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New workload assessment tool targets the key cause of teacher burnout

Unsustainable workloads and work intensification in schools remain the primary reasons behind record low levels of teacher recruitment and retention.

These challenges demand a wide-ranging response from school employers, educational authorities and governments; the finalisation of a new national [teacher workload assessment tool](#) is an important part of the larger plan needed to begin to tackle workload.

The federal government is to be commended for developing the workload assessment tool in collaboration with the IEU and other education unions. While applicable to policy initiatives arising from the National School Reform Agreement (NSRA), the tool sets an important precedent for the adoption of similar teacher workload protections across all areas of education policy.

The IEU has been calling for the [broader rollout of workload impact assessments](#) to stem the flow of excessive compliance and administrative duties that often duplicate tasks already being undertaken by teachers and school leaders.

There is much to be done to unpack the complex factors that contribute to teacher workload. The next [NSRA can also help deliver direct workload relief](#) for school staff in a number of key areas.

The IEU engaged at various levels in the development of the assessment tool, members will particularly welcome these actions, proposed by the IEU, as part of the assessment process:

- The assessment will require consideration of existing initiatives before the add-on of any new tasks. Teachers will be directly consulted on these existing areas of work in terms of timeframes, professional development and the reality of implementation in schools.
- Is additional release time, administrative support, training or more staff needed to support new policy initiatives?
- Are any proposed changes likely to disrupt the continuity of student learning?
- Do new policy initiatives add to the duplication of existing administrative tasks?

The government's engagement with teachers and their unions in the development of the assessment tool is an essential step in not only limiting the creep of more administrative tasks, but also in beginning to rebuild respect for the profession.

Our teachers have common-sense practical solutions to workload pressures; we just need employers and policy makers to listen.