



THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF MATHEMATICS TEACHERS INC.
supporting and promoting mathematics education

MEDIA RELEASE

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Time to act on Australia's education decline

The Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers (AAMT) is calling on universities and education systems to start acting on the many reports proposing ways to halt Australia's decline in education through initiatives in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

Today, the Office of the Chief Scientist has issued a position paper titled 'Transforming STEM teaching in primary schools: everybody's business' which calls for the transformation of STEM education in primary schools through raising the preparedness and quality of primary teacher training.

AAMT supports the sentiments and proposals expressed in the position paper, and is keen to work with universities and education systems to see ideas realised.

"We've watched this issue build for years, continually hearing from teacher educators and their concerns about the lack of appropriate mathematical backgrounds of many of their students," said Mr Will Morony, Chief Executive Officer of the AAMT.

"A lack of subject knowledge and therefore confidence in teaching Maths and Science is a major problem for many primary teachers. We need STEM to be taught and taught well, right from the early years, and the only way to do that is to have appropriate selection, pre-service preparation, and ongoing support for all teachers of STEM throughout their careers," said Mr Morony.

"We all know where the issues are. It's time for all parties to start working together to act on the advice," he added.

The position paper released by the Office of the Chief Scientist not only summarises many of the issues raised in various reports, but calls for long-term decisive actions.

The paper calls for measures to attract high achievers in STEM to primary school teaching, and for increasing the rigour of pre-service courses in universities.

It also calls for existing primary teachers to be supported by STEM specialists, professional development programs in STEM to be available at a national level, and for principals to be leaders in STEM.

The position paper is available from www.chiefscientist.gov.au.