

Cathaoirleach, Members of the Joint Committee on Education and Skills on behalf of NAPD thank you for the invitation to make a submission on the topic of the shortage of qualified substitute teachers throughout the State including issues related to recruitment and retention. The brief submission which NAPD has presented is based on the valuable work being done by NAPD on addressing the practical needs of its members in securing qualified substitute teachers. In compiling this report cognisance was given to the 2017 **Technical Working Group Report** entitled “**Striking the Balance – Teacher Supply in Ireland**”.

As you will have seen from the introduction to the submission the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals has been representing the voice of school leaders in Ireland since 2008. You will also have seen how NAPD has continued to work in partnership with Mr Kyle McLoughlin of **Posude Limited** since 2014 in creating and maintaining a national substitute database in the form of SubTeacher.ie. This system is now a valuable resource for post primary schools in sourcing substitute teachers. The operation of this database over the last three years has yielded a valuable set of statistics on both the substitute teachers sought by schools and the number of substitute teachers available by subject and location.

As a Deputy Principal in a school of 650 pupils I can tell you first hand that there is a serious shortage of substitute teachers in many subject areas. On occasions at times of peak demand it is not possible to source enough substitute teachers to cover classes. The reasons for this shortage as stated in our submission concurs with the findings of the Technical Working Group Report of 2015 but also includes more recent changes in post primary schools which have affected the numbers of teachers available for substitution work. Demands for substitution created by teacher participation in CPD and work for the PDST, JCT and SEC have also exacerbated the problem.

Our submission suggests some possible short term and some longer-term solutions which may help to alleviate the current challenges in the area of teacher supply, recruitment and retention. The lack of teacher supply is one of the biggest stress points for all stakeholders in our education system and to this end I wish the committee every success in its work today and into the future. Again, I would like to thank you for inviting me here on behalf of NAPD and I will endeavour to provide clarity on any areas of our submission on which you may seek clarification.