

MEDIA RELEASE

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EDUCATION DEANS CALL FOR ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO SHOW LEADERSHIP THROUGH A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO ATTRACT FUTURE TEACHERS

The peak body of the university faculties and schools that educate our future teachers is calling on all political parties to support a multi-pronged, collaborative, national strategy to improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession.

‘To avoid a widening teacher shortage, we must address the continuing drop in the numbers of those applying to become teachers and also attract the best possible candidates into the profession,’ the Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) President, Professor Tania Aspland, says.

‘Ad hoc, unconnected, short-term efforts will not progress the issue enough. We need a much more collaborative strategy, which links longer-term actions.’

The ACDE started the ball rolling when it convened the *Collaborating to Improve the Status of Teachers* Forum on March 29 in Melbourne. The day was attended by almost 200 representatives of political parties, media, governments, unions, peak education bodies, school leaders, teacher education students, teachers, youth advocates, think tank researchers as well as branding, social and behaviour change experts.

‘The diverse range of panellists, participants and views made it clear that there were many gaps in the education system to be targeted for improvement,’ Professor Aspland says.

‘These include encouraging more secondary school students and their influencers to consider teaching as a valuable career; teachers’ pay and career structures; greater support for early career teachers; ongoing professional development; lessening the administrative burden; and trusting our dedicated teachers to teach,’ she says.

Most forum participants indicated they wanted to be involved in future initiatives. From that starting point, ACDE proposes convening taskforces to focus on specific areas in need of change.

‘However, if we are to make a collective impact over the next five to 10 years, there also needs to be an adequately resourced lean and agile backbone structure to tie a national strategy, that involves many organisations and diverse approaches, together,’ Professor Aspland says.

‘This would allow for linkage between individual initiatives, evaluation of ongoing impact, helping to adapt strategies to meet changing conditions, efficient use of resources and the sharing of knowledge and learning between all the moving parts of a national effort.’

‘With teachers, we are talking about the workforce that educates 100% of Australia’s future. No one group can make the necessary changes alone. We must be in this together,’ she says.

Key points, transcripts and the recording of sessions from the March 29 forum can be viewed [here](#).

Further information:

Leslie Falkiner-Rose, ACDE Strategy and Communications
comms@acde.edu.au or 0418995240.

The Australian Council of Deans of Education represents all Australian universities and several private colleges that offer initial teacher education degrees