

Question on Notice
No. 701
Asked on 23 June 2022

MR S KNUTH ASKED MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MINISTER FOR RACING (HON G GRACE)

QUESTION:

With reference to the teacher shortage across Queensland—

Will the Minister advise what the government is doing in the current teacher enterprise bargaining cycle to attract and retain teachers and school leaders particularly in rural and remote settings?

ANSWER:

The Department of Education and the Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU) have been working diligently on a new agreement to replace the existing certified agreement covering teachers, heads of program and school leaders. Regular bargaining meetings have taken place since March 2022.

The department and the QTU have identified a shared interest in improving attraction and retention of teachers in regional, rural and remote areas and a range of options are being considered through the current bargaining process.

The department currently has an offer on the table that includes headline wage increases of 11% over three years plus a cost of living adjustment payment in each year of the agreement (capped at 3%), which will result in Queensland teachers being amongst the highest paid in the country. In addition, this offer includes an attraction and retention package for regional, rural, and remote teachers, which improves existing policies and entitlements, as well as introducing new ones.

For example, there are increased incentive payments, additional travel allowances for most remote areas, payment of applications for Queensland College of Teachers registrations for graduate teachers, and an incentive payment for teachers returning to Australia to work in regional, remote or rural Queensland.

This offer is on top of existing Queensland initiatives for attracting and retaining teachers specifically in regional, rural and remote areas, including:

- Teach Queensland and Teach Rural Career Fairs: regular expos, giving pre-service and graduate teachers the chance to talk to school leaders and recruiters about a career;
- Centres for Learning and Wellbeing in Roma, Mt Isa, Emerald and Atherton to support staff in any stage of their career through mentoring and professional development;
- Rural and Remote Teacher Experience Program: a six week professional experience placement;
- subsidies for teachers in rural and remote locations including relocation assistance and subsidised housing in some locations; and
- Rapid Response Team initiative to enable experienced permanent teachers in South East Queensland to temporarily fill critical vacancies in high demand locations. Meal and food allowances of \$700 a week are included as part of the incentive package.