

New specialist teacher workforce strategy for SA public schools Public school teachers looking for a change could score a serious pay rise by retraining.

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Teachers who retrain to specialise in subjects such as maths and technology will be eligible for a pay rise of up to \$16,000 under a new strategy to ensure more students are taught by experts in their field.

The state government will on Friday launch South Australia's first specialist teacher workforce strategy.

It is committing more than \$6.5m to offer upskilling opportunities to educators who are willing to specialise in subject areas where there are current teacher shortages, including maths, English, science, design and technology.



Playford International College teachers Dan Slade and Barbara Buckland. They will be teaching Design & Tech to Year 7 students, after retraining from other specialities. Picture: Brett Hartwig

The strategy will assist more teachers to become certified “specialist highly accomplished and lead teachers”, making them eligible for significant pay increases based on their extra experience and qualifications.

Education Minister Blair Boyer said specialist teachers “help drive better student results and bring a passion to their subject area to inspire our next generation of scientists, mathematicians or technicians”.

“Teachers should be recognised for their expertise,” he said.

“STEM subjects, in particular, are a priority area with the AUKUS submarine deal expected to generate up to 8000 jobs in South Australia over the next 30 years.

“We need to make sure our students are ready to take up these opportunities.”

An initial group of 40 teachers has taken part in a pilot retraining program to gain expertise in design and technology.

All but one will now be teaching that subject across 24 schools which had been unable to fill those positions last year.

Graduates of the pilot program include Daniel Slade, 48, and Barbara Buckland, 38, at Playford International College.

The pair are now shadowing experienced design and technology teachers and will soon complete a TAFE SA course in safe use of machinery.

They will begin taking design and technology classes of Year 7 and 8 students from Term 3.

Ms Buckland said she had already used equipment such as laser cutters and 3D printers when teaching art and was keen to broaden her skills.



Dan Slade and Barbara Buckland retrained from other specialities because there are not enough design and tech teachers. Picture: Brett Hartwig



Dan Slade and Barbara Buckland. Picture: Brett Hartwig

“I don’t think you can be a teacher without having a passion for learning yourself,” she said.

Mr Slade has been teaching English, history and geography and was looking forward to more “hands-on” experiences teaching in the workshop.

He praised the pilot program for “investing in” teachers and giving them time off-site to learn new skills.

SA Secondary Principals Association chief executive Jayne Heath said it was important students were “taught by teachers with the knowledge, capabilities and expertise in the subject area they are teaching”.

“Teachers who are teaching outside of their field of expertise need support to upskill and pathways to develop specialisation,” she said.