



Media Release

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New educator exodus and teacher mental injuries spike

Teachers quitting in their first five years of service has almost doubled since 2020, while teachers suffering psychological injury has increased by 59% since 2021, latest education department data shows.

“The increase in teachers suffering psychological injury is hugely concerning and the number of new educators resigning after only a few years into their teaching career must ring alarm bells for the government,” said David Genford, AEU Tasmania President.

“Unmanageable workloads, understaffing and worsening student behaviour are particular drivers of teachers quitting and others suffering psychological injury,” said Mr Genford.

“As well as addressing under-resourcing in schools, what the data shows is that government needs to be investing in more ‘backline’ support for teachers to prevent this growing prevalence of burnout and injury.

“Any cuts, dressed up as ‘efficiency dividends’, imposed on public education in the state budget would be madness and simply compound existing problems.”

Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) latest release of workforce data shows that teachers quitting in their first five years of service has jumped a huge 97% – up from 31 resignations in 2020 to 61 resignations in 2024.

DECYP data also shows that Workers Compensations claims from teachers for psychological injury has increased 59% – up from 39 in claims in 2021 to 62 claims in 2024.

Mark Kingsley, an AEU representative who has taught for 30 years, is saddened but not surprised by what the data shows. He has felt the impact of increasing workloads, staff shortages and prevalence of students presenting with complex behavioural issues.

“When I first started teaching you might have a class of 30 and one or two students might have behavioural issues – now in some classes its only one or two kids who *don't* have disruptive behaviour,” said teacher Mark Kingsley.

“I’ve seen two new teachers last only a couple of weeks and a third who left at the end of Term 1 and never returned,” said Mr Kingsley.

“I see the impact of the workload and stress on new educators who burn out and those toward the end of their careers who are retiring early,” he said.

“You never get the chance to relax, things are always on your mind. You’re checking the phone all the time out of hours to see if you need to deal with staffing issues.

“I try and switch off on Saturdays, but by Sunday afternoon I’m back thinking about work again.”

Mr Kingsley said the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) was excellent but there could be more done to support teachers who are struggling with mental health such as dedicated mental health officers in schools, staff access to school psychologists and more incident debriefing.

Mr Genford said the government must do more to support students and its education workforce.



DECYP DATA

Calendar Year Period Unit	Psychological injury claims			
	2021	2022	2023	2024
	March Number	March Number	March Number	March Number
Claims Lodged by Teaching Staff	39	53	47	62

*Claims Lodged by Teaching Staff – Includes Principals and Assistant Principals.

Department for Education Children and Young People

Teacher Separation with 5 or Less Years' Service by Separation Type

Calendar Year Period Unit	Headcount	Headcount	Headcount	Headcount	Headcount
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	April 2019 – March 2020	April 2020 to March 2021	2021 to March 2022	April 2022 – March 2023	April 2023 – March 2024
	Number				Number
Resigned	31	36	54	56	61
Retired	3	4	11	9	11
Other		0	1	1	2

For information

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