

— MEDIA RELEASE —

## Teachers are the key to national productivity: new report warns against deskilling Australia's education system

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Australia's teachers spend **up to 106 million hours every year** on administrative and compliance tasks that should be handled by dedicated school support staff, a new report from the McKell Institute has found.

The report calls for a national investment strategy to boost support staff in schools to make better use of teacher's time to reduce the growing administrative loads causing more teachers to burn out.

Findings from the report, [\*Freeing Teachers to Teach: Driving Productivity Through Classroom Support\*](#), include:

- Teachers overwhelmingly identify administration, compliance, and lack of support staff as the biggest barriers to effective teaching, not lesson planning.
- One in three teachers plan to leave the profession, citing workload and administrative pressures as key reasons.
- Centralising lesson planning through a national platform and relying on AI tools risks hollowing out the profession while failing to solve causes of workload stress.

The McKell Institute has called for:

- Funding more administrative and support staff in classrooms so that teachers can focus on teaching.
- The views of teachers to be included in designing strategies to minimise administrative burden.
- A national investment strategy to boost support staff in schools.
- A proactive and research-based policy for edtech and AI as teaching tools.

The report was prepared in response to the Productivity Commission's inquiry [\*Building a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce\*](#), which has proposed a national online library of pre-prepared lesson plans to allow teachers to reduce lesson planning time.

While the Commission identifies time pressures on teachers as needing solutions, its proposal risk narrowing teachers' roles to pre-packaged lesson delivery, deskilling core teaching work.

The full report is available at [mckellinstitute.org.au/research](https://mckellinstitute.org.au/research)

### Quotes attributable to McKell Institute Victoria Executive Director Rebecca Thistleton:

"Teachers are burning out from administration and compliance, losing millions of hours to tasks better suited to support staff.

"Lesson planning is core to being a teacher. Treating it as 'administration' misses the point and risks devaluing the intellectual and creative work they do."

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