

Question on Notice

No. 522

Asked on 15 March 2007

Mr Wellington asked the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts (Mr Welford) —

QUESTION:

With reference to the number of experienced teachers who are eligible to retire from teaching positions in the next three years —

What strategies has he put in place to ensure Queensland always maintains an appropriate level of experienced teachers in Queensland State schools?

ANSWER:

In recent years, my Department of Education, Training and the Arts has conducted a highly successful *Make a Difference. Teach* campaign. The aims of the campaign are to raise the profile of teachers in the community and to encourage school leavers and other members of the community to pursue teaching as a career option. The campaign has also included awarding teaching scholarships, such as Maths/Science teaching scholarships to draw attention to job opportunities for Maths/Science Teachers, particularly for people already working in Maths or Science related fields.

My department also works closely with universities by sharing supply and demand data ensuring universities undertaking teacher education are aware of departmental needs. The department is also introducing an annual census of students in Queensland university education courses to better understand their career aspirations and the factors that encourage them to join the teaching profession.

To improve the match between graduate teachers and available teaching opportunities, the department publishes the type of teaching jobs that are expected to arise in future years. The key school teaching career opportunities are mainly in: Special Education, Industrial Technology (Manual Arts and Graphics), Senior Maths, Senior Science, Languages and Secondary Teaching.

These activities have contributed to a 20 per cent increase in the number of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre applicants enrolled in an education course at a Queensland university since 2000–01.

The placement of pre-service teachers in schools for practical experience ensures that the new generation of teachers are exposed to the wealth of knowledge and skills of the current workforce. Graduate teachers are also supported in their new roles through the new *Flying Start* initiative. This aims to assist beginning teachers in their transition to the teaching profession.

Almost 44 per cent of the teaching workforce is in the under 40 years age bracket, which should ensure that an experienced workforce is maintained in Queensland state schools for many years to come.