



Media Release

For Immediate Release

COVID: Time to rethink the timeline for Curriculum Reform

The Science Teachers Association NSW welcomes the NSW Government's Response to the final report of the Education Committee's Review of the New South Wales School Curriculum tabled yesterday.

President Margaret Shepherd said "The Government's response appropriately recognises the strength of the Masters' Review and its recommendations for improvement of the NSW Syllabus'.

"We were pleased to see the Government's response confirm the evidence and research that formed the basis for Masters' recommendations to reform the structure and content of the NSW Syllabus" she said.

The response however, raises a number of questions in the context of almost two years of living and learning through COVID. The same assumptions that were being made in 2019 and early 2020 must now be considered through a different lens.

The Science Teachers Association NSW calls on the Government to reconsider the timeline for the curriculum reform. If we are to be consistent with the intent of Masters' recommendations, further time is required to ensure we are not just wasting our time with yet another syllabus tinker.

"The truncated four-year time frame was already insufficient given Masters' recommended 10 years, with the experience of COVID across 2020 and now 2021, it would be a fool's errand to continue on this timeline" said Ms Shepherd.

Teachers are already at breaking point and are leaving a profession that is already short of qualified science teachers. The reform needs to pause, Government needs to listen, reflect and readjust.



It takes time to get it right and the Minister now has a legitimate reason to rethink the timeline. With NESAs still recruiting the team for delivery of the syllabus development, more time is required to ensure central knowledge and skills for each subject are mapped appropriately, syllabuses drafted and consulted effectively and that resources exist to support effective implementation.

Ms Shepherd said we are concerned that “untimed learning” as recommended by Masters’ has not received the attention it deserves. The recommendation from Masters’ has the intent of upgrading our education system to support 21st Century learning. This remains a missed opportunity by our political leaders to show real leadership in education reform.

We look forward to the independent evaluation of the Curriculum Reforms and hope that this will be mapped against the findings of the Masters’ Review and intent of its recommendations.

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