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Treasurer

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MEDIA RELEASE

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MID-CAREER BARRIERS TO TEACHING TORN DOWN

Academics, high-performing professionals and subject matter experts will have an accelerated pathway into a teaching career thanks to a radical overhaul of how mid-career entrants to teaching are hired.

Minister for Education Sarah Mitchell said the new pathways are for professionals who have experience in relevant subject areas, or already have teaching experience in the higher education system.

“The NSW Government is building the country’s best public education system, we have more students enrolled and more teachers employed than ever before. But we need more and we want the best, particularly in certain subjects and parts of the state.

“The best and brightest from other professions must be encouraged to become teachers, and right now there are too many barriers to entry,” Ms Mitchell said.

“We are tearing down these unnecessary barriers to entry. We have incredible teachers in our system already, enjoying fulfilling careers. We are now saying to people outside the profession that you too can be a successful teacher with a rewarding career, and we want you.”

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the new approach was in line with recommendations in the NSW Productivity Commission’s White Paper, which found that teacher quality can boost the State’s productivity.

“We’re always looking for better ways of working to give our kids a brighter future and ultimately the whole state benefits from that,” Mr Perrottet said.

“When we create opportunities for passionate and talented people to become teachers, we’re creating opportunity for our kids.”

The overhaul will involve a tiered approach - creating new pathways into secondary school teaching depending on a person’s knowledge and pre-existing teaching expertise. Entrants will still receive a teaching qualification and, depending on their teaching experience, aim to be in front of a class and on salary within six months.

“We have some of the highest standards in the country when it comes to who can become a teacher in NSW. This reform keeps these standards in place – whilst recognising that prior experience and expertise in key learning areas should be acknowledged,” Ms Mitchell said.

The reform will focus on four key features: removing barriers to entry to the profession, bringing people into the classroom faster, supporting transition from an old career into teaching, and incentivising the transition to teaching.

“The government will engage in discussions with universities around how an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) degree can be made more bespoke for each mid-career entrant – ‘frontending’ the qualification depending on where the candidate’s skills are lacking so that the candidate can get teaching sooner – with the remainder of the qualification being ‘backended’ – and completed whilst the candidate is employed at a school,” Ms Mitchell said.

“We know that by being flexible in providing people with tailored education and training programs based on their personal circumstances we will attract more people to the teaching profession and ensure our students receive quality teaching.

“We want the stakeholders to come on this journey with us. We know that educators across the board recognise the need to get more people into the profession. I will be holding very extensive consultation sessions with all major stakeholders to make sure that this reform benefits every student in NSW.”

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