

IPA MEDIA RELEASE

Institute of Public Affairs | Australia's leading free market think tank

29 December 2014

TEACHERS SUFFER FROM OLD-FASHIONED INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MASSIVE GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY - NEW REPORT

Teachers in Australia's schools are suffering under an old-fashioned industrial relations regime and an out-dated salary structure according to new research published today by the free market think tank, the Institute of Public Affairs.

"Teachers are paid according to a 'one size fits all' model that pays the best and the worst teachers the same," says John Roskam, Executive Director of the IPA.

"Promotion is based on time-served and the completion of box-ticking exercises rather than on the quality of teaching in the classroom. For example, under existing regulations a Nobel Prize-winning scientist who wants to be a teacher must be paid the same as a 22 year-old inexperienced graduate."

"The industrial relations regime that teachers work under means they sacrifice salary in exchange for more time off work. For example, a teacher earning \$75,000 a year has 11 weeks away from work and 17.5% holiday leave loading. On a 'standard year' of 48 weeks work this equates to a salary of over \$95,000 a year," says Mr Roskam.

The report *Freedom to Teach* by IPA Research Fellows Vicki Stanley and Darcy Allen documents the 600 pages of regulations that stifle schools, teachers and principals.

"Teaching in Australia is managed as an industry according to systems established in the nineteenth-century. If we are to provide young people with the best possible education we must think of teaching as a profession in which teachers are rewarded on the basis of their ability," says John Roskam.

Key recommendations from the report include:

- removing restrictions limiting the maximum amount classroom teachers can be paid
- removing restrictions limiting the number of hours teachers can teach
- allowing schools to make incentive payments to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools

The IPA's new report, *Freedom to teach: A research report on the work and conditions of teachers in Australia*, is available to download at this link: <http://www.ipa.org.au/publications/2317/freedom-to-teach>

For media and comment: John Roskam, Executive Director on 0415 475 673 or jroskam@ipa.org.au