah, it’s a permanent job.”</p> <p>(00:37:40) “we’re not interested in contract, contract, contract, contract, we want to know that you want to stay here. We want the community to know that you want to stay there. Because the first question that the kids ask these teachers when they go on their first holiday ‘hey miss, you coming back here? Are you coming back here?’ ...it’s not fair on anyone, for the stability, for the culture of the school”</p> <p>(00:44:50) “one of the key reasons the good teachers will go to a school is because there’s a principal there they want to work with, which is leadership”. He makes a point about effective leadership in schools coming down to delegation, and knowing where mentors are needed (i.e. to support beginning teachers) to keep the system and processes running smoothly.</p>
3	<p>Attracting a certain type of teacher</p> <p>(00:15:00) “It used to be the 5 M’s but might be the 7 M’s now. The missionaries, the mercenaries, the misfits, the mad, there’s a whole lot of the words that are described. Well, that’s what you’re dealing with. You’re dealing with the concept that they’re going to a school that’s deficient, that the places are not good, there is not going to be support around. Unless you can sell to the young teachers that they’re going to go to a place that’s fantastic and they will learn so much more than what they’ll learn at XXXXX or XXXXX. And the ones who do come to us and do, they just say, wouldn’t have traded this in for the world, the experience, the development, the</p>

		<p>PD, the access to the cutting edge of educational trends. So, we're seeing that side, which is a plus side, but the down side of it is we've got a system that's inherently not catering for the recruitment and retention of teachers to hard-to-staff schools"</p> <p>(00:19:33) "good teachers, will go to schools where there's good teachers. So, if you got a school with good teachers in it, like really good teachers – engaging, really top-class teachers – guess what, good teachers want to go there"</p> <p>(00:36:40) "I think you've got to be literate and be able to communicate and understand things. But the very, very, very best teachers that we've got, and in my experience, aren't the best teachers academically. Because you can be good academically, but you mightn't be good as the other bits...how to engage with kids, or teenagers"</p>
	4 Retention strategy	<p>(00:07:00) "You can't just have an attraction strategy, you've got to have a retention strategy as well. And if they're not married together, then all for naught. No good attracting people if you haven't got a way of keeping them involved in what you're doing."</p> <p>(00:26:20) "We don't want them to live there for 20 years. We don't want them to do that. What we want them to do is be there for 4-5 years, 6 is great at the upper end. 3rd and 4th year of your teaching life in a remote community are your best years. You know the community, they know you, you know the kids, they know you. You know the systems, and also you've actually got capability. You can walk in in front of a class of kids and you can teach, get success"</p> <p>(00:53:00) "I think the overall big picture is the quality assurance of teachers coming in to the teaching service, but also how do we build their capacity to remain productive in that."</p>
Accountability / commitment to longevity	5 Investing in the long term, corporate memory	<p>(00:05:20) "some things have changed but I think departments by their very nature, they're big beasts that are very difficult to manage, the corporate memory doesn't hold onto the things that work well"</p> <p>(00:40:30) "You want long-term sustainable models of improvement, and how do you do that? Well you've got to put some guarantees in place... why do we expect schools or systems to go 4</p>

		<p>years? Well, the first year they're still working out what they're going to do so the money doesn't do anything for the first 6 months at least. By the fourth year, they're evaluating, or halfway through the third year and everyone is shutting shop and going home"</p> <p>(00:52:00) "Don't spend millions of dollars on attendance programs that are a failure, that are going backwards, spend millions of dollars – and they talk about it all the time, oh we're going to build capacity of teachers, how many times have I heard that in the last 5 years? And I don't see any remarkable difference. I don't see any remarkable difference. So if they have the money and they have the will, what they should do is invest in teachers, invest in training of teachers at pre-service level, developing them post, then giving teachers the status in society that they get in the Nordic countries, in Sweden and Denmark, not what they get here. We get equated to be like paid at the same level as a bloody taxi driver, or whatever, I mean it's shit. They've got to bite the bullet."</p> <p>(00:55:00) "This is an urgent issue. And we're still going to have is young people in remote schools and rural schools, and difficult to staff schools, that are going to be missing out. If they only realise that the investment that they made would make such long-term outcomes, they just don't get it"</p>
6	Reviews	<p>In speaking about XXXXX as the 'gold standard' of programs that were running in this space, (00:18:00) "the government, in its infinite wisdom, did a review. And you know what I've found, when people do a review of things, normally they fuck it up even worse...and what they ended up with was an animal that doesn't mean anything, doesn't do anything."</p>
7	Funding cycles	<p>In speaking about getting good teachers out into the regions, and trying to get programs up and running for this, (00:00:50) "the potential of it was incredible, but getting the education departments to sign up to things like that are just incredibly difficult. Because what they'll do is exactly what you've just outlined, they'll be 2-year or 4-year cycles of funding. Once that's gone, oh well, don't worry about that now, the problems not there anymore or the issues gone away. Well, that's just not true."</p>

(00:02:15) “when you’re a victim of those cycles of funding, government changes etc etc.
You’re dealing with a very strange animal that is very difficult to contain.”

(00:42:40) “it’s a very sad day when you’ve got to rely on private funding to sustain quality
education in remote schools, gives you an idea of where the priorities are, of government”

XXXXX

MULTIPLE PROGRAMS

Project/Program: XXXXX	Participant roles: Participant 1: Acting Director of XXXXX Participant 2: Executive Director of XXXXX, including branches such as the XXXXX Participant 3: 5-6 years involved in the supply initiatives within XXXXX	Date of interview: 19.03.2021 Time: 01:03:56	
Synopsis of the program	<p>This interview involved three stakeholders/representatives from the XXXXX.</p> <p>No specific program was spoken about, the main focus of the interview was on what the department has done to address supply and demand issues over time, and their incentive-based approach to attracting teachers.</p> <p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>The XXXXX was interested in knowing what the threshold is for attracting a teacher to a specific school, in financial terms primarily. Plus, what stops principals from utilising the funding they already have to address their staffing needs.</p> <p>XXXXX partners / contracts with XXXXX, XXXXX, XXXXX, XXXXX, XXXXX, XXXXX and XXXXX. Many of these partnerships are new partnerships/initiatives, and therefore they have limited capacity to report on their successes and/or challenges.</p> <p>The most recent supply and demand report that is most recent and available is 2018.</p> <p>They offer an Early Childhood accelerated program because of an investment in scholarships driven by an election commitment. This provides diploma qualified teachers to be bachelor qualified.</p>		
Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Policy approach	1	Devolved school model, global budget, autonomous schools	(00:05:30) ‘Schools of the future policy, which devolved school decision making down the principal model. Since then, school governance is centred on a global school budget for any individual school’ “rather than funding particular activities in a school, we fund a school as a whole, and the principal has substantial devolved responsibility for using that money to deliver schooling to their student

		<p>cohort. And one of the parts of those operations might be how they manage their teacher supply challenges and needs.”</p> <p>They speak about this model as needs-based and has a fixed-base, that is, more disadvantaged schools have higher funding per student. (00:16:00) They state that this is based on ‘the student’s parents’ background (occupation, level of educational attainment), as predictive factors of educational outcomes i.e. in NAPLAN.</p> <p>(00:08:30) “we believe in the schools being autonomous effectively, or semi-autonomous, and they have a devolved school budget and quite a large range of powers over which the principal can make decisions. But the corollary of that is that we have less power over the schools compared to other jurisdictions...we can’t appoint a principal, for instance. The school council in conjunction with the regional executive appoints a principal. We can’t appoint a teacher. Even if I have this absolute Rockstar teacher here, and I have a school that doesn’t have any teachers ...we can’t place that teacher in that school. They’d have to apply through the front door, through a merit-based process, like anyone else... while the schools have quite a lot of power, the department has less power, then, over the employment and hiring decisions of the schools. Schools don’t always act in their best interest in the long term sometimes. They may or may not.”</p>
2	Dual focus	<p>(00:07:00) “when we’re thinking about supply in Victoria, there’s a kind of dual focus in how we develop policy and one of those is what’s the role of the principal in managing their own attraction and retention approaches? As well as what support – beyond the global school budget – should central government provide to both lift the aggregate supply of teachers across the system as well as put our fingers on the scale to those schools that might need more support”. This may be total number of staff, as well as teachers with particular specialisations.</p>
3	Funding for sub-scale schools	<p>(00:22:00) XXXXX has a fixed-based funding model, which provides funding for sub-scale schools (i.e. small schools) to meet minimum requirements (“base level of provision”). They state that this would be funding for a principal, who is also a teacher, who also maintains school grounds. Schools do lose funding based on enrolments.</p>

	4	Influencing factors for initiatives (00:31:00) ‘baby boom’, increasing demand, “uncapping of university places... led to a large increase in ITE enrolments and supply. So, from 2010 onwards, we saw a massive increase in supply and demand. We’ve then observed that supply has waned slightly in the most recent years, at least plateaued... but we’ve continued to see this population growth. So, our most recent supply and demand and supply report shows that we are facing a potential deficit in the number of secondary teachers we train each year compared to how many we need. It’s a bit hard to call that a ‘shortage’ because we have a large number of teachers who are registered, but not working in a school.” (00:32:45) “We have a volume challenge, and a distributional challenge. Which is, we might have enough teachers, but they’re not in the places that we need them to be.”
	5	Oversupply the workforce (00:43:00) “Supply and demand isn’t a static thing, it’s a dynamic thing.... In terms of an employer, what you want is a flooded labour market so that you’ve got your guaranteed supply so there’s no point, you wouldn’t put an incentive or a supply initiative into a market where there’s already an oversupply of teachers. So those two things interact, and there is a case for supply initiatives to be fixed, of a fixed time frame, because they’re not necessarily something that an intervention in the market that you might need for a prolonged period of time. I’d be cautious about looking at something and saying, fixed-term, the fixed-term nature of a supply initiative is inherently a bad thing. It might actually be by design, because that’s the length of time that an intervention might be required.” (00:47:15) “We have enough registered teachers in Victoria – so, people who could walk into a classroom tomorrow and take a class, without having to do anything else – to meet our supply needs. But that doesn’t help if none of those teachers want to teach in schools that need them. So if you’re talking about a thin market in some places, you’re going into questions about local supply and demand, local-level mismatches in supply and demand”
Attracting teachers	6	Graduate teachers, and targeting supply to schools that need them (00:10:00) “You want schools to see the longer vision of ‘it’d be great to hire young teachers now so they’ll stay in your school for a long time’ but they may or may not think that way, and we can’t influence that necessarily”

	<p>This is an interesting perspective, showing that XXXXX believes that young, inexperienced teachers are the best choice for schools who need them. Rather than high performing, experienced teachers.</p> <p>In other jurisdictions (i.e. Tasmania) “they get all the graduate teachers, and they farm them out to the schools that need them. And they can send the best grads to the worst schools. We can never do that. Actually, the best grads will end up in the best schools.” (00:11:30) “in Tasmania, they can get all the grads, line them up, best to worse – or most promising to least promising perhaps – and target the ones they think are going to be great toward disadvantaged schools if they want to. But we could not do that. Cannot do that.”</p> <p>(00:10:30) “schools compete for the best talent as well, and that has some positive effects, but it probably has some externalities, that competition”</p>
7	<p>Incentives, financial</p> <p>(00:19:20) “Just because schools can do something, and make decisions in their best interests, doesn’t mean they necessarily will. So there is some kind of cultural barrier I guess to advertising a job at a above the pay rate, and some schools might feel like, ‘well, if we advertise a maths teacher +\$9K, which we can do under EBA, oh that won’t go down well with the teachers we have’, or maybe they just don’t think of it. Or maybe, who knows. But it wasn’t being used all that much, and potentially nine grand is not enough to actually entice someone to actually pick up sticks and move to the bush”</p> <p>(00:27:00) Incentive schemes run in 3 parts – initial one-off payment to get them there, 3 years of retention payments, and PD funding.</p>
8	<p>Other incentives</p> <p>We asked about other supports that weren’t financial incentives:</p> <p>(00:26:00) Retraining programs for STEM has been an approach in the past, and currently have a secondary school program running.</p> <p>(01:00:30) “We do have enough supply for most of our positions. Where we have trouble is distributing that supply to geographic locations and certain schools which are disadvantaged. But we do have some supply constraints in terms of specialised subjects. And those shortages have a lot of context in that, you know, Australia doesn’t have enough Mathematics graduates full stop,</p>

		<p>across all professions, so that flows through to we don't have enough Mathematics teachers. And therefore, we don't have enough Mathematics teachers in rural areas. And it's those intersections of those challenges which create the biggest issues."</p> <p>(00:28:00) They speak about other supports, but wanted to refer us onto policy documents which outline this.</p> <p>(00:53:45) "I think what you will observe is that we've stopped so much investing in the undergraduate space, in terms of scholarships, and we've turned our mind much more – or the department's policies moved a lot more to – investing in accelerated masters, employment-based programs, and then initiatives to redistribute supply."</p> <p>These programs do aim to prepare teachers for teaching in HTS contexts, but because there is no bonding or capacity to bond/contract teachers to these locations, those graduates can and do simply move into Metro teaching spaces anyway.</p>
	9 Accelerated or fast-tracking	<p>Providing support for universities to develop courses to fast-track teachers (recent graduates and career changers as the primary cohort). This comes on the back of money provided over the years to the XXXXX program, to XXXXX internship program, and the XXXXX program. (00:35:00) "We're ramping up investment generally in employment-based programs, or fast/faster initial teacher education and this is just the latest iteration of that really"</p> <p>(00:36:30) They state the challenges for this cohort of people who fall within these categories and access these accelerated programs, include: starting salary and forgoing income to transition to being a teacher from their existing career. These programs aim to lower the barriers (i.e. time out of the workforce, income support).</p>
Accountability / commitment to longevity	10 Budget timelines, and anticipation/beliefs about how much time = effective	<p>(00:41:00) "there's no hard and fast rule around that. So when we seek funding through our budget process, and usually you seek funding for a determined number of years, and a component of that funding will be some money to evaluate that program. And if the evaluation comes in with some good findings, you've got a fairly good chance of managing to get further funding. But not every budget bid has the same number of years attached to it, it can be variable"</p>

(00:41:35) “it’s a combination of effectiveness and need. Would be, in the perfect world, is the program effective? And is it still required? Would be the two questions government would ask when considering a particular program that might have its funding lapsing. But all those things are in the budget papers, when a particular initiative is funded, it’s clear in the budget papers how many years it goes for. It’s then a decision for government about its effectiveness and whether it’s still required as to whether the funding would continue.”

11 Precarious funding via Commonwealth

(00:58:00) “Bearing in mind that I think your research is funded by the Commonwealth, if there was one challenge that we would want to overcome it would be **commonwealth funding for our universities to actually increase the number of teachers going through ITE**. So, I would put that at the top of the list, because regardless of what we do, **unless that pipeline is spinning out more teachers, then we’re not going to - then we can do every supply initiative in the world, but that’s just a hard constraint on the number of teachers that are going to be available to us.**”

Participant 3 provided the following supplementary information via email:

Please see below some further information to supplement our conversation.

Information on current Victorian initiatives:

- <https://www.vic.gov.au/teachthefuture>
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/careers/teacher/Pages/targeted-initiative-attract-more-teachers.aspx>
- <https://engage.vic.gov.au/next-steps-victorian-early-childhood-workforce-strategy>
- <https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/smsi>
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/learningdev/vicstem/Pages/schools.aspx> - see the section on Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists (PMSS) initiative
- <https://www.vic.gov.au/accelerated-learning-program>
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/tapp.aspx>
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/intteached.aspx>

Features of the Victorian education system that we mentioned during our conversation:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/special-payments/overview>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-resource-package/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-resource-package-srp-equity-funding-student-based-funding/policy>
- <https://mpb.vic.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

Additional resources discussed during our conversation:

- Victorian Teacher Supply and Demand report: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/profdev/careers/TSDR-2018-final-report.pdf>
- Article written by Paul Weldon about teacher supply and demand: <https://research.acer.edu.au/policyinsights/2/>
- AITSL 2019 data report: <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/ite-data-report-2019>
- <https://www.dese.gov.au/teaching-and-school-leadership/resources/teach-australia-program-evaluation-report>

Previous Victorian initiatives:

- New Graduate incentive: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/profdev/Pages/new-graduate-incentive-program.aspx>
- A list of initiatives in 2012 and 2013 in sections 1.5 to 1.7 of this report: https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1027&context=tll_misc

Previous initiatives are also summarised in the Department's annual reports:

- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/200304deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 14 and 15
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/200405deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 116 and 117
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/200506deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 130
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/200607deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 119 and 120
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/200708deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 135 and 136
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/200809deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 139 and 140

- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/200910deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 134 and 135
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/201011deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 149 and 150
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/201112deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 128 and 129
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/department/201213deecdannualreport.pdf> - page 140 and 141

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Project/Program: XXXXX	Participant role: Teacher/graduate, previous background working with children and people with Disabilities for 16 years before coming into the XXXXX program.	Date of interview: 30.03.2021 Time: 01:03:33
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Synopsis of the program	<p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>Participant had an undergraduate degree in writing and literature, and ran a climbing gym for 3 years before the program, and coaching young people for climbing competitions.</p> <p>The main feature of the XXXXX program was a larger amount of placement time, in a school, from early on in the course. A handful of schools were part of the program, who were looking for English, Maths and Science teachers. The program came about seemingly because of a teacher shortage in specific specialisations in Western and South Western Sydney regions.</p> <p>Participants in XXXXX needed to commit to a double major. Participants were assigned to a school, and after a few weeks they would start prac. The year this participant went through, there were 5 participants in the program and one student failed the placement component, and so was considered “unsuccessful”. Two ended up at XXXXX and one went into a Selective school. There didn’t seem to be a retention strategy in place, aside from the permanent job offer/promise.</p> <p>On Mondays, she would go to university and do 12 hours of classes. Tues-Thurs she was on placement. Fridays she worked paid employment. There was one week of observations before starting teaching.</p> <p>Students needed to do a community service component as part of their degree, which included XXXXX for students who elected to do that.</p> <p>It was a 9-month accelerated program, and in Term 4 of the year, they got approval to do casual teaching and began teaching.</p> <p>Participant taught at XXXXX for 7 years, and XXXXX for 6 years. Now returned to Metro on LSL, and still on LWOP.</p>
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Preparing	1	Immersion approach	(00:04:00) “So it was real deep end kind of stuff, like, in you go. But really such great preparation for teaching in the end”

		<p>(00:06:07) “the point of it was, I suppose, was to get teachers into the schools quickly. And so the school that I did my prac at gave me a casual job for Term 4 and then I was a targeted grad, and I started there full-time the next year, permanently.”</p> <p>(00:34:28) “Limited blocks of prac don’t prepare you for teaching.”</p>
2	Personal motivation	<p>(00:07:23) “I guess, I was drawn to the kind of schools that they were talking about I didn’t go into teaching because I want to teach at a fancy private school or anything like that. I was, it is about social justice for me. So, I think, the schools that were on offer, were really interesting, challenging schools. And I just thought, yeah, this seems like the way to do it for me.”</p> <p>(00:08:55) “It was the social justice side of it, I guess. And just the idea also that there was a real targeted need. You know, I wasn’t just going to become a teacher and then go find a school that might want me. It was about schools who were really wanting people to be in there.”</p> <p>The participant speaks about her experience as a mature age student was to get in and out with a degree, without having a nice ‘university experience’.</p> <p>The participants experience working with young people for several years prior to teaching seemed to help her integrate into school teaching.</p>
3	Placement to casual to permanency pipeline	<p>(00:09:50) They speak about having done the prac at the one school, got casual teaching there, and then moving straight into a permanent position at the same school. They express feeling a bit ‘spoilt’ at this pipeline, and that they might not have gotten the experience of going to several different schools and getting a range of experience. In this case, it seemed that this pipeline really prepared her to teach at the school and stay on for 7 years.</p>
4	Preparing for HTS, curriculum in the course	<p>(00:16:00) “I think they tried to give us a consciousness that we would be going into schools where there would be a mix of kids. That was the expectation I suppose. That schools would be all tricky in various ways. So, I don’t think there was much else specific, apart from this one subject, because mostly they were talking lots about high expectations and maintaining expectations for schools even when the kids were from vulnerable backgrounds.”</p>

		<p>(00:17:00) “That’s a nice message [high expectations], but it doesn’t prepare people for working for the kinds of the kids you are going to meet in those kinds of schools. I don’t think it prepares you for the level of trauma you’re going to encounter amongst young people in those schools.”</p> <p>They speak about their prior experience working with vulnerable children and young people and people with disabilities, which raised her awareness on moving into that role.</p> <p>(00:30:20) “I think there was very high staff turnover the first 2/3 years I was there, and that was mostly behaviour management issues. People not being prepared well enough to understand how to manage a classroom that was so often rowdy or chaotic, or those kinds of things. ... I suppose it was a thing, and it did get talked about, a bit of racism perhaps around XXXXX. It’s a high Arabic population, and that was in the years after the world trade building and all that kind of stuff, and all that real meagre labelling of young Arab males as terrorists... so I can’t imagine that wasn’t an element for some people [in staying at the school]”</p>
5 Cohort model		<p>(00:42:00) She speaks of the sense of connection with the group of students she was studying the intensive program with. “I think we probably benefitted a lot from that, as well as the immersion side of it.”</p>
Attracting teachers to the program	6 Barriers to participation	<p>(00:19:00) “I think the other thing is that, trying to fit in 12 hours of lectures and tutorials, and then three days of teaching. I was also working in the evenings in the Tax Office three or four nights a week, and then on Fridays I babysat my niece and my sister paid me. So if you were not in a financial position, that was extraordinarily difficult. But I had no children, I had no husband. Those kinds of things that might take up a bit of extra time, so I <i>just</i> managed. But a very supportive sister, so I was quite lucky in that respect. So I guess, those kinds of constraints for people if they had children, or were financially not in a position to do that, would be difficult.”</p>
	7 Financial incentives	<p>(00:24:00) “I think it’s a mistake. I think it attracts the wrong kind of teachers and it attracts teachers who are there for that period of time. If you think the incentive, you get the incentive after 3 years, you stay for your 3 years, then you bolt. You don’t look to stay in the community.”</p>

			<p>(00:25:00) “I think that was one of the things at XXXXX is we got 90% rental subsidy. But there was no incentive if you bought your own house there. So there were local teachers who wanted to stay, but for them financially, they almost lost money, because they’re not using teacher housing... it’s too short-sighted and decomplexified”</p> <p>(00:46:10) “I think they need to find ways to support beginning teachers better. And it’s a whole kind of gamut thing, its not like one thing. And giving them money is absolutely not the thing, because then there’s no way to build up your practice if you’re just doing it for the money and then there’s perhaps more expectation that you do what you describe, and kill yourself for the first two years and then go. But I think if they invested a bit more in them in terms of reduced loads for teaching, greater loads for supervising teachers to look after their beginning teachers.”</p>
Retaining teachers	8	Complexity of RRR candidates, i.e. Medical issues	<p>(00:31:30) “For XXXXX, just distance, it’s 8/9 hours from Sydney. There’s very little there in terms of facilities. To go to any kind of health care professional other than a very basic GP or a very basic hospital service, you had to travel 3-4 hours. So if you had any kind of health issues, you couldn’t do it. So that would have restricted it for some people. Teachers had to leave when health issues arose.”</p>
	9	Complexities of the HTS schools	<p>(00:32:30) “And you’re working with a very resistant population out there. XXXXX, the kids were very difficult, but the parents believed in education. Even if they hadn’t had it themselves, or didn’t understand what it entailed, they believed, they knew it was an important thing. But XXXXX, not so much. Teachers not so welcome, perhaps.”</p>
	10	School culture / collegiality	<p>(00:34:55) “Teaching, you just do it all by yourself. It looks so collegial from the outside but a lot of the time you just do it all by yourself. I think, without that awareness, when you go into it and you find you’re in a difficult school and the support from the other teachers is not there. It’s very difficult.”</p> <p>She speaks about her first school as being very supportive of new teachers, that they weren’t expected to do programming, and were provided with resources to teach by other more experienced teachers.</p>

11 Workload

(00:35:30) “I did hear vaguely that they might have been reducing loads for beginning teachers, so they weren’t on full load like everyone else. I think that’s a good start but there needs to be a corresponding load allocation for supervising teachers, and head teachers, or mentors, or whatever. Just so you’re not so wrecked by your first couple of years. It’s so exhausting that doing it so much by yourself, it’s, again, I don’t know how young people do it. I can’t imagine doing it when I was 25.”

(00:37:00) “I think this expectation that teachers will stay up til midnight, 1 o’clock, all week. Is something that really should be addressed, because I am perhaps old enough to be kind of bolshy enough, to go **well I’m just not doing it.**”

She speaks of need for true recognition of PD, i.e. credit for PD for doing a PhD.

XXXXX – Multiple programs

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Project/Program: XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX	Participant role: Project Manager; CEO of XXXXX (in partnership with QLD Education Dept.); OECD work; and international policy and research for the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation.	Date of interview: 31.03.2021 Time: 01:00:34
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Synopsis of the program	<p>This interview was again not a straightforward interview about a particular program, but more of an information seeking interview about the more broad issues in teacher education for RRR schools. Participant has vast experience working in Australia and the international context in terms of training teachers for these contexts, with a focus on upskilling locals to work in schools.</p> <p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>XXXXX: Project Manager of a 10+ year program addressing tutoring, attendance, helping parents</p> <p>XXXXX: Partnered with 3 state schools in XXXXX. Similar to a Charter school model.</p> <p>XXXXX: It was originally designed as a remote teacher training initiative, in-situ, and in communities. However, it now works out of XXXXX, which means the program is more removed from the original intention of the program and doesn't work.</p>
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Preparing teachers	1	Training local teachers	(00:07:38) "I can tell you just anecdotally. There was, we had a really good teacher aide in one of our campuses, quite young, so maybe early to mid 20s. We brought her down to XXXXX and gave her a part time job and put heaps of support around her. And she enrolled in university. And that's going from the XXXXX to XXXXX, and it didn't work . Even though she had employment, she had all of us supporting her, she had staff helping her with her assignments and getting to uni. It just didn't work. It worked better when she went back to the community where she was working part time as a teacher aide and was doing Distance Ed ...and then she also had the teachers there helping her do the assignments and stuff like that. It was just too hard for her to be away from her family and support network. She had a young child.... It just didn't work, if you're going to make it work, you need to take the teacher aides in those remote communities and work out how you can

		train them in situ and give them the support they need to help them through it. It's just too big of a jump to go to a regional location."
	2 Targeted training for the location/destination	<p>In speaking about XXXXX work, a 6- or 7-day training prior to going into schools, (00:19:45) "there were some things that everyone did, a bit of cultural awareness training and stuff like that. And then there was stuff we did specifically to teach them to teach kids to read, like proper instructional training. You can get away with not knowing how to teach reading if you go to a mainstream school where 75% of kids can read already, you can't get away with that in schools where kids come in with very low language and literacy, or it's not even their first language."</p> <p>(00:22:30) "it's a whole lot of support at every step, and a whole lot of extra effort at every step to attract and then retain."</p>
	3 Placement to casual teaching to permanent pipeline	<p>In speaking about working with universities to get placement students in schools, and then hire them through permission to teach in Term 4 and then offer them a job in the school the following year, (00:21:33) "when they started their first full year of teaching in the next year, they all already had 6 months experience. They knew the kids and they knew the community."</p>
Attracting teachers	4 Long term investment in teachers	<p>(00:08:55) "If you're talking about staffing remote schools, that's what you need to do, I can't see how you can make it work by pulling people out of a remote community for four years without their support network. Even with their support network it's really hard... it's got to be long-term solution to train up locals. It has to be. Because that's when you're going to solve the retention issue there."</p> <p>(00:11:03) "Until you have your 30-year plan in place to train up local staff, which there's obviously multiple aspects about that, including making sure they have a good education – primary school education – from the start. You're going to have to accept that you're going to need to have other people come into the communities, and they're not going to stay. So, if you accept that, what else do you put in place around them and around the curriculum and around how the school runs to make that as efficient and effective as possible."</p>

		(00:38:41) “but the way the department works right, is in reality it costs more to have an experienced teacher out there. But they don’t really do the formula like that. Because they’re obviously on more money than a first-year teacher... it costs a lot of money to move them. If someone actually did the sums, if they recruited and retained better, because it costs like \$10K to move a teacher in and out. So if they got that right and kept teachers there, they would actually save money. ”
5	Incentives, i.e. transfer points	<p>(00:12:55) “the thing that gets teachers up in those remote schools in Queensland for 2 years is the transfer points system. So there’s an incentive to go, you kind of have to go if you want a permanent job. And then they do honour it, when you come back you get your first choice of schools... the problem is when you have 10 new teachers in a school in one go”</p> <p>(00:13:41) “there needs to be incentives for teachers with 5-year experience to go up to XXXXX... even someone with 3 years’ experience would be really helpful, as opposed to all first-year teachers”</p> <p>(00:32:00) “I think one of the answers is... creating Master Teachers. And having that career path where you can stay in the classroom, and earn a lot of money but also have a lot of respect. And also fixes the problem of having first year teachers spending 6 hours a night curriculum planning when they don’t know what they’re doing anyway... it gives people a career path for people who wouldn’t otherwise stay and also provides the support for beginning teachers who don’t have that support at the moment” She does go on to state that this kind of initiative has to be approached slowly, otherwise you get hundreds of Master teachers who share bad practice and don’t do any good.</p>
6	Recruiting couples and friends	<p>(00:14:00) “We started trying to recruit couples because it was just easier. Because they had their own support network there and they tended to stay longer.”</p> <p>She also spoke about teachers coming up with their friends, in brief/passing comments.</p>
7	Housing	(00:14:55) “The housing situation. If people don’t have a good housing situation, they won’t stay. If they’re fighting with their roomies, they won’t stay. If it’s not secure, they don’t stay. All that kind of thing. That’s like bread-and-butter stuff, but really actually important to getting people to stay ”

	8	Beginning teachers in RRR	(00:25:40) “these are the hardest to work in schools, it perplexes me in education why we send the most inexperienced, and also the low performing teachers – let’s face it, you go to these schools if you can’t get a job anywhere else – these are the hardest kids to teach”
Retaining teachers	9	School ethos / school culture	(00:11:30) “Which is what we did in XXXXX. By having structured curriculum and literacy and numeracy programs and tried to create those schools with an ethos that you would see in a private/independent school. If you go to, even state high in Brisbane, or if you go to any of the big private schools, they have an ethos and a culture that doesn’t change no matter who the principal and the teachers that come and go are. So that was the idea we were trying to create in XXXXX, like schools with an ethos and a culture and also structured curriculum programs that teachers could come in and pick it up where the previous left off.... There are going to be teachers who come and go. How do we ameliorate this disruption to the kids? Or disjointed learning? How do we keep their learning going?”
	10	Collegiality, support	(00:15:35) “ If you don’t have someone supporting you with behaviour management, especially as a first-year teacher, you’re going to get frustrated and leave.... But once you’re learning and the kids are learning and you’ve got that support and someone to go to if a kids not getting it, a lot of our teachers starting to stay for the three years rather than just the two.” She speaks about (00:27:00) if you have a good, experienced principal and an experienced deputy and some experienced teachers, you can take on a beginning teacher. But to have 10 at once, it doesn’t work.
	11	Funding schools appropriately	(00:37:00) “I think the government needs to commit to overfunding small schools. The official formula - it’s probably changed a bit – but when one of our schools had 50 students so you had to have a teaching principal. And the formula was that the teaching principal had to have a 90% teaching load, which is ridiculous. You can’t, it still takes just as much time to run a small school as it does a big school in some ways, like the basic operations. And if you can’t get a good admin person to do most of the principal’s job... that poor principal, it’s like the worst job every to be a

		<p>Band 5 principal of a school that size and still meant to teach all day. So we just overstaffed that school.”</p> <p>(00:44:00) “remote schools need a whole lot more money for PD, and a whole lot more money – you should be able to buy extra teachers if you need”</p> <p>She also speaks about the extra funding that was given to schools in the Gillard era, but if it costs three times as much to build a library in a rural or remote school, the money isn’t as effective as it would be in the metro space.</p>
12 Best-fit, suitability		<p>In speaking about recruitment screening, (00:18:28) “as part of that imitative we could also get rid of them straight away, no questions asked... we had a lot more flexibility than other schools, because it was put down to ‘they’re not fitting into the community’, for whatever reason they’re not fitting, the community is not fitting with them. You can get them straight back out. And the Dept was generally really supportive of that which is a good thing. Because you can kind of tell in a term or two if its not working, if someone’s not suited.... But you need that flexibility to be able to get them back out again if it’s just not working. Because there’s no point in forcing someone to stay for 2 years, or even 6 months, it’s just detrimental to the kids.”</p> <p>She spoke about the work of XXXXX in screening new teachers for the remote context.</p>
Accountability / commitment to longevity	13 Targeted policy and targeted support	<p>(00:51:30) “I think you have to target the program. Policy is really bad at differentiating. But you do have to target. You do have to have a special role recruiting for these schools, and advertising and promoting, and what the benefits are to go to these schools. You do need a targeted policy incentive scheme to get them there, you do need targeted retention policy to keep them there, you do need the housing. It has to be targeted across the board. And I think the departments don’t do the targeted support very well.”</p>
	14 Broad staffing issues	<p>(00:53:40) “some of the problems about staffing remote schools are the problems with staffing schools in general, and having effective teachers in place, they’re just exacerbated in those locations”</p>

Participant provided the following supplementary information via email:

XXXXX – this report mentions a bit about staff turnover

XXXXX

Learning First reports on initial teacher education

- The pathway through ITE including selection, hiring etc - <https://learningfirst.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/12.-A-new-approach-reforming-teacher-education.pdf>
- Improving initial teacher education - <https://learningfirst.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/13.-Connecting-teacher-preparation-and-practice.pdf>

OECD papers on initial teacher preparation

- Policy report on several countries – see Chapter 3 for discussion on teacher workforce including supply and demand, diversity, attraction - <http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/a-flying-start-cf74e549-en.htm>
 - Policy examples from Australian on attracting teachers to remote areas (mentions Qld, WA and NT) – probably a bit out of date and high-level compared to our research <http://www.oecdteacherready.org/promising-practice/attracting-teachers-to-schools-in-rural-and-remote-areas-in-australia/>
 - Policy examples from US on NYC Men Teach - <http://www.oecdteacherready.org/promising-practice/addressing-teacher-diversity-in-the-united-states-through-nyc-men-teach/>
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XXXXXX

Project/Program: XXXXX	Participant role: University Coordinator, previously a Lecturer in the XXXXX program	Date of interview: 05.03.2021 & 10.03.2021 Time: 01:07:21 & 00:25:00 (over 2 days)
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Synopsis of the program	<p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>Established around 2009/10. Partnership with XXXXX funded by the Federal Government. The program provides ITE to Indigenous people working in XXXXX in remote communities. The model was for assistant teachers working in those schools, and provide financial support to study 2 days a week to become teachers. XXXXX provided academic course delivery, funded by XXXXX. XXXXX also provided funding to students and the schools who were involved.</p> <p>XXXXX delivered a mainstream course, which wasn't tailored specifically for the cohort or schools in which they were working. Most students at XXXXX were part-time, completing the course in 6-8 years.</p> <p>Estimated \$3.5-4.5m over the past 9 (approx..) years, with several hundred thousand a year to XXXXX.</p> <p>Some involvement from XXXXX, on an ad hoc basis.</p> <p>HECS and enrolment fees are covered, as are travel, accommodation and meals. Some of this was funded by Away from Base funding.</p>
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Summaries of emerging themes

Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Attracting teachers	1	Up-skilling locals	<p>(00:07:36) "it's built around the idea that because recruiting outsider teachers is always difficult and because you're pretty much guaranteed that most of them won't stay that long, but that people who are part of a remote community are generally - you know it's their own community, it's their own place that they live, you're not having to attract them to the location, they are already there, that's where they want to be. So if you can train them to be teachers, the idea is then you'll be able to retain them"</p> <p>(00:14:30) "focusing on people who were working in schools, so they already had a commitment to education"</p>

	2	LANTITE	(00:42:40) “I don’t know how big a factor this was, but one factor in not enrolling new students, is that all the students we had had enrolled prior to the requirement of LANTITE being completed for teacher registration and for graduation. XXXXX had said that they would hire these teachers without LANTITE. In our new course, our current course, students have to do LANTITE to graduate so it is no longer a, um, there’s no wiggle room there. So there’s definite concerns with any new project of this kind, how will we support and ensure that students are able to successfully pass LANTITE...I think that was definitely one significant factor in decisions about whether to continue the program in its current form or not.”
Retaining teachers	4	School culture (Whiteness)	<p>Even teachers who graduated from the program were not necessarily working as teachers.</p> <p>(00:09:30) “I do think it has stuff to do with the structure of the schools, the expectations of a teacher, what is expected of a teacher and so although these Indigenous teachers have trained to be fully qualified Australian registered teachers, they are still Indigenous people with Indigenous culture and they’re still trying to work in an institution that is not Indigenised. So they’re really being asked to just step into a White person’s role with an added bonus of bringing their culture and language with it. So actually more is being expected of those teachers, those Indigenous teachers, than of outsider teachers because they are being expected to do all the things the outsider teacher would do plus have all the local contact, community and cultural knowledge, linguistic knowledge and so on.”</p>
	5	School culture (workload)	(00:11:00) “I think that a lot of remote schools, because the schools are primarily staffed by outsiders, people move there and their life is about their job. You take a job as a remote teacher, you go to a small community, you don’t have your regular sports club, your regular family, your regular social group. It’s very easy to just stay at work til 7 o’clock. It’s very easy to work on the weekend. I mean, teaching is an endless job anyway, but people who go to communities go who don’t have, they don’t have other caring responsibilities for their family because if they do they couldn’t go to the remote community....Sometimes in a town school, you’re forced to stop work even though the work is still there, but you’ve got other commitments so you go and meet those

		other commitments. Anyway, so the culture in the remote schools doesn't create space for someone to be a teacher while also acknowledging that they've got a really, really busy life outside of the school "
	6 Support through transitions between roles	<p>(00:30:21) "when the students graduate and then they've given them jobs as teachers, they haven't been sure how to support them in that transition... it hasn't been necessarily that they haven't tried to support them but that maybe what they've tried wasn't- that they didn't necessarily consult well with the new teacher."</p> <p>(v2 00:03:50) "I know that there are some XXXXX graduates who are working in schools as teachers, but it's not a lot. So, for a whole lot of reasons some people have left teaching, some people have left the communities they were living in...and then others who are working in their schools in, still teaching related roles, but like as assistant teachers despite being qualified teachers"</p>
Program design	7 Tailoring the course	<p>(00:56:20) She speaks about some missed opportunities to tailor the mainstream B.Ed program specifically for that cohort, in a way that was relevant to the context of remote schools where this cohort would be working when they graduated. Repeated in essence (01:06:30).</p> <p>(v2 00:15:00) she suggests that without a program like this, remote Indigenous students wouldn't be able to do it, that there are too many barriers to them being able to complete a course like this. So it is still relevant and necessary.</p> <p>With reference to creating/designing programs designed for the contexts in which these teachers will work, and that the tailoring of the program was done on an ad-hoc basis, (01:07:00) "I think with GOO that was done on an ad-hoc basis, and sometimes done really well, but I'm convinced with all sorts of teacher education programs, you can't rely on exceptional lecturers, you need to design it for having just some ordinarily good lecturers. It's the same with the expectations for these teacher education students, we can't just focus on teaching the expectational students, we have to teach the ordinarily good – not the bad – but the ordinarily good ones. It has to be achievable."</p>

		<p>In speaking about tailoring the course and accreditation constraints, (r2 00:02:00) “Getting an actual course that’s specifically designed for remote Indigenous students, fully accredited past the teacher accreditation board, AITSL and things like that, I don’t think it’s something that anyone is really doing in Australia at the moment, you know. I think it might be seen as politically not the thing, or else the impediments to doing it are just too great. The impact of the idea that that cohort of students should still do the same course and that a separate course would be of different standing I think means that that gets in the way of designing a course that has equal standing but is more specifically designed for their needs”</p> <p>In speaking about XXXXX and the new pilot XXXXX program, (00:10:00) “I suppose one of the things that I’m trying to do differently is, because we still can’t have a separate course, but I’m trying to be more systematic about documenting what differentiation we make in the course delivery for this cohort and more systematic about planning in and documenting the scaffolding of literacy and numeracy throughout the course.”</p> <p>(00:13:00) She also suggests that pathways out of the program would serve this cohort – providing recognition to students for what they have done, and providing some application to their workplaces (i.e. how might their roles in schools change after they complete some of this training?)</p>
8	Successes	(01:03:00) “Considering how few teachers are graduating from remote communities in the NT, I’d say it’s a success that we even got some. Considering that the number of Indigenous in NT schools is more likely dropping than increasing, anything we can do to increase that number is a success. But as to whether it was the most effective way to do it, you know, there’s definitely things that if I was given free reign and a lot of cooperative partners I’d do differently. Probably starting with designing a good course from scratch.”
9	Politics in delivery by institutions which may have contradictory vested interests	<p>(00:37:00) Mentions the politics within XXXXX, which was ‘happy to say that they were a part of the XXXXX program, but not willing to invest financially in the program’.</p> <p>(00:59:00) “Although XXXXX was really happy to get all the funding and although XXXXX was funded for lecturer time, my boss at the time didn’t necessarily then allocate that time to the lecturers</p>

	<p>who worked in the program. So, people worked in the program as additional to their workload while the uni got the money for that work. So that made it hard.</p> <p>(v2 00:14:00) “making sure that - it all costs plenty of money - making sure that that resourcing is there and that no one is trying to profit off it but spend all that money for the good of the program and for the good of the students, so that people who are working on it do have enough time, so that lecturers and school-based support staff really have enough time to do a good job to support the program...if people don’t have enough time and support for it then they’re not going to be able to do it well”</p> <p>(v2 00:17:00) “institutions can become attached to wanting to say that they’ve done a good job. So, my previous boss was really keen to say well XXXXX is great, but that was less about an actual evaluation that it was great and more about its great for us to say that something we are doing is great.”</p>
10 Partnerships breaking down	<p>In speaking about delivering the program in the face of challenges in how schools receive the program and its participants, (00:32:20) “we don’t exert any direct influence on what happens in the schools. It’s frustrating to put all this effort into training people, graduating them, but not being able to effect the environment in which they are going into.”</p> <p>(00:59:10) “keeping schools and other team members on board. Because the program depends on having so many participants collaborating, if any of them are weak, it makes it really hard.”</p> <p>In speaking about active, functioning partnerships, and lessons to be learned - (v2 00:12:00) “making sure that everyone whose involved keeps working together and that time is spent to ensure that you still have shared goals. I think that this sort of program involves so many different participants, the schools, the university... the educational bodies, as well as all the individuals in those. So just trying to keep everyone on the same page as you go.”</p>
11 Lessons	<p>(01:05:25) “ensuring those partnerships were in place, and where possible, making sure that there were MoU’s that would have some continuing strength with schools so that if a principal was going to change, for example, make sure that the new principal comes in with the understanding that this is going on in their school, don’t get hostile staff. Factor in professional development for</p>

everyone in the schools involved on an ongoing, recurrent basis, every 6 months, **so that people know what’s going on.**”

Accountability / commitment to longevity	12 Personal vested interest	<p>In speaking of the opportunity to lecture and coordinate XXXXX, (00:06:20) “to me, I just think this is so, so important. Pretty much anything we can do to get more Indigenous teachers is a good thing” (00:04:30) “from my own experience of working in Indigenous education in the NT, I’m pretty convinced that long-term success is really dependent on having more Indigenous teachers. Particularly if you have a view of preserving language and culture while still giving school students access to English language and a mainstream education, they have to have local Indigenous teachers if they are to get a bilingual education...at the moment a lot of schools basically operate as this foreign, White institution. So you have students with 100% or 95% Indigenous enrolment and then all the staff in leadership roles, all the staff as qualified teachers, are all from outside the community and predominantly White. And similarly that’s the way a lot of communities run. The medical system, the legal system, the administrative system. It’s all these Other, outsider things.”</p> <p>(00:06:00) “the school will always keep being and outside institution to the children if they are always taught by outsiders. I don’t believe that just having Indigenous teachers is enough, I think that the role and nature of the school will need to transform in the long-run as well, and that’s really hard because there’s lots of forces operating against that.”</p>
	13 Destination data and follow up	<p>No formal evaluation was done. 6-monthly reports from XXXXX to XXXXX.</p> <p>(00:22:09) “there’s bits and pieces of data” – start dates and dates of completion are the main data point collected. Graduates aren’t tracked after they complete the program in any formal way.</p> <p>(00:24:20) “it seem a little surprising after what’s possibly a multi-million [dollar] project over the years, that no one could find \$50,000 at some point to do an evaluation. Even \$10,000.”</p>

	(00:53:10) “milestones were just do a report every 6 months, a financial report and a delivery report...they [the funders] certainly never set any milestone on progress or retention”
14 Reception of the program	<p>(00:25:30) “there’s one community that has a separate primary and separate high school next to each other, and there were students enrolled in the XXXXX program from both those schools, but the students were all studying the Bachelor of Primary Education, so they were initially located at the primary school. But because the principal of the primary school was not really supportive of the program, the classroom was relocated to the high school. And yeah, you know, I think in some cases schools have been a bit resentful of the program... that they’ve just had a directive that this is operating in their school but they haven’t actively supported it. Others have just struggled conceptually with it...they remain convinced that the students aren’t studying a real degree. They really struggle to see these students as pre-service teachers.”</p> <p>They describes the issues that some pre-service teachers had in their own schools, such as being excluded from staff or teacher meetings, but that this isn’t occurring in every school, and some schools are supportive.</p>
15 Embedding programs and processes	<p>(00:33:40) “you have that longevity that where it might take 6 or 8 years to train a teacher, so the school might self-select at the start, but then if the principal and/or the staff change. I think what can be helped is if you structure in time for engagement, really solid engagement, with each school on an at least yearly but probably every 6 months as they get new staff. So at the start of term 1 and the start of term 3, if you had built in ‘here’s the XXXXX program, or whatever program, this is operating in the school, this is part of what we do in the school, you’re all lucky to be, you know, you people who have just come from Melbourne, aren’t you lucky to be in this school where we’ve got this program operating?’ But yeah, you need to have the principal on board. If the principals not on board, its’ not... nothing will happen.”</p> <p>[this also ties into the concepts previously discussed by the participant around racism and school culture]</p>

16 Anticipating turnover in program staff in high attrition contexts	<p>(00:18:50) “from all parties, things change at schools, things changed here at XXXX, things changed at XXXXX. and so the expertise, the priorities, the beliefs, all those sort of things change. Somewhere like the NT you’re going to get that, we just in general, as a territory, we have much higher turnover than other jurisdictions. So, you have to build in for change. You cannot anticipate that the same person will be doing a job in 3 yeas, 5 years, 10 years... that’s why you have to build in that refreshing of goals and what it looks like in a really regular way. Otherwise people come in - someone leaves, someone else comes in – and they’re filled in only on the day-to-day operations stuff but they don’t get filled in on the rest of it.”</p>
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Project/Program: XXXXX	Participant role: Previously school Chaplain, then moved to NT to teach in remote schools. Worked for XXXXX, and went into University Coordinator role for XXXXX (3-year term, 2016-2018)	Date of interview: 01.04.2021 Time: 56:55
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Synopsis of the program	<p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>In essence, XXXXX was “birthed” by a couple of individuals who wanted to see more Indigenous teachers in schools. Funding was directed at a long-term approach for retraining assistant teachers, already in the school environment and already with some classroom skills, rapport, aptitude, etc. Previously, a program at XXXXX, which had some negative perceptions, so XXXXX wanted people to do a mainstream degree.</p> <p>2009-2020 – CEO XXXXX. Program seemed to be responding to the request by local Elders who had been teaching for 30-40 years, and wanted to retire, and were worried about only white teachers replacing them. Participant perceived that XXXXX was listening to this request, and so used government money (Away from Base) that was available to put the program in place.</p> <p>When the CEO changed, they felt that maybe the new CEO didn’t share the vision and that things would change.</p> <p>The idea was for people to not have to leave their communities to study, which is something that XXXXX didn’t do so much. First cohort in the XXXXX program were (00:07:00) ‘often people who had done a 3-year degree at XXXXX, perhaps 20 years previously’ to train them up to get the mainstream accreditation.</p> <p>The model was for people to be working, paid full-time, working in the class 3 days and 2 days a week to study. At least once a fortnight, a lecturer would come and visit from the uni to small group of 3 or 5 people/students. On the other 2 days, when there wasn’t a university person coming in, there was another staff member coming in to help them with their assignments.</p> <p>Participant role was to coordinate from the university side, working with the XXXXX office counterpart, what units people studied, who would be travelling, assessment and marking, and liaising with schools to ensure things were working well.</p>
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Attracting teachers	1	Incentives (financial, study leave, etc.)	(00:13:40) “some people take them up, and that’s great. But many just, it’s just a long time – 5 years, even – in a remote community. And some are genuinely remote in the Territory, where you don’t have access to things that people just take for granted in mainstream Australia. And you’re also just

		<p>far away from your family. There are a number of factors that make teacher retention difficult, and I don't think, not solvable anyway. It doesn't matter what you offer people, what incentives, they're going to say 'well actually I'm keen to leave now. I've done this, I've put some effort in, it was exciting and adventurous', and that's taking all the good things. Let alone all the hard things which do exist, which can turn people off... all of this is to say that the initiative to bring in more Indigenous teachers is certainly part of the long-term plan I would think"</p>
	2 Targeted Indigenous teacher preparation program	<p>(00:50:00) "nothing else is producing Indigenous teachers. All the other scholarships and other things that look good, they are not producing good numbers of Indigenous teachers...it's a big need. And the need is getting bigger, not smaller"</p>
Retaining teachers	3 Avoiding turnover – the merry-go-round workforce	<p>(00:11:00) "The huge, bigger picture item was people living and working in their own communities aren't' going to go anywhere. They're not just the best teachers, they're going to stay. You never know what's going to happen in life, but in generally speaking, that's their home. So they're going to become teachers, they may stay there until they retire. It might be 30 years, 40 years sometimes. Whereas, non-local people, you're talking about that role in the school, it might literally have over 40 years, <i>30 people</i>, 30 different people in that role. And besides being a cost, a huge cost actually. It's also you just have to start again. And the schools and the kids have to learn this new person and get used to them. It takes up so much time that could be spent just learning, having to go through that whole process again. I mean, everyone just accepts that now because that's the way it is – it's good that your project is looking into this – because it doesn't have to be that way. That merry-go-round cycle, which is exhausting and financially crazy."</p> <p>(00:34:00) "every new teacher has to start back at square one. So if they're going over to Tiwi Islands, every new teachers knows no Tiwi, every new teacher knows nothing about Tiwi culture. As nice as they might be, and as good at ESL teaching they may be – not that many are – but even if they were, they still start at square one when it comes to understanding kinship on Tiwi and all the myriad of cultural knowledge. A new person cannot know that... It's just over and over and over again. There's a lot of other factors there that don't necessarily get made explicit, this is actually not benefiting the overall education experience, that's for sure."</p>

4	Graduating XXXXX students, drop out/retention	<p>(00:16:00) “it’s hard to do a 4-year degree and work at the same time, even with the good set up as it was. And when English is not your first language. And that’s the other huge elephant in the room here, is that not again, not 100% but probably 90% of the students in XXXXX, English was not their first language. So they’re studying at a university level, and some of them would have finished year 12 but many didn’t. And even if they finished Year 12, it wasn’t at the level where you’d naturally just go ‘I can handle a Bachelor degree, no worries’. That was a big factor in some people dropping out, or finding it too hard. So, many people still didn’t complete the degree, but I think they still got a great benefit. They were greatly enhanced in their capacity to work as Assistant Teachers. Even if they didn’t finish the degree, or if they came out at a lesser spot, or got a Diploma or a Graduate Diploma ... I think it was hugely beneficial for the actual teaching of those kids in those communities, even if they didn’t become a fully accredited teacher”</p> <p>(00:17:40) “life gets in the way as well. The nature of community life is – someone being there for 4 years straight and not having some blip in the life there in some way, or connected to their family, or some major trauma, is rare, very rare... it’s not smooth sailing practically, but I think you had to hold onto that bigger vision of why it was so vital that it was happening”</p> <p>(00:42:00) “four years is a long time and a lot can intervene...life, community life, kinship life meant lots of people ended up dropping out for a time or a season or for good...They didn’t have little issues like, you know, my car broke down. It was, well, my partner beat me yesterday. Some of the things were major things, that you go well of course you’re not going to be coming to study today. But often they’d be there the next week, the resilience was just incredible”</p> <p>(00:45:00) speaks about the cohort numbers being important to feelings of support in the XXXXX student group. It was better when students had other people to be studying with, rather than be on their own.</p>
5	School culture issues	<p>In speaking about some principals who didn’t support local Indigenous Assistant Teachers, and the low expectations for them to become teachers, (00:23:30) “If the principal wasn’t really for it, they’d say ‘there’s no one, no one here capable of doing that’, and I’d be like, <i>I think there probably is some of your Assistant Teachers capable</i> [of completing XXXXX]. Others embraced in</p>

			<p>entirely, were very happy, really supportive of their students going through XXXXX. So there was a bit of diversity there... I think it's just personality-wise, to be honest, some people shared that vision. Some people were like 'well, I'd rather just get another ... Whitefella teacher or another specialist with that money and just get them to teach the class'."</p> <p>They go on to speak about resistant teachers, principals or schools 'getting it' when they saw the XXXXX students teach a lesson, and seeing the impact on kids when they're being taught by their aunty or something in a good way i.e. turning kids around, or getting otherwise disengaged kids engaged again because they're being taught by people from their own community.</p>
Accountability / commitment to longevity	6	Commitment to community, personal motivation	<p>(00:08:20) "To me, this was one of the most important things you could be involved in in the Territory context. Having worked in a remote school myself. Having then also worked in a boarding school, which drew in from the remote schools. And knowing how important people's language is to their understanding and their culture. And how disappointed many communities were when bilingual education was wound back over the last 20 years. It was a no-brainer that the best teachers for remote Indigenous kids are their own people, their own aunts, uncles, grandparents. It just works on so many levels. One, it's an empowering thing. Two, it's literally they're just better teachers because they can understand what kids are saying rather than Whitefellas coming in and having a tiny smattering of language at best. Three, you could possibly – even in schools which were no longer bilingual – if the teacher was speaking that language, they would naturally teach part of it in actual language that the kids understood. So you could have some of the benefits of bilingual education, without ever having to call it 'bilingual education', and making it a controversial thing. It would just happen naturally. You're not having the turnover of staff, and the huge cost to schools of bringing someone up from Adelaide or Sydney who lasts 6 months or one year and goes home, and goes cycle, cycle, cycle. And so, all those things combined, for me made it a really appealing – yeah, really something to be quite proud of to be part of, and you knew that it was making a difference in the lives of kids. So it was easy to be motivated."</p> <p>(00:52:00) "you've got to be committed to the vision. If you're going to review ... your pilot program in 2 years, and that's enough to decide if it's good or not. Well, you're probably going to say 'not'. They're long-term investments. More importantly than that even, though, is that this is</p>

		<p>what the Aboriginal people are calling for. If you're talking about self-determination, if you're talking about having a voice and honouring that voice, just listen, and just do it. It's not going to cost you more, yes it's out of – it's more messy, like we've talked about - but it does produce teachers, and even if it didn't produce a whole swathe of them, the communities themselves love XXXXX... if you're really not just paying lip service to some of the rhetoric around self-determination and those sorts of policies, you'd listen to what remote Aboriginal people are saying about education... just commit to it, that's what it has to be"</p>
7	Financial investment	<p>(00:32:00) "from a financial perspective, it was going fine. Like is said, I think in the end XXXXX might have gone, we've been funding this for 10 years and we thought we might have got more teachers in the end than what we have. Or we're going to use it in a different way. And I guess that's their business. But at the time, I think, there was no dramas from a financial point of view... If you look at a genuine cost-benefit analysis of how much spending to replace teachers on this merry-go-round, of in and out every 18 months, or whatever it is. I think you'll find XXXXX justified its expenses comfortably."</p>
8	Budget and true cost analysis	<p>In speaking about the wrapping up or continuation of the program, (00:38:16) "those with longer corporate memories could see the benefit, again, that changes with the wind a little bit."</p> <p>(00:45:00) "some people got really concerned about 'is this worth it?', I think making that explicit compared to what that re-churning of Whitefella teachers is, I think that would be helpful, to doing a bit of a cost-benefit analysis...not only is it best practice, it's actually cost-effective as well."</p>

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Project/Program: XXXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXX	Participant role: 23 years in education, primary school background. Previously, school principal, then regional manager. Currently Principal in Residence, Principal Programs	Date of interview: 13.04.2021 Time: 00:55:96 (two recordings)
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Synopsis of the program	<p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>‘XXXXXX is the ‘flagship XXXXXX program’ has a (00:16:00) ‘multi-pronged approach’ 6-workshop and internship components, and a peer learning group, while also working remotely. Face-to-face, group facilitated, learning segments around core concepts on leadership that are aligned to AITSL. On the ground, there is a 4-week internship in a school, working with a mentor. There’s been a series of iterations, anticipating a high number of retiring principals of a particular ‘baby boomer’ generation, and therefore an anticipation of a large gap or shortage of principals/aspirant leaders ready to replace them. So the XXXXXX program recognises that there might not have been enough people in the future wanting to be a principal, and the crucial aspect of having appropriately trained and ready people in this role.</p> <p>Applicants put in a career map/CV, answering question, providing a 2-minute video. Candidates are then vetted by senior education improvement leaders and regional staff in a panel approach, to deem suitability for XXXXXX who are ready for leadership. Part of that is thinking about HTS, and developing people who are appropriately qualified for these schools.</p> <p>Candidates are fully funded, they don’t pay any fees – travel, accommodation, tuition, CRTs, etc. (00:27:00) which is ‘why it’s so important to choose the right people’. (00:29:00) “We don’t <i>want for</i> participants” – they are already over-subscribed (300+ aspirants), limited to 40 participants per cohort, 4 cohorts per year.</p> <p>XXXXXX workshops outsource the key content to external agencies who deliver the content. With support of recently retired principals and field experts, big names in Education.</p> <p>XXXXXX is a paid partner. Currently working on partnering with regions.’</p>
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Rural leadership	1	Teacher to principal pipeline	(00:03:40) “I think there’s a higher likelihood of tapping on the shoulder. When leadership is recognised in more rural areas, there’s probably a more stringent approach to say ‘look, let’s get them into a school’, they may not have had leadership experience before, but let’s get them in there

		<p>because we can see potential in this person ...Traditionally we view levels of experience, and levels of readiness, based on number of years in the job, having been through: a teacher, leading teacher – what is now a learning specialist – assistant principal, principal role. I think there's probably a higher likelihood in a rural area that people would go from a teacher to a principal role, which would be a rarity, I would say, in urban and metropolitan schools.”</p> <p>(00:31:25) “with hard-to-staff areas, you might have people who might not have had the opportunity to be an AP [Assistant Principal] then therefore become a principal. But we might have to consider that we're going to be getting teachers who are ready, and who are endorsed by their principal, because that's another thing, they have to be endorsed by their principal. They are ready to undertake XXXXX so that there's a pool of people also for hard-to-staff schools, too.”</p>
2	Small school PLC groups	<p>(00:05:50) “hard-to-staff schools are a manifestation of isolation. And that isolation continues once people get into that role.... If you bring people together, there's less isolation, which means a higher likelihood you're going to have people who are wanting to go and work in those schools. Because it's not as isolated as you would have thought.”</p>
3	Teaching principals	<p>(00:06:00) “the principal role in a smaller school is – the principal is everything, as well as necessarily having a teaching load. So that can be quite daunting for many, trying to do two things at once”</p> <p>(00:08:40) “in terms of salary, principals of smaller schools are usually paid the same amount as an assistant principal. And yet an assistant principal has a network around them... you're expected to be all things to all people, but you perhaps don't get the same remuneration”</p>
4	Workload, releasing aspirant leaders for placement	<p>(00:41:40) “I think a challenge is, for often our people who do XXXXX, they can tend to be leading teachers or assistant principals that have quite meaty roles themselves within schools. And they find it challenging to be given an internship to go, and their principal finds it challenging to enable and support them to do it and say ‘right, I'm going to step out of my role for 4 weeks, and I'm going to be in a different space, and I'm going to be the intern, the aspirant leader in a new school’. They find it challenging to do that. And the principal from their home school finds it challenging to let them go for that period of time, that is an ongoing challenge...they are highly successful when</p>

			the home school Prin [Principal] is able to do that for them and say ‘this is your time, go and make the most of your opportunity to apply your learning in a new context and learn more about different leaders and I’ll see you back in 4 weeks’, or 6 weeks, as it has been previously”
Rural staffing	5	School size, community size	(00:07:40) “if you don’t have a relatively large population base, you don’t have people to draw from , just in pure number, I suppose, that goes without saying”
	6	Collegial support	(00:08:20) “that notion of isolation, that it can be quite challenging to be in a small school. People don’t see schools as an appealing place to go if there’s not a lot of support around them ”
Program design	7	Funding	<p>(00:23:00) “Ultimately XXXXX puts in a budget bid to finance, central office, to say look this is how much we need to run this program. And they say yay or nay... the funding is very much a governance approach. There’s not a lot of additional funding that is built in to support XXXXX.”</p> <p>(00:24:30) “Given that XXXXX is an arm of the department, which means it’s an arm of government, so it’s really about saying, we’re going to apply for a pool of funding because this is what we need to do and this is why we need to do it...they put it in and the government goes yes or no, accordingly.”</p> <p>(00:25:00) “Given the profile that the Education State has and the focus that education has had particularly around things like NAPLAN and recognising that leadership is such a vital part of making sure that schools are ultimately successful in improving student outcomes... there’s not been a major threat to funding, mind you, from an on the ground perspective, there is also that ongoing importance of maintaining its viability through having impact.”</p> <p>(00:47:20) “XXXXX in Victoria has made a significant long-term commitment to key programs that they see as valuable for the long term... to the department’s credit, there’s been some key things that they’ve recognised that they need to do, and they’ve put their money where their mouth is, I suppose. And it probably helped that there’s been a consistency of government, too, because we haven’t had a change of government to say: ‘it’s time to go, we see things differently, that’s out the door’.”</p>

8	Assurance of quality	In speaking about graduated candidates, (00:39:40) “the learnings that they’ve undertaken through XXXXX were not only catalytic , in terms of saying ‘yes, I am ready’, but also being vital for when they step into a principal role, too. So I think the success is that we have a level of assurance - it provides some level of assurance that the people that we’re moving into principal roles have a breadth of knowledge, are building the skills and have had opportunities to apply that before going into a principal role itself. ”
9	Evidence base, commitment to longevity	(00:44:00) Speaks of research and evidence based, data informed, cyclical approach to the program (00:45:00) “but it is about making sure that the programs you’re delivering are research based, you’re getting the stakeholder input into it as well.... What do our educational professional bodies say? What’s the experience of the interns themselves? What’s the experience of the supplier? What’s the experience of XXXXX? What’s the experience of our regional people in terms of what’s coming through?... what does our data tell us? What are our outcomes need to be? That is continuing to be refined, too, around outcomes. So I think it’s just making sure it’s evidence based and data informed. You seeing the value and the impact of it as we go along, but we’re not sitting on our hands and saying it’s done and it’s good already , let’s just leave it as it is, we hold onto the good stuff and change the stuff that isn’t working as well as we would like.”

Project/Program: XXXXXX	Participant role: RRR Principal; Executive principal for a cluster in XXXXX; currently a Principal's consultant for XXXXX.	Date of interview: 31.03.2021 Time: 01:01:01
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Synopsis of the program	<p>Paraphrasing/summarising:</p> <p>‘Started around 10 years ago, with the idea to recognise and build the skill of Aboriginal people in schools who could offer longevity, and who had the skills and knowledge background in the community. The program was designed to take the knowledge base of Teacher Assistants, using Federal Funding (NT Remote Aboriginal Assistant Scheme), and build them up to be teachers via XXXXX, in situ.</p> <p>The program was a Bachelor of Education (Primary), participants would stay in the community and be paid to be released 2 days a week to study. Lecturers travelled out to their locations to deliver instruction. It was the same university program as mainstream. There would also be intensives, where students would go off Country and finish a unit or two, before moving back out into their communities.</p> <p>Catholic Education appointed a teacher to work with the student teachers to help with assignments, practicums, etc.</p> <p>Students were completely funded, HECS fees paid, university allocation for remote instruction, travel, accommodation. The costs of coming into Darwin for intensives would be covered.’</p> <p>Participant speaks about graduates of the program being teachers, while some remain in their original role.</p>
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Summaries of emerging themes			
Theme:	No.	Sub-theme	Accompanying quotes
Attracting teachers	1	Financial incentives	(00:28:30) “you’re actually paying someone to study. You’re paying them a full-time wage and two days a week they come out of a classroom, and in most situations, they had their own room set up. They had their own, we provide them with laptops... which at the end of the course, whenever that

		was, they got to keep. We gave them every bit of support that we could , including as I said, a teacher two days a week, who was released on their days off, to actually work with them. So that was like a tutor, mentor, guide”
2	Recruitment	<p>(00:37:00) “when I was recruiting, the thing that I looked for most in recruiting someone was someone who was willing to come with the right – to use the term ‘growth mindset’ – to have a person come that was willing to learn. Was willing to be to some degree flexible. Had some level of resilience. Was coming with a skillset...come as a capable teacher, but don’t come thinking ‘I’ve got everything I need’”</p> <p>(00:38:00) Speaks about the challenge of recruiting is recruiting from a distance, where ideally people would go out into the location and see what it’s all about before hiring them. But that they may not have funding available to make that happen. They (00:41:00) “don’t fully understand what they’re putting their hand up to go into”</p> <p>(00:39:00) “you definitely need a mix of people, you need mature people, love graduates – the enthusiasm – you need that full spectrum of people. But to ensure success, the key thing for me... are people that have the skillset but have a willingness to learn”</p> <p>(00:57:00) “it’s setting people up to be successful and actually helping people to understand – as much as you can – what they’re going into. And then supporting them when they get there. But not taking people because they’re upright and have a heartbeat.”</p>
3	A good place to hide	<p>In speaking about a principal in a very difficult NT school, with longevity in the deputy principals, (00:41:30) “Many of the teachers have been there for 3-4 years.... And that school has had a lot of turnover as well. But it’s also got a core of people who for whatever reason have found it to be successful and challenging and have stayed there. And are good practitioners. They’re not there because it’s a good place to hide. Which used to be a bit of the reputation in the territory. It used to be if you were upright and had a heartbeat, you could get a job in a remote school because they were desperate. It’s not the case anymore, we try hard to recruit really good people.”</p>

Retaining teachers	4	Indigenous teacher attrition	(00:05:20) “you hear reports that half the people leave teaching in the first 5 years, and I suspect that – and I don’t have any hard data on it at this point – but I suspect that a lot of our Indigenous teachers don’t even last 5 years. The attrition rate would be even higher for them. And most of the time they drop back to being an assistant teacher. Because the demands of being a classroom teachers are just too great for them. But there’s a whole lot of other complexities around that as well.”
	5	Training local teachers	<p>(00:10:10) “Aboriginal people teaching in their communities with their own students is seen as a very valuable thing to do, rather than just continuing to be taught by Western trained teachers”</p> <p>(00:13:00) “these people live in those communities... They actually live there. And they’re committed to the school and the education. So it removes some of that hard-to-staff aspect, because you’re not bringing a teacher in... that are very unfamiliar with some of our locations, particularly the remote locations, and they experience culture shock. They experience isolation... there’s a whole range of things that when someone comes from outside, are quite a challenge. Whereas having people that live in the community, know the community, know the cultural background, know the sensitives, know the challenges. Training them to become teachers, the chances are they’re going to stay there. They’re not going to up and – after 2 or 3 years – up and go somewhere else. The likelihood is that they’re there for the long run.”</p> <p>(00:25:30) “the broader benefits of a person graduating as a teacher in their own community. Because there’s the role modelling, the economic benefits, the skill, the leadership of that person – if you graduate as a teacher you’ve got an awesome set of skills and knowledge and background, that is valuable to the community beyond you as a teacher”</p> <p>Reiterated at (00:49:00) and (00:52:00) regarding role modelling.</p>
	6	Leadership pipeline	(00:16:18) “once they are an effective teacher and they’re working well in a school. What’s the journey? Because eventually, obviously we would like these people to be in leadership positions. We want them in the future to be running schools. ”

Accountability / commitment to longevity	7 Commitment to community	<p>(00:29:00) “unfortunately that doesn’t ensure a high success rate if you’re just looking at ‘how many teachers did we get out of it?’. And some people look at it and say that’s an awful lot of money for not a lot of teachers at the end of the line. But that’s to me, that’s a narrow view. Because all those people who have been studying on the way through, and maybe didn’t make it to the end as a teacher. They are still working in schools as assistant teachers with a whole lot more skills, a whole lot more benefit to the school.”</p> <p>In speaking about transitioning teachers out into remote schools, (00:53:00) “There’s a range of successful things that we could do better for that, about induction. About support when they get out there. About setting them up with mentors and support people. So when you come into a community and it’s new to you, it’s crucial that your induction is done well. That the ongoing support is there. That you have mentors, you have coaches.”</p> <p>(00:55:20) ‘If we are genuine about doing this and doing this successfully, we need to work with communities. About their hopes, desires... and working with them to match and make that work.’ (paraphrase)</p>
	8 Learning in situ	(00:44:00) comments on the strength of XXXXX is that it is on Country, and a guaranteed job in a school.
	9 Funding	(00:59:20) “I think if we’re committed to being a first world country and providing those sorts of things, we need to commit the funds, and we need to commit the effort to make them as successful as possible. And that’s a lot of training, support, recruiting the right people... we want the best for everyone, and we’re a first world country, we should be able to provide those sorts of things”

Appendix C

Overview of Hard-to-Staff Initiatives

NB: Separate Excel File: Provided as an addition to the report