

BOSTES REVIEW

The Professional Teachers Council of NSW (PTCNSW) has welcomed the opportunity to have both appeared before the Panel Review of the NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BoSTES) and to submit this consultative document. As the umbrella body for the 48 teaching associations across NSW representing teachers from the three sectors and K-12, we value our working relationship with BoSTES across the education pillars of curriculum, teaching, assessment and educational regulation.

As the largest cross-sectoral provider of student centred, cost effective professional learning that is designed and facilitated by practising teachers, the PTCNSW is well placed to deliver key aspects of the *Great Teaching Inspired Learning Blueprint for Action* (GTIL) across NSW. PTCNSW and its member associations are accredited to provide registered professional learning at all career stages (Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead). We have a Ministerial appointment to the Quality Teaching Council and have a seat on the Professional Learning Endorsement Advisory Committee. In addition, we value our regular meetings with the President, Tom Alegounarias and his Directors.

We have concern at the brevity of the Review in terms of the release of the Issues Paper on 31 March 2016 and the closing date for written submissions 21 April 2016 which has fallen during the school holidays. BoSTES is held in high esteem at state, national and international levels and it would be fitting that any review of its governance and work be accorded greater time for consideration by key stakeholders.

AREAS OF DISCUSSION

Have the opportunities of the amalgamation been fully realised?

The Great Teaching Inspired Learning Blueprint for Action has provided a framework for the amalgamation of the two bodies. At times, the movement of staff has been problematic as relationships have been built and then have to be rebuilt as roles and responsibilities have changed. There needs to be a period of consolidation to create stability particularly when building relationships with outside key stakeholders.

The governance of BoSTES, in terms of the previous Office of the Board of Studies (prior to 2014), needs to take a more representative profile that is reflective of both curriculum and assessment and teacher quality rather than its present constituency. We would suggest that a new governance structure be established and be representative of both areas therefore reflecting GTIL.

Are the roles and responsibilities clear and appropriate?

It is apparent that many teachers are confused about the roles of BoSTES and Department of Education. Very few teachers, particularly non-early career, are cognisant of the role of the Quality Teaching Council within the BoSTES structure. There appears to be an opportunity to raise an awareness of the general profession of each of the areas in terms of curriculum and assessment and teacher quality before the registration of all staff by 2018.

Are processes and practices as effective and efficient as possible?

We would draw attention of the Review Panel to the increasing workload of the Quality Teaching Council (QTC), its secretariat and associated sub-committees including particularly the Professional Learning Endorsement Advisory Committee (PLEAC) and also the Moderating and Consistency Committee (MCC) and the Initial Teacher Education Committee. With the move towards the registration of all teachers by 2018, it is imperative for the good governance of the process and for the goodwill of the profession that there are adequate financial resources directed to the QTC.

In terms of the movement towards Registration of NSW Public Schools to ensure the delivery of the quality education across the state, there must be support in terms of policy and processes for schools. Whilst it is the DoE that is being registered and schools are the exemplars of implemented practices, there needs to be a clarity of purpose and understanding of the process for those who are involved. Concern has been expressed that the role of the KLA Inspectors has been broadened with the inclusion of public schools in the registration process and has taken them away from their core work of leading and supporting the delivery of curriculum.

There is a duplication in the submission and storage of data, particularly for DoE teaching staff, regarding professional learning. This has led to misunderstanding, errors in the movement of data from one platform to another and has limited the buy-in into teacher registration processes. We are aware that both DoE and BoSTES are re-developing their digital architecture to accommodate a two-way seamless transmission of teacher data. It is imperative that this be available to all sectors and be supported with the financial resources required to ensure its integrity.

The rapid inclusion of the Early Childhood sector under the APST has been managed by a small number of outstanding professionals. Funding and inclusion of this sector in both the QTC and its sub-committees must be supported by the government and BoSTES. It was pleasing to see a place being made for Early Childhood at the QTC and PLEAC. Such appointments provide learned advice to the processes.

A number of business opportunities identified in GTIL have not been fully explored, developed and facilitated. PTCNSW and its teaching associations have been identified in the document as key stakeholders in the provision of professional learning across the state. We have endeavoured to develop relationships and deliver quality products. At times, despite PTCNSW readiness, problems within BoSTES have arisen and therefore the Minister's GTIL timeframes have not been met.

Are effective governance arrangements in place?

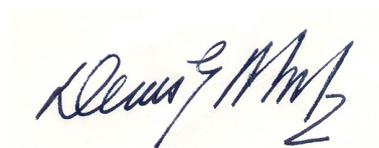
At present there is no representation for teaching associations on the statutory body the Board of Studies even though PTCNSW has been identified and cited throughout the GTIL *Blueprint for Action* as a key stakeholder in the provision of professional learning for teachers across the state. PTCNSW believes that with the amalgamation of the NSWIT and BOSTES there was an opportunity to restructure the governance of BoSTES to reflect the directions of education in NSW. This was not addressed with the amalgamation the two bodies. PTCNSW as the representative of teachers and teacher associations should have a seat on a new statutory body at which it can represent and advocate student centred, cost effective quality professional learning across all sectors K-12.

The Quality Teaching Council and, in particular, its PLEAC have had an ever increasing workload over the past twelve months. With the rising consciousness of the market place around the provision of registered professional learning, there has been an increasing rise in the number of applicants seeking endorsement as providers. The PLEAC has had to consider a number of issues including: penalties for those who refuse advice regarding their applications, the sheer volume of reading before each

meeting and the integrity and quality of courses that appear to be product placement by textbook publishers. That is, of course, the governance and work of the PLEAC. However, as we move closer to 2018 where all teaching staff will need to be able to access registered professional learning, this will inevitably increase. There needs to be provision to support the work of the PLEAC and the secretariat of the QTC in terms of increased staffing and funding. In addition, provision of staff within the QTC secretariat to support the movement of all pre-2004 teaching staff to become registered by 2018 is imperative. Adequate funding must be forthcoming to support the building of a quality database to allow the free flow of information to enable a smooth transition and to secure the commitment of pre-2004 teachers.

PTCNSW has concerns about the devolution of responsibility for curriculum support for the implementation of Key Learning Area syllabuses and the loss of consultants across both curriculum and assessment in a period since the 1990s of unprecedented curriculum change in NSW. The large number of syllabuses that Board Inspectors manage: TAS has 13 with Technology being combined with Science K-6; HSIE has 10 plus K-6 which sit under a single curriculum area, is problematic for efficient management and development of support documentation. This has also become a problem at the school level where Head Teachers struggle to support the effective implementation of multiple discipline-based syllabuses at the classroom level. Whilst this responsibility has been devolved to the sector level, it has become problematic. Many teachers, not just in small independent schools or in rural and remote areas as one might expect, but increasingly across all sectors and demographics, report that they feel unsupported. Research continually reiterates the essential role of classroom teachers in curriculum implementation. Classroom teachers deserve adequate and appropriate support for their efforts. Students, parents and teachers look to BoSTES as the authority on curriculum and assessment matters. It is critical that sufficient and appropriate personnel are available to maintain the integrity and status of that organisation, and to ensure optimum quality of education outcomes for the students of New South Wales.

On behalf of the Professional Teachers Council NSW and its member associations, I thank you for your consideration of our submission to this review.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dr Denis Mootz", is written over a light yellow rectangular background.

Dr Denis Mootz
President
20 April 2016