

## **Press Release:**

### **NSW Deans to launch *New Learning: A Charter for Australian Education***

Australia is now virtually alone in regarding education as a cost rather than an investment, according to the Australian Council of Deans of Education. At the NSW launch of *New Learning: A Charter for Australian Education*, the Deans will argue that we risk losing our first-world status unless urgent action on education is undertaken. Outlining their comprehensive plan for revitalising Australian education, the Deans will focus on addressing the crisis in preschools, supporting world-class teachers, and redressing regional inequality.

Australia is the worst in the OECD at funding preschool education. Our preschool participation rates are also lamentable, and the sector continues to be ignored despite overwhelming evidence of the importance of quality education in early years. The NSW Deans will outline the steps needed to turn the preschool sector around, including improving the conditions of our preschool educators.

It is not only preschool educators who are suffering. In the past fifteen years, the pay and status of our educators across all sectors have declined dramatically in relative terms. The brain drain is no longer a fear, it is a reality. And the reason for this crisis is clear: simply, the salaries and conditions of our schoolteachers, our TAFE teachers, and our academics are not competitive in world terms.

At the Charter launch, the NSW Deans will outline innovative new ways of supporting our educators to prevent the prospect of empty classrooms and to halt the brain drain, including exchange programs and redefining schools. The Deans will also suggest that both state and federal governments must provide the resources necessary to produce the high quality system of teaching and teacher education so strongly advocated in the 2000 Ramsey Review.

The shocking inequality in our education system, and particularly the regional divide, will also be addressed. Strengthening TAFEs which support regional areas, redressing the digital divide, and encouraging high-quality educators to teach in the bush are all fundamental to closing the educational gap between urban and regional Australia.

A state launch of the ACDE Charter will be held at **University of Technology Sydney, 1 Quay St, Haymarket, Sydney from 1.00pm on Monday 29 October**. Enter via the Graduate School of Business, proceed to Level 5, Room B-517. Media, education leaders and other concerned citizens are all welcome to attend.

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