

Queensland Educator Stories



2021
—Abridged

QUEENSLAND EDUCATION UNITED



DEAR READER,

We would like to present to you this book which has been compiled by 345 members of Queensland Education United. These stories represent thousands of our members and they contain the real-life stories of Queenslanders from across the country.

These stories have been written by principals, deputies, administration staff, teachers, teacher aides, early childhood educators, guidance officers, cleaners, canteen vendors, groundspeople and others who have been affected by the COVID-19 vaccination mandates.

We hope that you can take the time to peruse their stories, just as they have taken the time to write them for you.

As you are aware, we are facing a staffing crisis in Queensland schools in 2022 as a direct result of the COVID-19 vaccination mandates, combined with ongoing teacher shortage. We are now seeing mandates being relaxed in other high-risk public sectors such as nursing, because staff shortages have reached a critical point. Education faces the exact same prospect.

There is clear need for urgent action to revoke these mandates, as our members are facing imminent stand down and termination proceedings begin in earnest. If this is not rectified, Queensland will, almost certainly, lose an overwhelming number of highly qualified educators and school staff.

Ultimately though, it is the students who will suffer the most as a result of the loss of these passionate and dedicated educators and support staff, who simply want to continue working in education, safely, and without coercion.

The breadth and complexity of each person's story clearly illustrates that the "one size fits all" approach of this mandate is short sighted, at best, and dangerously ignorant at worst. Many of the stories contain experiences and unique circumstances that will, no doubt, result in further litigation. This is due, not only to the gravity of their situation, but also the cavalier manner in which their concerns have been disregarded by their employer.

Yours in Education,

THE QUEENSLAND EDUCATION UNITED LEADERSHIP TEAM

Educator 1

My name is J and I am a passionate teacher in FNQ who is currently out of employment due to mandated vaccinations being required to work within schools. I am 46 years old and have worked as an educator for approximately 15 years. I have a Bachelor of Education and am currently undertaking my Masters of Guidance and Counselling. Teaching is not only my passion and my career, but it is my vocation. I cherish the connections and learning memories I make with children and the thought of not being able to do that again, is inconceivable.

I work for X Diocese Catholic Education Services and they are following government mandates which require all staff to be double vaccinated, which I am not. As a result of the mandates, I am unable to work at any school in Queensland in 2022.

The mandates have directly affected myself and my family adversely. Personally, I have lost my job, my career and the option of continuing my university degree, which involves practicums. This has tremendously impacted our family situation financially. Without taking the vaccination, I am unable to work within my profession, doing what I love, and am grossly limited as to where I can find employment. I firmly believe I have a gift with children and this is where my heart lies. Unfortunately, I have also just endured the very quick demise of my father following his vaccination. He did not survive the aggressive onset of his condition and I am unwilling to take the vaccine as I am not certain that it was not responsible for his death.

This in turn has impacted my mental health phenomenally as I have no financial security, no job prospects and no way to service my mortgage. This is an enormous pressure and the weight of the decision is huge. If I concede and get the vaccination, then I will not be honouring my own values and self – yet I will be able to work. This is definitely coercion and the limiting of my own free will. If my government is supporting this, then I feel that is a breach of the constitution.

I am very concerned for the greater public – my students and their families who are also in the situation where they are being coerced into the vaccines. With the vaccines being so new in their development, it concerns me that the long term effects are not known.

Ideally, I would love to be able to return to my work, as a teacher, in an understaffed profession, to be able to continue to be a role model for children. I would like the vaccines to be through choice, rather than mandate. I would like children not to be vaccinated as their risk of death due to Covid is negligible.

I implore those in power to make changes to the mandated vaccinations being required for employment within the educational setting to please reconsider the current mandates. I implore you to consider the constitution upon which our nation has been built and the free choice and democratic society which underpin our nation. I kindly ask of you to not facilitate the rights of hard working, essential professionals away.

Educator 2

My name is C, female and a first-year primary school teacher. I have been offered a full-time position in an Independent school (Christian College) as a prep teacher (my first contract). I graduated in March 2021 and have been relief teaching since then. I was also a Teacher Aide for 5 years whilst spending some of it completing my degree. I'm a mum of 4 and completed my degree while working full-time and doing the books for my husband's business. I was considered a mature-aged student, this career choice was a life dream for me. To get this position I was to start on 14 January 2022 was my dream job!

My employer has been quite 'legalistic' about his approach. Unfortunately, I don't feel I have a leg to stand on as my contract formally starts on the 14th of January. Although I haven't received my termination of contract email yet, I know it's coming. This is the most disappointing and disheartening thing to ever have happened to me in my working history.

The mandates will substantially affect my family as I will now lose my much-desired job and be pushed into one income. I had already spent a substantial amount of time and money preparing for my class. Being terminated has left me and my family under financial strain. Not only financial but I am suffering bouts of depression and anger. I've never experienced this sense of grief for a job. Just knowing I spent the last 4 years of my life studying and obtaining my ideal job to now the reality that I may never have my own class. It is deeply saddening and distressing. I have not had the vaccine because I'm not comfortable with the adverse reactions. I have two older children that I am concerned about. If I settle for the vaccines that are available, they will get it also, I'm a mum and my children's health is more important than my job. My family will always be my priority.

I had been given the opportunity at the end of the year (2021) to work in the early childhood centre where my 2022 students were attending. This was an ideal opportunity for me to meet the students and parents and start to build those relationships we all need to as teachers. I even had a student that had arrived from a country that speaks the same language as me. He was going to be in my class. Now all that effort and relationship building has gone to waste. This student needed me as his teacher as his English was limited and his mother was so happy and relieved to know I'd be his teacher, I was too! All this has been taken away from us.

All I ask for is that the students be thought of in this whole process. That we as teachers are valued for all the extra hard work and effort we put in before we even start our year. That these vaccines mandates be abolished. Our students need teachers that are dedicated and passionate about what they do. We should not feel pressured to take a medical procedure to complete a job we have already been doing during the pandemic, with great success. Acknowledge our worth and stop this insanity. I am ready, willing, and able to do my job, let me do it.

Educator 3

My name is C. I am a 44 year old female who has been working in the child care and education sector since completing my early childhood qualifications in 1997. I have dedicated the past 26 years of my life to facilitating children's learning in the foundational years of their education and development. For the first 10 years I worked in a preschool as a teacher's aide and the last 4 years I have worked as a casual educator in a community child care centre in the Townsville region. This might seem like an insignificant and dispensable role to some but it is like the glue that holds everything together. Without the contribution of casual staff in child care centres they cannot legally operate and pre covid 19 vaccine mandates, there was already a critical shortage of staff. As well as the regulatory requirements, my services are being relied upon by colleagues (for leave) and by clientele (parents) to remain operational so that they can maintain their own employment situation. You may think it a simple matter of training people up to fill these positions but unfortunately not everyone is suited to these types of care jobs and you run the risk of having just enough people who don't really care. My philosophy has always been about caring for and putting the needs of the children first and this is reflected in the positive relationships I have with each individual child.

I have been discussing my concerns about the vaccines and possible mandates with my direct superior all year and her response has been in line with my views, that it should not be forced onto anyone against their will. However, when the mandate came in, she felt she had no other option but to follow orders like everyone else. She and the rest of my colleagues expressed their disappointment at having to lose my services. The response from head office was much less personal. I received a few emails demanding proof of vaccination and a policy was issued on the 16-12-21 which basically said to get the job or be terminated from employment.

I have chosen not to get the experimental jab and therefore presume that I have been terminated, although I am yet to receive an official letter of termination. This may or may not come as I am a casual employee and rely on weekly rostering for hours of employment. I was getting an average of 25 hours per week. This loss of hours will impact our family income by about \$700 per week, which has effectively halved our family income. This situation has caused undue financial and emotional stress and anxiety for myself and my family and intense uncertainty for our future.

These mandates are not only affecting me and my family but also affect my employer, colleagues, children, parents and the entire community in which I live. The mandates are unnecessary, unethical, unscientific, unlawful and unsustainable in the long run. They may even prove to be criminal if it turns out that these vaccines have serious unintended consequences (as medicine often does) and that people in positions of power acted in a criminal or negligent manner.

What I am asking for is for the mandates to be revoked (permanently and immediately) and for our constitutional guarantees to be upheld according to the law. There is no medical conscription in this country under S51 of the constitution and no state government can override the constitution, even in an emergency. I am asking the people who are in a position of power to stand against these unlawful mandates and demonstrate to the state government the same level of courage and determination myself and others are demonstrating by saying "No, this is wrong".

This letter of request is not about being anti-vax or ant-government. It is simply about maintaining our right to choose or decline medical treatment, especially that of an experimental nature with unknown long term consequences. Please do what is right by the people of Australia.

Educator 4

Hello my name is K, I am a 48 year old female who is a full time teacher aide on the Sunshine Coast at a public High School in X, Qld. I work in the Special Ed side of the school and have worked at this High School for 5 and a half years. I absolutely love my job and the team I work with along with the students. I know that I am very well respected, appreciated and a valuable member of the school. I work hard and I know I am very good at my job. I care for the students and offer support and kindness. I believe I have a natural ability with teenagers and their parents. I support the students and teachers in classes, also during my lunch breaks and before and after school. I have a natural way of calming students who become heightened or upset. I feel I have a special bond with so many and they can come to me for support. I follow this through by supporting teachers in whatever way I can. I am a part of an amazing team and it saddens me to think that these mandates are going to affect this.

The mandates that have been brought in, are saying that I need to be double vaccinated to do my job. This has impacted myself and my family in so many ways. I am deeply upset, it is affecting my mental health. It is also putting pressure on my kids and the loved ones around me as they see how this stress is causing me so much pain. I feel like I am being pressured and coerced into taking a vaccination that I do not want. But by me not taking these vaccinations I face losing my job, which means I have no idea how I will have money coming in to pay my mortgage and everyday bills. I feel scared, lost and like this is totally unfair to do this to someone who is giving 100% to her job. A job that involves caring for our younger generation and being a positive role model.

We teach our children in schools to not keep quiet if we are being bullied. To speak up if we feel like someone does something to our body we don't like. Well- I feel like this is happening to me right now, but I am meant to sit down, be quiet and have something put into my body I don't want and that I don't feel comfortable with. I am feeling so emotional and stressed about all of this. I cry at the drop of a hat, I'm not sleeping properly, and my kids are seeing a broken mother. I am being bullied and no one wants to hear me.

I have sent emails to my principal and deputy principal. I am not being heard by them and only received generated emails back that must be from the education department.

I want to be given a choice of what I put into my body. I have always lived a very healthy life and raised my kids in a healthy environment.

This is Australia. We deserve freedom of choice. Let people choose if they want this or not. We should not be made to feel backed into a corner to have this vaccination if we want to keep our jobs.

Please will someone listen to us?

Educator 5

I have just clocked over 25 ½ years teaching and have to date loved everything about my job. BUT now all of this is broken, fractured into a million pieces. I am a highly experienced teacher who is currently a Head of Department – Teaching and Learning at a P-12 College on the Sunny Coast. I work with teachers to increase their own professional knowledge of the Australian Curriculum and to improve their pedagogical practice will improve outcomes for all. I run our school playgroup and support parents through this avenue. I support administration and work with Teacher aides around our literacy support program for students. But now that I have been coerced into having the vaccination to just keep hold of my job.

The employer I have worked for all these years, clocking up an inordinate amount of personal time as a teacher and then HoD. My own children were small when I began teaching. I saw my initial employment as a teacher as a blessing as a single mother, that allowed me to meet the needs the need of my young family.

I gave so much time, lost so much family time and money buying my own resources for the classroom but I did it without regret. BUT now, knowing the same employer, I was devoted to has chosen to treat so many amazing employers (teachers, cleaners, TA's, tuckshop ladies, P&C parents etc) as just an indispensable commodity, or cog in their machine, I have lost faith.

And this is not all I have lost. This last few weeks has been mentally draining as my partner and myself have had to decide to lose control of our own life. We lost our right to choose what we put into our body, what course of action wanted to take.

I am now also very concerned that our students will be forced into something that may affect their futures and there is little anyone seems to be able to do to stop this thing just consuming all and sundry in its path.

Please do all you can to stop this

Madness!!!!

Educator 6

My name is D and I am a District Relief Teacher based in Mount Isa. I have worked in Mount Isa since July 2021 after spending the first half of the year in X, Western Central Queensland, as a Collaborative Support Teacher. I moved to remote Queensland at the beginning of 2021 from Victoria with my eleven-year-old son, for a new start and life adventure. I love teaching and believe that I have great strength in connecting with young people and an ability to assist them in reaching their potential.

Since the vaccination mandate I have emailed my employer several times requesting a Risk Assessment for my base school as well as the schools in the area that I visit in my role as District Relief Teacher. None of the replies from my school have provided me with a Risk Assessment or any other discussion on the role that the school has taken with regards assessing the risk that COVID presents to staff or students. I have not been involved or invited to discuss the risk that COVID poses at the school or indeed the risk of my having the vaccine poses to myself.

The impact of the mandates has had an enormous impact on myself and my family. I am terrified of what the future holds for myself and my son. As a single mother and therefore the only income earner for our family I do not know what I will do if I cannot remain teaching. For the past several weeks I have felt frozen in fear of not knowing if I will need to move out of the Education Department housing and how I am going to find appropriate housing in Mt. Isa that has few rental properties and high rent. I am aware that there have been people that have experienced adverse effects to the vaccine and it frightens me to be put in the position of risking my health versus risking my income.

Our end of year family holiday had to be cancelled because of the mandates and our Christmas plans and presents for my son severely compromised. With the uncertainty of employment next year I had to make the decision to alter my plans because of concerns over future finances.

Since the education mandates were announced I have experienced high levels of anxiety to the point where I have been advised by my doctor to go on anti-depressants to assist with coping with the ordeal. My son is also experiencing anxiety with respect to our housing and my employment situation. He is so concerned with the situation that he has even offered to start mowing people's lawns to help with finance. Due to the stress there have been multiple outbursts in our home that do not normally occur. Our generally happy home has been invaded by a huge black cloud that is hanging over almost every future plan.

As a District Relief Teacher my role is to 'fill gaps' when teachers are absent. Since working in Mt. Isa there have only been a handful of days where I have not been needed. I am also aware of staff shortages and the need on occasion for classes to be combined or be divided and spread out over the school due to lack of teachers. Even a small number of teachers being lost to the Mt. Isa schools will have a major impact on the education of students as this will have a major roll-on effect within the schools. Teachers who are already overloaded will be pushed to the limit to make up for the short-fall caused by the mandate.

My understanding is that it has always been difficult to fill teaching positions in rural and remote Queensland schools for a variety of reasons. One such reason is the diverse behavioral challenges that exist in the classroom. My concern is that the Queensland Education Department, in their desperation to fill positions, may grant 'Permission to Teach' to close-to-graduating teachers who are not ready for the classroom situations in which they will find themselves. This will result in two very disturbing situations: students will not be receiving the level of teaching standard that they deserve and young teachers, due to their not being ready for the classroom, may be put off teaching and leave the teaching service, never to return causing even more teaching shortages in the future.

I would like to see proposals on how to better manage the risk that COVID poses within schools. Surely there cannot be a significant difference between having 80% of staff vaccinated compared with 100%? And certainly there could be another solution to reduce risk than to ask staff to have a vaccine that may risk their own health or to coerce and compromise their family's financial security?

Educator 7

My name is F and I am a 44 year-old male, Secondary School Teacher on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. I have a Bachelor of Information and Communication Technology and a Graduate Diploma in Education.

Before moving into Education I was a Creative Designer for 10 years. During our Honeymoon we taught English in South Korea and my wife identified my aptitude for teaching children. Since my late teens I was always passionate about helping younger kids at my local church so this new-found passion for education made sense.

Since gaining my Education qualifications I have taught almost 7 years in an International Baccalaureate School in Shanghai and 7 years in Queensland. In 2021, I taught Year 7 and Year 9 Digital Technologies, Year 7 Art, Year 9 Christian Studies and Year 11 & 12 Information Communication Technology.

My prominent role since 2019 has been "Year Level Coordinator." Last year I was responsible for the general needs, discipline, and pastoral care of Year 8. This is the most passionate role I have in my job, as it is my passion to see students grow wholistically, not just academically. I enjoy connecting with kids "outside of the classroom" whether it's interactions during breaktimes, sports and coaching opportunities, school camps, extra-curricular activities or during community service. I believe that some of these times with students are the most impressionable and opportune times where many life lessons are learnt.

In general, my employer has been very gracious about the vaccine mandates and it's effect on those that are vaccine-hesitant. Counselling support has also been made available to those that have needed it. That being said, any discussions about vaccination have been discouraged and in many ways I wish there was an opportunity for staff to discuss their concerns with our Principal and Senior Leadership. The timing of the announcement was very inconvenient for teachers and leadership. I know that this has caused a burden on schools and I do believe an announcement earlier in the term would have been less impactful on the health of many staff.

The mandates have made a huge impact on my family as my wife, who is also vaccine-free, and works in an industry where her employment has been affected. Financially it has been stressful as we are thinking of ways that will pay for our mortgage. We are considering selling our house if we cannot make ends meet next year. We cannot afford to buy back into the market on the Sunshine Coast so we would have to relocate further north.

I think that it is very unfair for people to be coerced into getting vaccinated to lose their jobs. I know that many of my colleagues, friends and family have been vaccinated not because they believe in the health benefits gained from it, but because they cannot lose their job due to their vaccination status.

My wife and I have decided to stick to our convictions and not get vaccinated. This may sound noble to some but it has been a very difficult line to walk. I had several weeks during Term 4 where my thoughts around the vaccination and income were a major burden and it affected my performance at work and as a Father and Husband. Looking back on it now, I think I had a form of depression. This is quite unusual for me as I am known to be a very positive, 'glass-half-full' type of person.

My wife has felt more of a depression, and it has increased her anxiety. This of course compounds when I'm not feeling well and I know that our 2 young children, can feel the strain as well. At this point, we are faring better due to the holiday season but the reality of the new working year is looming and I am actively exploring alternative employment that is not in Education.

Not being able to work at my school (an independent Christian school), means that my children will no longer be able to attend as we will have to be very careful with our budget. On top of the possibility of working from home in new roles, we will add Home Schooling to our list of newfound challenges (and potential opportunities) in 2022. This will be another stress that my whole family will have to face in the new year.

Educator 8

My name is K and I have worked in Early Childhood Education for over 38 years. I have always wanted to be a teacher it was my dream to help children learn and make a difference in our world. I am an adult that grew up in poverty and abuse and hoped I could be part of the solution. So I began my career as a volunteer in a community childcare centre, I worked hard and studied and soon had a job. I then applied to University as a adult student and completed my degree in 1991. I continued to work hard, study and research and have taken on many roles in the field. I received a scholarship to upgrade my degree in 2011 and have provided a Kindergarten Program to over 300 children since my registration as a teacher, I believe I have touched the lives of thousands of families and their young people, and I am proud of my achievements. ***I have a passion to teach, it is who I am not just what I do.*** I share a love for nature and people and try to instil good morals and positive attitudes in my classroom.

I have lived and worked in Queensland most of my life and have always chosen to teach close to where I live. I wanted to be part of the village it takes to raise a child. Finally, after working my whole life to gain a job that provided myself and my daughter (I am a single mum) and have prided myself on never taking handouts unless I had to, I was able to save enough money to have a deposit to purchase a house, this is a huge deal to me after living week to week most of my life.

Then in October 2021, the worst possible scenario occurred as my employer decided to follow the Victorian mandate and all were told to get a jab or lose our job. I have many fears stemming from my childhood and needles are one of them. But add to the mix my family history of strokes and blood clotting and I was not at all encouraged to take this experimental drug, and after much research and hours reading medical articles and listening to experts in immunology I wholeheartedly stand by my conviction.

However this stand has meant I have no income, no means by which to pay my mortgage and live, but the worst of this is the children....two weeks before our graduation I was told that I would not be able to attend the event and my last day of was casually mentioned in a conversation.

I did my best to explain to the children as they are innocent and don't understand the reason the person who supported them and cared for them could not be with them on such a momentous occasion, but I cried and so did they. I cannot explain the sadness I felt when I had to have two children removed from my legs as they had to say goodbye. I was given my holiday pay and am still waiting for my other leave to be paid. I have no income as Centrelink require documents I cannot provide. I am living day to day, with no end in sight.

My mental health is shot, I have little social life due to mandates and no money, I cannot see my doctor as she is scared of me, (yes she said it!) and my last appointment when I spoke to her about my mental health she decided to write me a medical certificate for my mental health yet refused to see me again. I cry every day about something that reminds me I am no longer accepted or valued in my world. Each time I think about my class and the future I hoped for them I am filled with sadness. My community is broken, teachers and parents have one of the hardest jobs in the world to bring out the best in our future leaders but until the mandates and freedoms are returned, the village is lost!

I implore you to reconsider the mandate for teachers and hope and pray with all my heart that I can return to the work I know and love, one day soon.

Educator 9

My name is D. I am 40 years old and one of only three male school chaplains in my district. I have been at my school for five years and four months. I have a Diploma of Youth Work and I love what I do. In an environment where most staff have very little time to spend with students individually, I have the luxury of being able to sit with kids one-on-one and just listen to them.

The response from my employer, Scripture Union (SU), to the recently imposed vaccine mandate is that there is nothing they can do about it. They are contracted by Education Queensland to employ chaplains to work in government schools, and must therefore abide by whatever restrictions are placed on those work places.

SU has “encouraged” us to get vaccinated, and has said that anyone who chooses not to will have their employment terminated on 14 January 2022.

This has been an incredibly distressing time for my family and me, especially coming right before Christmas. I am fortunate in that I have some alternate employment to fall back on. But many others don't. Seven of the 25 chaplains in my district are going to lose their jobs as a result of this mandate.

I work in a large primary school that only has three days of funded chaplaincy. In the last two years I have seen an alarming increase in families struggling to make ends meet. And tragically, we have had two fathers lost to suicide in that time. I am extremely concerned for the social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of my students, and am devastated that this mandate will not allow me to be there to support them and their families.

I find it incredibly inconsistent that all through 2020 we were told that adults working with children were at minimal risk of contracting Covid, yet now we are supposed to believe that schools are high risk settings, and the only way we can continue working in them is to be vaccinated. According to the ABS, the case fatality rate for people under 20 in Australia is 0.004. That's one death in every 25,000 cases. An extremely minimal risk and one that can be mitigated in other ways besides vaccination.

I am begging you to do everything in your power to abolish these vaccination mandates, not only for education but all sectors.

Educator 10

My name is S. I am a 55 year old female itinerant primary music teacher, working on the southern Sunshine Coast. I have been teaching since 1989, beginning as a primary classroom teacher, and changing to music in 1995. I have had the good fortune of teaching in various locations around our beautiful state: Deception Bay, Innisfail, Cairns, Gympie, and now the Sunshine Coast. Apart from the gift of sharing and making music, I have a deep connection with our disengaged and marginalised students, and I feel blessed that several of these students have reached out over the years to contact me as adults, sharing the impact I have had on their lives with friends and family. I am deeply touched and humbled by these stories, and they are a constant reminder to me that **I make a difference.**

My employer (base school principal) has been very supportive of my reluctance to comply with the vaccine mandate. One of his sons had ended up in hospital after the vaccine, with repeated vomiting. He has been very professional at all times, contacting the Department for advice when I had emailed about Risk Assessments, and sending on their inadequate responses to me. He believes the Department should be writing up the risk assessment for employees, rather than expecting individual administrations to deal with this difficult matter.

The vaccine mandates have caused immense stress on our family. My partner remains supportive of the decision I am forced to make in order to keep my job (I am the major breadwinner in the family, and we have just purchased a house, so I have no choice but to keep working). I feel angry that my employer now decides what I should do with my body, rather than it being a personal decision. I do not feel the vaccines have been through enough rigorous testing. I was prepared to wait for Novavax, as, according to my research, it seemed an alternative with fewer side effects and higher success rate, but that choice was taken away from me when the government decided not to release Novavax this year. Regardless of my vaccination status, I will continue to oppose the mandate and the forced segregation occurring in our society. I also hold grave concerns for the 'booster shots'. I was always prepared to have the flu shot, every year, but lining up every few months to be protected against a constantly mutating virus which could still land me in ICU appears futile.

This 'forcing of my hand' has had me speak with both my GP and a psychologist about my mental health. I am currently on a Mental Health Plan. I have also been taking natural remedies to try and relieve my stress. I cry often, and without warning, and can remain depressed for days on end. I experience feelings of hopelessness, and am always fatigued. Although a spiritual person, I don't know what to pray any more. We have turned off the news in our household, and I spend limited time on social media as I am sick of hearing the same narrative. I no longer trust our government, my employer, or the Queensland Teachers' Union who is supposed to work in their members' best interests. I find myself short tempered, and frequently arguing with family members. Today I have been to a dentist because I have started clenching my teeth at night and experiencing jaw pain.

After receiving my first injection (Pfizer), I got violently sick several times, and then slept for 24 hours. I had lost my appetite, was in a 'brain fog', and felt very lethargic, unable to do the simplest of household tasks. The last thing I want to do is have the followup injection in two weeks - I am very anxious about further side effects.

I am concerned for my colleagues and friends, who will not take the vaccine and are in danger of losing their jobs - excellent educators, volunteers and chaplains. I am worried as to how Education Queensland expects to fill these positions, as there will be many. I am concerned for the students I teach - being marched off to get vaccines, despite the fact that there have been many side effects in adults. How many boosters are our children going to have to line up for during their lifetime? How much longer do I have to teach behind a mask? Singing is exhausting. The students who have hearing impairments have been doubly disadvantaged. I personally teach students who are going to be home schooled in 2022 because they suffer anxiety when their teachers teach behind a mask. When I teach across the whole school it is

difficult to learn students' names. Will that be compounded by students eventually having to wear masks, obscuring half their face? If we go back to 'learning-at-home', music gets lower priority because it is not one of the 'key learning areas', and I find myself supervising the children of essential workers, rather than teaching in my subject area.

My hope in writing this letter is that vaccination mandates are lifted immediately, before I compromise my immune system further by being forced to have the second vaccine. The expectation was that 'herd immunity' would be achieved by an 80% vaccination rate. We have achieved this target, so what are we waiting for?

Educator 11

M, I am a 31 year old female teacher on the Gold Coast in a Secondary School. I am Primary trained, however, have found myself teaching in a high school since my first year and I absolutely love it. I have taught at the same Independent school since April 2015. I am currently teaching part time since coming back from maternity leave.

I honestly thought I would never teach in a high school as I always considered the kids to be too big and scary for me. Oh how I was wrong. I began my teaching career with an easy introduction to the big kids with 2 Year 7 English classes and one Year 7 Humanities class. I really enjoyed being so immersed in this year level and enjoyed being there for them as they made their transition into high school. Since having kids, and coming back part time, I have been gently pushed into teaching older grades and in 2021 I taught one year 9 English class and one Year 10 Essential English class. If you had told me 6 years ago I would be teaching these grades I would have ran for the hills. Now, I consider it the most rewarding year of my teaching career so far. I don't know if it is because I am now a mother, or that I have always been able to connect with students, however, I have really enjoyed being able to make meaningful connections with student who have previously struggled in the education system. I would say this is my superpower as a teacher, being a constant in their lives, always waiting with a smile, holding no judgment, giving chances and in return earning their respect through consistency and fairness. In 2022 I am supposed to be teaching Year 11 Essential English, and I was so looking forward to this new challenge. I really hope this will still be my reality.

Since informing my Principal that I was not going to be vaccinated by the date given, I was met with nothing but support. He suggested I apply for unpaid leave to give myself some time. For that I am so thankful, and also grateful that this was offered as an option and I know it is awarded at his discretion. It instills confidence in me that he was also not willing to let me go as an educator and that I am valued.

I was always quietly optimistic that the mandates would not directly affect me, until they did. Since the day we received the email about the mandates, I have noticed a big change in myself. My patience as a mother has declined, while I am still a good mum, I find myself stressed about what the future holds for my family. I am stressed about what this means financially for us. What will my children have to miss out on because of this? How many extra hours is my husband now required to work in order to keep us going?

While my concern is mostly for my family and our world, I still find myself concerned for the students and community. I know there will be students looking for me next year, those students who need a hello at the beginning of the day to make it through. Unfortunately though, I won't be the only teacher missing next year, and for that I am so sad for these children.

My hopes for the beginning of 2022 is that teachers are recognized as valuable based on their skill, commitment and connection to the school and community instead of their medical status. We have worked so hard to provide such a valuable services, to grow and nurture the next generations and now are left feeling like just a number.

Educator 12

My name is L I am a highly motivated and passionate teacher Aide of 14 years on the Gold Coast. I specialise in Learning Support, special needs, social/emotional difficulties and Speech and Oral language screening and therapy. I work with small groups and one on one intervention.

I have received no response as of yet from my employer on my risk assessment questions, despite emailing them now on five separate occasions. I have also asked for a copy of my original contract that states that I must receive an experimental drug to maintain my employment with Education Queensland, I was of the understanding that this was a requirement by law to be supplied to an employee.

I have Protein S Deficiency which means I am at a high risk of blood clots. Due to the risks stated on the TGA website and some personnel friends who have experienced adverse reactions, I am therefore scared to have any experimental drugs as it could put my health at risk. As a result of these enforced mandates I am currently experiencing mental health difficulties and have been put on antidepressants as I am struggling with my anxiety. This obviously affects my ability to be there for my husband and two boys.

If I am unable to return to work due to these mandates, I am concerned for my students, as at my school there is only me to facilitate this role, as I have the experience and knowledge of particular programs. They will therefore not receive the extra academic, social and emotional support that they desperately require. I would therefore like to see these unnecessary, forced mandates ceased immediately and the whole school system needs to be overhauled into a more holistic way of teaching and learning.

Children are my world. The memorable moments when students realise that they can succeed fill my heart with joy. Providing a nurturing environment and making meaningful connections are why I was called to be on this journey.

Educator 13

I write to you regarding QLD Health vaccine mandates within the Early Childhood Education and Care sector. I am a 28 year old female located in Brisbane who has been employed in my current job role as an apprentice, studying towards my Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, for the last 1.5 years.

Prior to this, I was employed as a trainee, studying towards my Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care for 1 year. Unfortunately, I was unable to complete my Certificate III due to the closing down of my centre after lockdowns in Brisbane. I subsequently transferred any credits to my diploma after starting my current job.

I have spent the last 2.5 years on a trainee/apprentice wage in the hope of achieving a qualification, only to have all hope lost after the implementation of COVID-19 vaccine mandates. I was due to complete my diploma this year.

I am a dedicated Early Childhood Educator who has spent years developing my knowledge and experience, often sacrificing my free time for professional development. I am a qualified children's yoga teacher and lead our weekly yoga class at kindy.

I was married in Feb 2020 just before the first lockdowns in QLD. My husband and I have been trying to conceive since then, having suffered 3 consecutive miscarriages - one at 9 weeks and two at 4 weeks. I am currently 5 weeks pregnant and considered to be at a high risk of miscarriage. I therefore, have decided against COVID-19 vaccination for this and many other reasons.

My mental health has been dramatically effected by COVID-19 vaccine mandates within the Early Childhood Education and Care sector, so much so, that I felt I had no other option but to take 2 weeks stress leave after my third miscarriage in November. I have had ongoing counselling to support me with the loss of my three previous pregnancies.

My employer has advised that I will be terminated on 23rd Jan when I 'do not present for work'. I have requested a letter of termination explaining why I am being terminated, which my employer has refused to provide me with thus far. I have no qualification, am unvaccinated and pregnant, which leaves me with very few job opportunities going forward.

My husband is also facing unemployment on the 31st Jan due to vaccine mandates. We have a mortgage and rent to pay, and as the cost of living continues to rise, it's hard to know how we will manage being unemployed with a baby on the way.

As I am in the very early stages of my current pregnancy, I am trying very hard to manage stress related to loss of employment and the termination of my studies.

I booked an appointment with my GP to request an exemption from vaccination in my last pregnancy, before I had miscarried. I was so extremely anxious that my request would be denied that I had a panic attack in the doctors office. I will never know if this contributed to my pregnancy loss. I was, of course, denied an exemption.

Educator 14

My name is T, a female teacher in Cairns, Far North Queensland. I have taught music for 30 years, both as a piano tutor and classroom teacher, mainly in secondary school. I have loved seeing my students grow as musicians and more importantly journeying with them through their teenage years.

The recent mandates have meant that I am facing the loss of my job and livelihood, as I have chosen to be vaccine free. My employer has made that clear.

The pain of this situation has affected my mental wellbeing and the grief I have felt with this sudden turn of events has at times been overwhelming.

The workmates at my present school where I have worked for 10 years have become like my family. Our school is a close-knit community which will suffer from these vaccine mandates.

The students who I mentor and educate are from 12 to 17 years old and I know that the sudden loss of teachers who have journeyed with them with care and love will have a detrimental impact on each of them.

I am hopeful that plans and strategies can be implemented in 2022 that enables all teachers, no matter their medical choices would be able to continue in their career of educating the next generation.

Educator 15

My name is I. I am an experienced senior teacher of Maths and Science as well as Japanese, with 20 years experience teaching in Australia, and abroad.

I have taught in primary schools, high schools and universities. I currently reside in the Sunshine Coast. I have a Bachelor of Science and Graduate diploma in teaching.

After 4 years of developing relationship's with staff at my current state college, my employers response has been to get vaccinated without supplying consultation on the risks involved to do so, or be fired from a job I have loved for over 20 years.

My husband has been terminated from his management role in the private health sector as he would not be coerced into taking the vaccination. He has had a close family friend in mid 30's pass away after his second COVID vaccination and his brother recently admitted to ICU with inflammation around his heart after his 2nd COVID vaccination.

My teenage children are facing the prospect of finishing their education in a home-schooling setting, missing out on ending their school years with friends and loved teachers, as well as an excited 5 year little boy eagerly awaiting his first day at primary school with his friends, facing the possibility of no longer being able to do this. I now face loosing my job as I do not wish to be vaccinated.

I am currently seeking psychological help as I cannot sleep with worry about our impending situation and loss of livelihoods for all of us.

I am worried for the future of this country, I am worried for our freedoms, and the world that my dear children and students will have to suffer if these mandates continue.

I am saddened that this could happen in Australia in a country, whose freedoms, our forefathers fought and lost lives for. I fear a future of tyranny for us all. I'm calling for an end to mandates and government by fear.

Educator 16

My name is K, male. I am 68 years of age and have been in the employment of EQ (and its predecessors) since 1974. I did take two years off of teaching at the end of 2012 to assist my wife's recovery following an accident. I have worked part time since 2015.

Obviously, I would not have stayed teaching all these years if I did not love the work: There is nothing like being with a team of people who are dedicated to enriching the lives of young people, interacting with young minds and helping to build a better world. Over the years I have taught all ages of students: from Prep to Tertiary Levels.

My passion and training have been in teaching the skills of Critical and Creative Thinking. My focus over the past decade has been in teaching these skills directly and imbedding them in the various levels of curriculum I have been able to assist other teachers with. I am also able to provide Professional Development for Teachers and Teacher Aides in these skills.

Most recently I have been working in High school support and, in particular, with students with a diagnosed disability and in general learning support for Year 9. Despite the challenges of this cohort, and I do find these students hard work, the rewards have been numerous and deep.

Now I do not have the opportunity to continue the work I love and have dedicated my life to.

I have chosen not to have the Covid Vax due to health reasons. The bureaucracy involved in getting an exemption is horrendous and is an insult to the medical professionals who look after me. It is deeply offensive to me on so many levels.

I could tackle this so called 'Mandate' in so many ways: Logically, Ethically and Morally this decision to exclude Volunteers, Cleaners, Teacher Aides, Administration Staff and Teachers is totally bankrupt. It makes no sense, particularly in the current state of the 'pandemic' and in the context of the staff shortages in education that already exist. I truly pity the staff who will be trying to pick up the pieces from January 23 of 2022. The stress levels, which are already through the roof, will become astronomical.

On a logical basis, it demonstrates the flawed thinking of the Queensland Government about the viability of treating Covid versus vaccination. Since the earliest days of the spread of Covid, the idea of treating Covid has been downplayed with the focus on getting a vaccination as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, this bias has been widespread around Australia and around the world. It has also ignored solid evidence from strong sources around the world that, when Covid is treated early, there is an almost 100% survival rate. Had this vaccination bias not been in place, we would have had fewer, if any, lock downs, a much stronger economy and much more robust social and mental health in this country, let alone in Queensland.

Although I do not subscribe to Conspiracy Theories, I do find them fascinating to study. When I look carefully at many of these theories that abound today, I find that there are a few common triggers that ignite and fuel such popular social phenomena. When injustices occur and justice is not seen to be done, when intellectual and scientific rigour is lacking, and when strong censorship of views opposed to the official diatribe occurs, Conspiracy Theories abound.

The injustices of the Queensland Government's Mandate on Vaccination for education workers is the pertinent case of injustice that I am writing about. Believe me: there are untold Conspiracy Theories about this.

The lack of Scientific and Intellectual rigor that we have been subject to as Queensland, Australian and World Citizens since December 2019 has been enormous. Two quick examples. This Mandate is handed down by one doctor: NOT the elected government (they simply implement and enforce his edicts). The opinion of this one doctor is not up for challenge and evidence to the contrary of his edict is not allowed to be presented. You are backing one fallible person and implementing his edict without proper scientific or intellectual scrutiny or balance of evidence. As mentioned, he has a clear and stated Vaccination Bias. If the present Covid situation is considered, it looks very much like he has been mistaken.

Secondly, when an industry funded regulator such as the TGA approves a therapy, it is mandated to apply the highest levels of scientific and intellectual rigour to such an approval. The corollary should also be in place: before it

bans an already approved drug, it needs to apply the same levels of Scientific and Intellectual Rigour to such a prohibition. When the reasons given by the TGA for banning drugs for treatment of Covid, which have been shown to be safe around the world for nearly four decades, are scrutinised carefully, they do not stand up to rigorous analysis.

Again, when these and many other breaches of Scientific and Intellectual Rigour are seen by the public, they trigger and fuel many such questions about the integrity of our governments, media, academic institutions and corporations.

When the level of censorship that has been experienced by people at all levels of life over the past two years is considered, distrust of governments and public institutions are at an all-time high.

To take this to a highly personal level for many people in this state, to be forced to have a vaccination against their wishes and will, is seen in the following offensive and repulsive context:

When a person is injected with a fluid against their will by a man, it is called rape. I, and many others, feel that being forced to have the vaccination fluid injected into us is just another form of rape. This is so by both abuse victims and non-abuse victims.

And THEN you implement this cruel and heatless 'mandate'. Its effects on the lives and wellbeing of students, parents, teachers and all other persons affected by education in this state will be enormous and will have no positive result.

Please: RECONSIDER!

Your arguments for such action are not strong. They will have enormous negative impact socially, economically and personally for so many people in this state.

For the sake of all Queenslanders: remove this draconian, discriminatory and dangerous 'mandate'.

Apart from the suggested benefits for the people, and in particular the students, of this state, I would deeply appreciate being able to take up the work that I love once again.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Educator 17

J – Female – Teacher - 18 years of service – Masters of Education Studies (Academic Excellence), Bachelor of Teaching / Bachelor of Health and PE (Hons).

My gift as a teacher is believing in the students' unique potential and helping them to identify their own gifts and live with them so they can share them with the world.

I have not had any response from my Principal, except an automatic reply from the admin lady a few days ago when I sent RA#4 off.

It has been an extremely stressful time for me as I am single and living alone. Am so grateful for my immediate family and inner circle. Yes, I now face losing my job.

It has been extremely stressful. As I live by am single and live alone, it is very stressful trying to navigate this situation. I have not been able to go and visit my family interstate which I do each Christmas / New Year and that has been hard as family is extremely important to me.

There are many other things I could write about how these mandates have effected me (including trauma), however will choose to keep the specifics of those private as I am not sure where this is going.

My concerns for the students are that they are going to just get any one teaching them without the experience or depth of knowledge to teach them.

For the community, we are modelling segregation and that is not useful. Our forefathers and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this country have fought for our freedoms and now that is being taken away and that is not great role-modelling. In schools, I thought it was about working collaboratively with the community, so everyBODY could thrive, not just the one's that fitted in...

I am asking for you to be fair, transparent and to stop creating a tiered-system and segregation within the Australian country. This is seriously not OK – we work with students to get along with each and not hurt other people or try and control them and the government is modelling this, which I feel is totally unacceptable.

What I want to see happen is the truth come out and the Government stop trying to control the people and let people CHOOSE what is best for themselves and their bodies with the support of their own inner circle of trust and medical team.

Seriously – why are you doing this? Can you really look in the mirror, look yourself in the eyes and say you are doing the right thing? Remember – you are the ones that see yourselves every day, no-one else and as one of my favourite teachers says – “Whereever you go, there you are.” ~ Jon Kabat-Zinn. Truly, when you look within your heart, can you honestly say that what you are doing is OK? You will know what the real truth is and will live with that. Remember, we are one...

Educator 18

My name is L, female, worked in Education for 32 years on the Gold Coast. I have endeavoured to be a reliable, efficient, dependable employee who has undertaken all manner of training, professional development opportunities, certificate courses, internal training and self development workshops, so that I was able to perform my duties with the most current and up to date knowledge and experience.

I have been running the library for many years and have found this area of my work to be my passion. Bringing books and literature to children, seeing their faces light up when they have shared their delight at having read a book, keen to read the next installment, ready to try a new author, sharing their delight with class members and teachers. To see children sitting, sharing their passion over a novel, or subject was most gratifying. To be able to manage the library for teachers and students, provide the necessary resources required, develop certain areas of the collection and be aware of needs is essential to curriculum support, this takes experience and prior knowledge that develops over a long period of time.

I have also tutored children for many years in the areas of maths, reading, literacy, speech, speech language, fine and gross motor skills, writing and handwriting. To see children progress, to gain confidence in areas where they had none was a delightful and rewarding experience.

Classroom work is also a skill set, quite apart from the other areas of my employment, with knowledge of classroom timetables and routines, curriculum, behaviour management, teacher expectations, interaction with parents and staff alike.

Running events related to Book Week, Book Fairs, Library Lover's Days, Grandparents Day, Clean Up Australia Day, Easter celebrations and competitions, Nude Food Day has also been a gratifying part of my employment.

The government mandates have impacted greatly on my role as education support staff. I, along with many others, was given a short two week time frame, at the end of term four to consider my stance on mandatory vaccinations and my personal position on this. As I vehemently decided not to partake in this experimental vaccine program, I have grave concerns about the impacts of these vaccinations, their adverse reactions and the coercion and enforcement of such mandates, which clearly goes against many acts of parliament, Fair Work Commission and Education Department guidelines.

I would like to see these mandates squashed and a return to normality and to have some common sense prevail. To have been a dedicated member of Education Queensland for so many years and to be pushed aside like vermin is very disheartening, distressing, disturbing and devastating

With great sadness and heartfelt desire to return to work.

Educator 19

My name is E I am a 25-year-old female and a full-time classroom teacher in Logan Queensland. Since graduating in July 2019 with a Bachelor of Education majoring in Early Childhood I have been teaching for two and half years in different roles first as a relief teacher, HASS teacher and NCT teacher and then was blessed to be offered a classroom teaching position in Prep and that is what I have taught for 2 years and a term.

At the beginning of 2021 my Deputy Principal offered me permanency which I was not expecting and couldn't believe I was being offered it so soon since graduating. My DP told me I am an amazing teacher and that my school cannot lose me. I love teaching it is my passion I never wanted to do anything else. I believe teaching is a calling if you are not passionate about it or why you do it, you cannot do it and it shows from the way you teach and are around students. I'm a creative person and teaching allows me to create exciting new teaching approaches, resources and hands-on fun engaging meaningful learning activities for my students. I love being able to watch students grow not only their cognitive knowledge and understandings but their physical, emotional and social skills so much in a year and knowing I helped in that process is so rewarding.

The response from my employer/principal who is just new at my school was not helpful he told me to read Department emails as it tells me everything, this is the new way now and if I don't get the vaccination I will have to use my sick leave which is only about 2 weeks and afterwards he will hand me a termination letter. My Deputy Principal was more compassionate with how she addressed me she told me she wished this was not happening and cannot lose me as she said I am a great teacher, but like my principal said that I will be handed a termination letter.

Since being told this mandate for vaccination in education was happening I have had so much stress, panic attacks and anxiety all things I shouldn't be feeling at the end of a school year and on my Christmas holidays with my family. I should be celebrating another year teaching Prep and be happy and relaxed on my holiday and excited for the new year as before the mandate was announced I was offered Prep again. However, I face losing my job because I have not had the vaccination, which impacts me financially and mentally. My sister a teacher aide has also been impacted and will also lose her job.

This mandate has impacted my mental health for myself and my family. My family having to watch me breakdown so many times. I'm constantly stressed out all the time I have gotten bad anxiety and have had few panic attacks which is not at all like me. This is all because I'm losing my passion and what I studied, worked hard for and put so much of my time and energy into. It does not help how I'm feeling with the constant bombardment of emails and text message from Department of Education reminding every week and then also getting my religious exemption denied.

I'm concerned about my students and how they will cope as I already met and introduced myself to them as their teacher for 2022 and we did a transition day and sent booklets home to parents and my students about what to do on their first day of school and a photo of me as their teacher, so all holidays they would be reading the booklet with parents and seeing a picture of me as their teacher, then day one they come and I am not there because this mandate will not allow me on school grounds. Also concerned about the parents who requested me to teach their younger children, they have expressed that they trust me and that they really liked how I teach and wouldn't want to have anyone else.

I'm asking for you to please not make this a mandate and please let me keep my job. I want to be able to make my own choice without being coerced with fear of losing my job. I want to see freedom of choice happen and people to get the jobs they love back. My students need me and I need them. Teaching has never felt like a job for me because I love it so much. I love being able to help students and being a teacher is so rewarding as young children love unconditionally, they are trusting, honest, funny and caring and every day is different. They are the reason I am a teacher as they give me purpose and inspiration not being able to teach is like taking away the essential piece of my heart.

Educator 20

My name is R, I'm a 42yr old female and I'm a teacher aide/school support worker/houseparent/and Jill of all trades in a newly opened rainforest style schooling education center situated in X, North Queensland. Having only gained this role late last year, in October 2021, I have signed a 12month contract to continue, build upon and shine in this position for the duration of 2022.

I know if my employer were to be reading this email before its submission, she would 150% back me up that the creativity, patience, love, support, nourishment, encouragement, and detective skills I bring to the children, and the teachers alike, that I support, is like the missing piece of the jigsaw finally falling into place. Students with individual behavior support needs and challenges are my forte, and building solid, trusting and confident relationships with those students is essential to their support, growth and overall success.

Commencing with this school in November has been a challenge as there have been teacher and support changes, and the students have felt the adverse impact of sudden departure from routines and people they have been building relationships with. There have been some serious testing of boundaries I've undergone in just 4 short weeks before the Christmas holidays, and they all presented along the lines of "if I push *this* hard, are you gonna leave?"

Having spent 2years working full time hours as a disability support worker, I understand the confusion, frustration, loss of confidence, fear of abandonment, anxiety, worry they won't be understood, that people living with disabilities experience when continuity of care isn't able to be carried out, where there is high staff turnover, where there may be a lack of understanding surrounding basic needs are not met. These kids deserve that kind of respect towards the continuity of their care. They deserve to not have a revolving door of staff but people wholly invested and passionate about their wellbeing.

When the opportunity came up at the school, I felt that it was my calling to undertake this position so that I can provide intervention and support where it's most needed, to our children. It was a dream to sign my 2022 contract and my mind was racing with all the amazing things we could achieve together. 2022 was way off in the distance, and I wasn't really working very much, but that didn't matter because this was the opportunity of a lifetime worth waiting for.

The verbal response from my employer in relation to the vaccine mandate has only ever been supportive. They personally chose to vaccinate themselves, not their children for their own reasons, and had no issue with my vaccination status. The Principal is pro choice, but she also has the weight of what the repercussions may be if she continues my employment if I remain unvaxed. I have witnessed the wear on her trying to figure out how to keep her super team together, to stop it from splitting at the seams and falling apart, and hitting brick walls all along the way. She is tired. She is sad about it. I think she is even feeling pretty defeated.

I have in fact suffered multiple adverse reactions to previous vaccines such as flu shots, rubella and the Hepatitis B series, but that is not being recognized by my GP as sufficient to qualify for an exemption. Her official advice was "I don't want you to get Covid" "you should get your first shot under hospital admission so that there are medical professionals there to assist you if you need resuscitating".

I'm not sure the "2 sizes, fits all" categories there are for medical exemption are sufficient enough for people who know their own circumstances, and legitimately fear for their personal health, wellbeing, life and safety at the hands of this blanket rule for everyone, or else be excluded from meaningful and free engagement in society. There is no protection here for me and anybody with sound risk assessment capabilities, would deem my personal situation at a critical, catastrophic risk level, and give me a break aka an exemption.

Educator 21

My name is J, a 46-year-old male, full-time primary school teacher. I successfully completed my *Bachelor of Education degree* at the *Queensland University of Technology* and in 1999 I became employed by Department of Education as a full-time teacher teaching in the public school in the Logan region.

For eighteen years I taught as a classroom teacher, specializing in teaching upper primary - Year's 5 to 7 and having two years' experience teaching Gross Motor Skills. In 2018 I became a physical education teacher & sport coordinator.

I am currently employed as a Senior Experienced P.E teacher with 24 years of teaching experience in the primary school. As a school teacher, I accumulated vast amount of knowledge and skills in planning, behavior management, communication, listening, collaboration, adaptability, empathy, inclusion, differentiation, patience and leadership.

"My gift as an educator is making a world of difference in a student's life".

In November 30th 2021, my employer Department of Education advised **Mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations** for all teachers. This mandate has had a very devastating psychological and mental impact on me and my family due to the fact that I am being coerced to take this injection without any prior consultation or consideration for my pre-existing medical condition, and if I do not comply I am facing losing my job.

The prospect of losing my job, my livelihood as I am the only income provider for my three children and pregnant wife who is not working, has had a very debilitating impact on my mental health. As a direct result of this mandatory vaccination, I am experiencing anxiety, depression, fear, sadness, feelings of helplessness, lack of sleep, loss of weight and unprecedented levels of stress from the uncertain future that lies ahead of me.

My main concern for our students, school and the local communities is an irreplaceable loss of many experienced teachers unable to take this vaccination. This will have a devastating impact on our schools and overall education across the Queensland. I am asking my Employer - Department of Education and the Honorable Senators to STOP this mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for all school teachers across the state and allow all Educators to have a freedom of choice to get vaccinated against the Covid-19.

Educator 22

My name is D and I am 57 years old. I have been working as a relief teacher (mostly primary) in both private and public settings in the Bundaberg area for the past eight years.

I am a life-long learner who is passionate about education, sustainability, and wellbeing. Grit and growth-mindset are two of my defining traits. I enjoy running and volunteering at Parkrun as I believe in the importance of wellbeing and service to the community.

Qualifications: Graduate Certificate of Leadership and coaching,
Graduate Certificate of Education Specialisation Special Education,
Graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning (GDTL), University of Southern Queensland (USQ),
BSc.in Botany and Geography, University of South Africa (UNISA),

I use multimodal texts, interest based learning, and universal design for learning. I build relationship with students as I guide them with learning strategies. I enjoy replacing specialist teachers as there is always great brainstorming and sharing experiences to be created.

I am studying for a Master in Counselling (as I suspect the world will need more people displaying unconditional positive regard) and cultivating my wellbeing through strengthening my family, meditation, running, volunteering and practicing random acts of kindness to neutralize the unbelievable attack to freedom created by the following sentence sent to me every fortnight: "Education Queensland will need to know your vaccination status to ensure you are eligible to continue working in 2022".

I refuse to take an experimental injection which uses a new technology with no knowledge of long-term effects and produced by a pharmacological company renowned for paying enormous fines over two decades of misrepresentation, bribery and suppressing adverse trial results).

I fear that the unreasonable decision to vaccinate children is leading to a genocide as they are our future and are not a vulnerable group for Covid-19.

Educator 23

My name is R, I am a female early educator of the past 15 years (Certificate.3 in Children's Services and I have recently had to relocate to X, South Brisbane, due to the housing shortage in Queensland.

I value my experience and have a great passion for working with children who have additional needs and using music and movement as a part of my teaching. I have worked in Early Childhood since 2006 and have had numerous permanent positions in different long day care centres; depending on my place of residence, this has ranged from the Tweed Coast, to Labrador and Scenic Rim Regions.

I have currently been laid off from my permanent/part time position as an Educator from X early Learning due to the mandate of the Covid 19 vaccination ; having served loyally in my position as educator for the past 9 years I was looking forward to completing my ten years of long service with the company.

I was also very close to completing my Diploma of Education and care in order to further my qualifications and eventually complete a degree in education, as that has always been my goal. (But it's taken me a bit longer because I'm also a mother of two boys aged, 3 and 9 years.)

I have been forced to stop study and work due to the vaccination mandate of the Covid 19 jab, because of this I cannot work in the industry that has shaped the very essence of who I am because I love to work with the younger generation, it's part of my essence, heart and soul and it hurts to have your passion ripped away from under you as well as the opportunity to earn money to keep my family fed, educated, clothed and housed.

I have received numerous written directives by my company to provide my personal medical status and be vaccinated; however I value my health over my wage as my well being is paramount to my families needs and they need me to stay healthy and stay in good health as to look after them and support them with their needs.

After X mandated the Covid 19 Vaccination I went and found a job at another long daycare centre, but again I was stopped in my tracks as the whole education/early childhood sector was mandated. This was really disappointing as I did work hard to find another job, but, sadly, of course I had to forfeit the position, that I'd managed to secure.

There has been ongoing discussion in my household over the fear of not being able to function as a normal part of society due to the mandates. I have cried many tears due to my loss of financial and psychological security from the government mandates of the Covid 19 vaccine. I have no secure income since X Early Learning laid me off in late November 2021, my family and I have struggled financially as I am unable to claim any of my work entitlements until the company terminate my contract of employment, which they have directed in writing will occur as of the 7th of Jan 2022.

They have informed me that my contract of employment will be terminated for not choosing to comply with experimental trial of these vaccines and despite my other medical issues, no medical exemption is available.

I am currently in the process of having skin cancers removed as I was originally diagnosed and had surgery in 2012 on a second stage melanoma, then again in 2018 and at the start of December 2021 also had a precancerous mole surgically removed, I am due to go and have another preventive surgery for this.

I have developed high functioning anxiety and have symptoms of stress daily due to the changes that these mandates have made to my life. I have had to seek out professional help from a psychologist to continue to be strong enough to function still because I believe you should try and be the best person you can be, but I am being punished by having my career and life become non existent due to new rules that have come into play that aren't even law.

My youngest child had to change from the X centre that I worked at due to the situation that covid 19 created, being laid off from my job and the company removing my staff discount.

My service now makes parents wear masks to their front door and the teachers have to take the child in and out of the service... not being able to settle your child in and ensure their security before leaving is just traumatic for everyone involved.

I cried to my children , at a family discussion, telling them I would conform to the mandate if they wanted me to, so that they didn't miss out on cinemas, theme parks, restaurants and arcades.. but my child said to me:

"Mum it's your body, it's your choice".

It rendered me speechless but proud that he was brave enough to hand the decision back to me, however I was ready to put my life on the line to allow them to function

I now fear for our children and that the government will mandate school for children and the numerous injuries and deaths that some of our adults are facing will now be the same as our babies and children will be.

I fear that our grandchildren will never know the freedoms that we experienced pre covid. Please see that every decision we make impacts the future generations and this coercion and conditioning is a crime against our human rights.

Please let me be able to listen and sing to our national anthem with loyalty and pride, because at the moment when I feel it honestly all I can do is cry.

Please remember what it means to be Australian... we are young and free... please, I beg of you remember that we are fighting for the best future for our children and speak up for the people.

Revoke the mandates, let the nurses and the educators teach the children they love to teach, without having to literally put our lives on the line. Please have mercy on us and stop creating this absolute hardship on the society and economy of Australia.

Let the children enjoy the joys of childhood, without paying with their health and please do whatever you have to do to ensure that education is not mandated...please don't let the babies vaccination schedule be next.

Educator 24

My name is M. I am a Female Special needs Secondary Health Senior Teacher Full time at a Public school in Rockhampton. I am 49 years old and have 23 years of service. My qualifications are Bachelor of Education majoring in HPE and a minor in Drama.

The response from my employer has been nothing. I took my long service leave to look after my elderly parents. I can't get home. I was talking to my head of department who told me who she would like to replace me. I drove to school (18min drive) to take my stuff back. I ran into the principal and asked if I could cancel my Long service cause the doctors are stuffing me around and I may not be able to get home interstate. She said no because I had already been replaced. I was replaced in 18 minutes?

I face losing my job.

The impact on my mental health is I cannot sleep. I am worrying about how to make house payments. I was forced to buy a house. I can't sell it for twelve months otherwise I have to pay stamp duty as a first home buyer. I can't rent it either. I am worried about being homeless again. I spent nine months living in hotels and air b n b because there are no rentals in this town. I cannot get home interstate. My mum is dying of cancer. Dad had dementia. I could not go to my daughter's university graduation interstate. I have two nieces and a nephew that I have not met yet. I was diagnosed with two major illnesses one terminal. I thought I was getting an exemption as I work from home. Both specialists have writing letters allowing me to work from home. I have had bullying from the principal and admin to return onsite to work. All of my resources went "missing" as I left them at school rather than putting them in the storage unit where they would be eaten by mice. I'm worrying about sleeping in my car again. I only just got a kitten. I am also getting ringing in my ears which I have not had for years. I used to get this when I was stressed.

I would like all the mandates re getting vaccinated in order to be able to work to be removed. I do not understand why I have to be vaccinated since I work from home and have no contact with anyone.

Educator 25

I am B, a female primary school teacher with 33 years of full-time teaching. I now use my many years of experience and my vast knowledge of the Australian Curriculum to write programs for distance education. I am employed at a private (independent) school in Maryborough that has both a day school and a large, highly-respected Distance Education department.

I have taught all levels within the school system (Foundation to Year 12) at various times during my career, and also hold an Early Childhood qualification. Over my teacher career, I have guided and taught in the region of 2000 students, and formed just as many positive relationships with their families. I have welcomed volunteers, appreciated Allied Health workers and encouraged parents to enjoy and be proud of their beautiful children (4 to 18 years old). I have recognised my far-reaching responsibility as I have interacted with my students. I would say that I have left a positive mark in my different communities.

Because of the mandate placed on all schools, I am now unemployed and have no place on my school's staff – just like that! I now clearly stand out amongst my colleagues as non-compliant and unvaccinated.

I am distressed that I have lost my employment, my working community, and my family have lost a critical income. I have been forced into a situation which clearly says, "Get vaccinated or suffer in multiple ways for 'non-compliance'."

This mandate has caused a huge amount of anxiety and distress to me and my family; this is mainly financial but my confidence has also suffered: I've gone from being a well-respected and appreciated teacher to being 'difficult' and 'anti-community-minded' in the eyes of almost everyone. I've been forced into a situation where I've lost who I am, and have been, for 33 years – my main identity has been stripped from me with one announcement. I am devastated by my community's and governments' lack of care and respect for my role as an influential and valuable part of our country's education system. I am being severely punished for not following the status quo.

As a result of the vaccine mandate, my present and my future are affected... I will not have as much superannuation as someone who is vaccinated, for example. Sides have been constructed and I'm set to lose a great deal.

Every child deserves the very best that Australia has to offer. This includes the diversity that we bring as individual teachers. Our schools chose us to teach in our different communities because they saw our value and what we had to offer for our learners. A mandate should never be put in place to change those important and deliberate decisions.

I ask you to stabilise this unstable situation by removing vaccination mandates. I ask you to consider what this mandate has thrown away – dedicated teachers who choose to be in the 'thick of it' ... and I ask you to move as quickly as possible to reinstate our jobs before learners start their new year of learning. I ask you to remove the divide that has so quickly been created (it would be as easy as another announcement). In doing these things, we can all move to a much healthier place – one where love and respect are restored and our children can learn and function without the fear that all these rules ('mandates') have created. Our children have been confined and stunted enough!

Please think about it: I want to work. I sincerely love what I do. I've chosen to continue in a profession (for 33 years) that has a reputation for its challenges, stress and burn-out.

Do I really deserve so much less because I make a different choice?

Educator 26

My name is N, an outdoor education facilitator from X, small town in Sunshine Coast, QLD. I'm 45yo, born in Brazil and migrated to Australia where I am a citizen. For a long time, I worked as a graphic designer and after the covid crisis in 2020 and the period of uncertainty which I was stood down and could not get a job again as a graphic designer in a so competitive market. The whole period made me reflect upon my life and search for a more meaningful profession where I could work as an educator and mentor. It was a big life shift and I've then studied my Cert IV in Outdoor Leadership with TAFE. I've been working for the X Mapleton, X Youth Camp which has been so great to bring kids back to nature and outdoors and nature. I've worked in centre-based activities and with expeditions and survival camps, leading kids to face their challenges in flying foxes and giant swings or canoeing. I've also been teaching kids survival skills on how to make fire, acquire water, build shelters, cook in fire and challenge themselves in solo times in the forest, where I have been a mentor. My gift as an educator is my passion for transformation in Nature. Something that has always been my "playground" for my whole life. Since I was a kid.

Unfortunately, all of that had to cease due to this unfair and disproportional vaccination mandate for Education settings. I was told by both companies that I am not allowed to work anymore due to the mandate and I feel very sorry to have to stop something that I so much love and have changed my life into, which is outdoor education. Also wondering how many kids will lose so many outdoor educators due to that mandate. I am not willing to get the shots as I have friends and family in Brazil that have been hospitalised due to adverse reactions. It is a medical procedure that should not be compulsory but for people who might think that is better for them and I respect that. But I am not willing to take part in it, I have always had a very healthy lifestyle and it is quite rare for me to get sick. So I am losing my jobs due to that mandate :(

Last year the covid crisis had an immense impact on my mental health, especially after I got unemployed in my previous area. I had to rebuild myself and try out a more meaningful path which lead me to study again and start my life in Education which I am so grateful for. But then again a whole turn and now I can't work again due to my personal choice on my body autonomy. So the depression ghost has started again to come to me seeing that I will be unemployed even though fully qualified and the centres needing my services.

I know that the pandemic is creating a massive health crisis, but the mandates are making everything much worse. So many people have had an impact from it (mental health and bankruptcy). The numbers of suicide and domestic violence have never been so high in history. And I understand the despair of those losing their jobs even though being able to work but having this vaccination as the only way to keep their job. That is not a choice but coercion and it is very sad. So many students will suffer from the lack of professionals.

I pray for the politicians in Australia to understand the ethical and moral dilemma of this coercion and to do what is right for all of us: to stop coercion. People who want to get vaccinated should be free to do so as well as those who don't want to so. Following the same logic of "doing the good for all", I am sure that we have good arguments that a Vegan diet is the best for the planet but we are not going to make it a mandate. I believe everyone has the right to choose what they want to do with their own body, whatever it is: a medical procedure like vaccination or plastic surgery, diet, religion or gender preference. For any of those, if they want to make it mandatory, it is unethical. Please be thoughtful about us and the future of all. I just want to keep working with what I love and seeing the smiles on the face of my kids.

Educator 27

My name is N and I am a teacher in Ipswich, Queensland. I am 32 years old and I have been a teacher for five years. I completed my Masters of Education in 2016 and since then I have been teaching full-time. Prior to my career in teaching, I studied and completed a Bachelor of Creative Industries. However, this field did not provide me with the fulfillment I had envisioned. Becoming a teacher on the other hand definitely changed my life and for the better. Teaching to me is more than just a job, it is in fact a lifestyle. The hours invested are beyond those that are paid, but fortunately teachers are rewarded in other ways which are priceless. As a teacher, I play a valuable part in the community. I know I am making a difference to the children I teach and it brings me such joy. The relationships that are built may change year to year as a primary school teacher but they live on in both the teacher and student for a multitude of reasons and for an infinite amount of time. As an educator, I am responsible for the education of around 24 students each year. It is no easy task of course, but to watch children grow in their learning is all I can ask for. In return, I provide a safe and comfortable learning environment to each and every child that enters my classroom. I encourage all my students to give their best effort.

With current mandates in place, a large number of educators will be forced out of their jobs, myself included. Currently, I am on maternity leave and have until my return in August 2022 to provide proof of my vaccination status. However, when this time arises I will not have the necessary certificate to do my job anymore. Despite years of study qualifying me to do this particular job and despite a permanent position with Education Queensland. This action to mandate a COVID-19 vaccine has caused great uncertainty for myself and my new family. I have been put in a position where I must make a decision regarding my health in order to maintain my employment. I don't have the answers on how I can raise a family without a secure, stable job like my position as a full-time primary school teacher. I do not believe that teachers should be presented with this ultimatum in order to keep their job. My medical status does not affect my ability to do my job and I do not see sense in my job being completely weighted by whether I comply to this demand of receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.

My well-being has been severely affected by the uncertainty surrounded by this situation. Right now I should be focusing all my energy into raising my child and enjoying the leave I have from work. Instead, I am feeling uneasy and stressed about the inevitable prospect of losing my job. The impact of this is causing me mental stress and will soon be causing me financial stress. I love my job and I want to continue my career as a teacher for many years going forward. This is the job I want to retire from one day but that day is NOT today. I am not ready to give up my career but I have been put in a position where I am no longer the decider of this. My future is no longer in my hands. The future I've dreamed about which would allow me to have a satisfying career, raise a family and live comfortably has all been taken away. My mental health has no doubt been hugely impacted due to this new unknown path my future will take.

My concerns extend beyond my own personal circumstances. I have serious concerns for the broader community which will feel the impacts of the COVID-19 vaccination mandate. Teachers and school staff who are unwilling to be vaccinated will leave gaps in their workplaces and the skills of these people will not be utilised. In an industry that already faces shortages, the mandate will put schools under immense pressure. I also worry about the teachers who remain. I have deep concerns for the well-being of my colleagues feeling it from every angle. Reduced teaching staff will increase teacher workload and create unnecessary strain. This will also impact students and their learning outcomes. The burn out these teachers will face will grow out of control and once again more teachers will leave the profession. Education is the real passport to the future. It is the foundation of everything. Our industry will most certainly feel the repercussions of this mandate.

I am asking that the mandate of COVID-19 vaccination for all school staff be reversed. This mandate is unfair, discriminatory and individuals should not be coerced to take a vaccination in order to keep their job. Do not let these skilled professionals with years of experience go to waste. Do not lose these people in an industry that already has declining numbers. Do not stop these individuals from doing their job on the basis of their choice to be vaccinated or not. Allow those who have been doing their job to continue to do so. Allow those to make a choice about their health which is free from coercion. Allow those who are in the final stages of their teaching degree to complete their study knowing they will have employment opportunities regardless of their medical status. Please consider the knock-on effect this will have on individuals, families, communities and schools across the state. The COVID-19 vaccination mandate for all school staff must be revoked.

Educator 28

My name is C. I am 40 years old, and I live in X, Brisbane, Qld. For the past three years I have been employed as a P&C Liaison Officer at a local primary school. I have an active role in our school, and I am responsible for the day-to-day general running of P&C Operations. I am responsible for the uniform shop & I organise & run all our P&C based fundraising everything from raffles, the disco, the colour fun run, and our school fete. I also assist in the tuckshop when required and during the past two years this has been everyday due to the severe restrictions that were placed on schools. In my first year in the role, I was even the recipient of a local legend award after being nominated by our school principal & business manager for my service and commitment to our school.

My employers are a committee of 4 people being our P&C. After the vaccination mandate announcement was made my employers had varied responses. I felt supported by some and not so much by others. The majority also disagree with the mandating of vaccines and offered their empathy regarding my situation. One however used it as an opportunity to discuss how vaccines & seatbelts are the same thing which, honestly, is just plain ridiculous. I have however had to chase up formal notification from my employer regarding the mandates and to date have received a notification regarding the announcement & the requirements from staff, but no mention of what things will look like for myself moving forward if I do not vaccinate. Verbally I have been told that the advice that they have received is to get me to either resign or put in writing that I will be taking a leave of absence neither I which I will be doing. This is not MY choice this is being forced upon myself by the government.

I have been on an emotional rollercoaster since this announcement was made and during my last week of term 4 spent more time in tears than not. I have been asked to change my mind and "just get it" but this vaccine is not suitable for myself, so I am now faced with no job due to me wanting to have control of my own medical choices. I am so sad that this is happening and feel helpless and hopeless.

I may not be the main income earner in my family, but my income helps in so many ways and the impact of this financially will be felt by my family. I am a mum of 2 ASD children and working in a school environment is so important as it allows me to be there for my children when they need me the most. I am now faced with having to find a new job to continue financially contributing to my family yet taking away the emotional supports my children require if I am unable to work school hours. I am scared for the emotional impacts and long-term psychological damage from having such upheaval in their lives.

So yes, I work in a school to be able to have great work life balance but also because I love children. Being around them, every day brings such a joy to my life. I have been the face of our P&C for three years and in that time have built up amazing relationships & bonds with not only the students but also the staff and to be losing all of this is not ok!

I want our government to allow all school staff to return to work on January 23rd regardless of their vaccination status. I have been able to work the past two years during a pandemic and at no point have I been considered less than until now. I am not a second-class citizen because I have decided that this vaccine is not suitable for myself. I am not a germ or a danger to anyone, yet this mandate is driving a wedge between people and is going to create staff shortages that our education system does not need and in the end it will be our children who will suffer the greatest and that is not ok.

I am a mum. I am a P&C Liaison Officer. I am a human being.

Educator 29

My name is A, and I am a 35-year-old female high school teacher in X, Far North Queensland. I hold a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Accounting and Finance and a Graduate Diploma of Education, and I have 13 years of teaching experience spanning across both the public and private sector. My teaching areas are Business and Accounting, and more recently, Mathematics.

My greatest gift as an educator is the time and effort I spend building relationships with both students and parents. These relationships have formed the cornerstone of my entire career, and I am constantly rewarded by students – both past and present – stopping me outside of school to share their stories and experiences. For me, being an educator is about so much more than teaching content, but rather the most incredible opportunity to assist our young people in achieving *their* version of success. There is nothing more joyful than watching the spark of self-belief light up for a student, and being able to champion these moments continues to fuel my passion and enthusiasm for my vocation. In my 13 years of teaching, I have never really known a 'knock-off' time, as there is always a part of my brain ticking over, strategising how I could better connect with my students so that I can be more effective in supporting the achievement of their goals.

The response from my employer, Education Queensland, has been disappointing given my dedication to this organisation. When news of the mandatory vaccinations for Queensland teachers first broke, I immediately sought advice from Red Union as to how to respectfully approach the matter. This process has involved seeking to engage in a risk assessment process with my employer to determine the impact of mandatory vaccinations. I attempted to undertake this task in a timely manner, before the end of term, to give both myself and my employer time before the holidays to negotiate an agreement. Unfortunately, these requests were not met, and simply referred on to other departments. I have been continuously harassed (during both the end of term and my holidays), via emails and text messages, to complete a generic survey stating my vaccination status, however, there has been no advice or information about the outcomes of this survey for my job. Again, I have sought to engage with my employer regarding my concerns with the survey, and this too has been ignored. I have further attempted to retain my employment with Education Queensland by requesting to take my Long Service Leave at the beginning of 2022, but too this was rejected.

This mandate has had a catastrophic impact on my mental, physical and emotional health and wellbeing. I have always considered myself to be a respectable and professional employee who works hard to achieve the best possible outcomes for her students, and I have many references from Principals and Heads of Department to this effect. Given my dedication to my students and my career, it is devastating to think that I may potentially lose my job because of a personal medical decision. My sleeping and eating has deteriorated, and I have bouts of anxiety which lead into panic attacks when I contemplate the financial and professional impacts of potentially being stood down if I am unable to comply with the mandate. It has been gut-wrenching going into the holidays not knowing how the new year is going to unfold, and I often feel physically sick with worry as I wait for impending deadlines, with no communication or negotiation from my employer.

However, these effects are not felt purely by myself, and extend to my husband and two children. My husband is now facing the possibility of being the sole income earner in our family, which is incredibly stressful for him, given that we bought a home 6 months ago after searching the property market for over 2 years. He is now under considerable stress as we navigate the financial impacts of the mandate. My young children, aged 5 and 6, have had to bear witness to this stress, and despite our efforts to shield them from our worries, they too are sensing our fear. It has been incredibly difficult to put on a brave face and be positive over the Christmas break, at a time where we should be relaxing.

I am gravely concerned for my students and the community of my current school, X State High School. As a rural school, staffing is already challenging, and these mandates will have a devastating impact for our students. Our Mathematics department in particular struggles to retain experienced teachers; mandates aside, we are already having trouble filling a full-time Mathematics teaching position for 2022. The reality of these staffing issues means a high turnover of teachers, lack of consistency for students and teachers working outside of their area of specialisation. I have been in multiple staff meetings where our Mathematics achievement data is called into question, and I fear that vaccination mandates for education workers will only serve to worsen outcomes for our young people.

It is my sincere hope that mandatory vaccinations will be abolished. Across Queensland, we are facing the very real possibility of losing immeasurable talent, skills, experience, knowledge and dedication from employees across all aspects of the education system. Our schools rely on each and everyone of these people who go above and beyond every day to support the growth and development of our young people. It would be devastating to see these people being stood down from their jobs, vocations and livelihoods, simply because it is the only way to maintain sovereignty over their personal medical choices. I am hopeful that in 2022 and beyond, our young people will continue to be educated and supported by all education workers, regardless of their vaccination status.

Educator 30

Just over two years ago my husband and I had planned to move back to Australia so he could study and we could live closer to his family. We had lived near my family in Holland for 8 years. But our plans had to be changed as our flights got cancelled due to covid. Thankfully we were able to arrive in July 2020, just in time for my husband to start his online Masters of Teaching and Learning. His study went well and he is going to finish January 2022. He had finished his last prac at a great school who also offered him a job starting January 2022. He even received a permanent contract. Our dreams of my husband being a teacher and providing for our young family with three boys seemed to be coming true soon.

But then there was the announcement on November 30th that we had seen coming for a little while. My husband and I aren't against all vaccines but we do think that living healthy is a good start to preventing many health issues. The vaccine is showing to be of little effect in many countries that have been a few steps ahead of Australia. It also seems to be very strange that many states can tell people they need to have a vaccine just as you would need a police check for certain jobs. This vaccine is still very much in a trial phase until 2023. So unless my husband takes this jab, he won't be able to work as a teacher anywhere in Queensland. Please don't forget there are hundreds if not thousands of teachers and education staff who are going to step down. Think of all the chaos this creates in classrooms. For the past 18 months Queensland has done well to not disrupt the education of our next generation. But now you will have burnt out teachers, too many students in a classroom and probably many teachers who will need to take days off due to their adverse side effects of having the vaccine.

While writing this my husband had an anxiety attack and passed out at bedtime. Luckily I was able to catch him as he passed out. Ambulance was called and arrived shortly and luckily his heart and blood levels seemed to be okay. But we spent an entire night at the emergency ward waiting for blood results and seeing if there were no other underlying issues. We believe the stress and anxiety that this mandate has brought on our family was too much for my husband to cope with and his body went in fight and flight mode. He is very much ready to teach and educate children and finally fulfil his dream job. Why is the government not allowing these wonderful teachers to do what they are good at. There is no difference in jabbed or unjabbed, all can pass on covid!

For the past year I have been teaching Religious Instruction at a state school to year 3. It has been wonderful to give the kids hope and sometimes a listening ear to their stories and concerns. The kids find RI the best class on their Friday at school. We teach songs, do crafts, skits, tell stories. It is such a privilege. But again the mandate has forced me to no longer be able to teach the kids next year. I saw it coming, and still it hurts deep down inside to be forced to sign up to x amount of needles to keep up my vaccination status.

Now the government has even approved the Pfizer jab through the TGA for children aged 5-11. One of the ministers said on ABC news that although children are at low risk of getting very sick, they can spread to elderly and vulnerable. This confuses me. Because anyone who has had this vaccine can at any point still pass on the virus, there is no lower transmissibility. So why would we then need to vaccinate the children if it doesn't matter if they get sick and they can still transmit it whether they are vaccinated or not. So wouldn't it then be better to not vaccinate the children with a trial vaccine that we have no idea what the long term health concerns are for these growing children.

I hope that you will broaden your research and stand up for the individual Australians, before we become a communistic country rather than a free democratic nation. I hope that the politicians in Australia will start looking at the real evidence. That all our measures so far have not flattened any curve. That a healthy lifestyle includes all the things that the lockdowns take away from people; fresh air, friends and family, joy, healthy food, exercise, fresh air. Thankyou for taking the time to read this. We pray you will be granted wisdom as you stand up for the freedoms of all people living in this beautiful country.

Educator 31

I am P, a male high school teacher on the Gold Coast and have been teaching in the same school for over 30 years. The first 14 of those years as Chaplain. I have a Bachelor of Education and Exercise Science along with a stack of certificates and other qualifications. I am qualified to teach Senior Sciences (Physics, Biology and Chemistry) but have spent a lot of time in HPE and VET, Maths, Computers, Science and recently in the last 5 or 6 years saw a need in Manual Arts and decided to assist and have fallen in love with construction and manufacturing and teaching students how to use hand and power tools as well as machinery and build things they never thought they could.

The mandates have had a significant impact on an already fairly serious personal situation. I have been unwell through the second half of 2021 and finally got it checked out at the start of term 4 needing to have most of the term off on sick leave with some cardiac issues and hypertension which were exacerbated by some conditions at school and seem to have ramped up since the mandates have been enforced upon us.

I have been to see specialists and doctors and have had a surgical procedure as part of the treatment along with a bunch of pills that I'm told are now lifelong. I have a number of people I know who have been directly affected by adverse reactions from vaccines and with little to no mercy from their employer or even voluntary organisation. One of them nearly passed due to a reaction to the first dose that she only received because she wanted to volunteer in a charity organisation. She requested an exemption from the second and was told no. If she wanted to volunteer with them, she had to be fully vaccinated. She was living proof of the need for an exemption but that still wasn't enough to allow her to volunteer and help.

Even while I was in hospital having my surgical procedure, I chatted with people inside the ward including staff and described the situation with a little more detail and while it was obvious that the staff could not "add" to the conversation there was a definite agreement with the concern regard the dangers of the vaccine. One of the other patients spoke of her never having had heart issues until she had the first dose.

It really feels like it doesn't matter if there are adverse effects, there is no real choice. If you want to provide for your family and cover the house payments, you have to be injected. Even medical exemptions are nearly impossible to get hold of. So, the pressure on people is building to a point that it is having a massive impact on their wellbeing and personal life. Well, I guess I can really only speak for mine and I can tell you the pressure some days is unbearable. Despite having filled out the survey I still receive emails and texts saying I need to fill out the survey. Every time one of these come through it's like being bullied. I remember when I was in grade 7 as a student, the feeling I got when the school bully appeared and came at me is not dissimilar.

A lot of my colleagues have only been injected because they had no choice out of fear of losing their jobs and everything they've worked for over the years. I just can't get my head around how people are being forced to deal with this situation. How are people being forced to do their bit to stop the spread by being injected with a vaccine that doesn't seem to actually stop the spread? It can't be said that this is for the staffs own good because I have watched and am watching people literally in panic over being forced to be injected. I know because I am one of them. I just don't understand how the department can be so overbearing and force this on their staff. I believe the impact on the staff is massive and our mental health is being destroyed.

I don't know how many people will need to show cause as to why they should keep their job after countless years of selfless service, but I do know that the absolute vast majority of people who were injected in the last month or so are being injected under duress and would not have otherwise taken the risk.

Please, this mandate needs to be lifted for the wellbeing and mental health of the staff.

Educator 32

My name is A, and I'm 35 years old.

I have three beautiful children and last year I furthered my career by sacrificing time with my family to gain a Dipoloma of Early Childhood to add to my Bachelor of Education.

I had the privilege of teaching my daughter with my new qualification only for you to take my job away from me.

I am appalled that you took away our freedom and choice about my own body and hence losing my livelihood.

I'm no longer able to work because it isn't worth me working on the minimum wage during school hours because finding and paying for care for my three kids isn't an option.

I love my job, I want my job, I worked for hard for my job.

Give us our freedom and futures back please.

Educator 33

My name is R, I am a 31 year old Male Secondary School Teacher on the Sunshine Coast. Whilst I am only a recent addition to Teaching at 4 years of service, I am fighting to ensure I am not another statistic of Teachers who end their careers before 5 years of experience. Whilst I did a full Bachelor of Education degree with subject areas of Business and Health & Physical Education, I predominantly teach in the Industrial Tech/Construction areas. This is due to the fact that I previously completed an apprenticeship in Cabinetmaking and had various experience in the construction industry. I see my past experiences as being a beneficial addition to my teaching practices but most importantly, I see it as being beneficial to my Students, allowing them to seek advice and guidance that may align more towards their future pathways.

When these mandates for vaccinations were introduced on to the education sector, my employers response was one of blind acceptance, stating "it was always going to happen" and "there's nothing we can do about it". Whilst this response did not fill me with confidence of someone in a position of leadership, I did take some positive from the fact that he stated he did not agree with the mandates and believe despite the reasoning it is appalling for anyone elected official to set such precedence's on the citizens.

The mandates have had quite an impact on myself namely emotionally and mentally. This did result in me becoming physically ill, throwing up on multiple occasions following the announcement that I had to get Vaccinated or lose my livelihood, my career, everything I had worked to up until this point in life. There is no doubt I have face coercion for the past year. From colleagues, my principal, and even family members and friends. Despite their opinions and reasons for themselves being vaccinated along with wanting myself to be. I could not help but find it laughable their differing reasons for doing so. This only added to my mental and emotional health decline.

I have grave concerns that these mandates will increase to my students, in which they will be coerced and forced in to making choices (or their parents choosing for them). This simply goes against the fundamental job of a Teacher. As a Teacher we are to give students the tools in which to research, collect evidence, and make informed decisions for themselves. These decisions are being taken away from them, as they have been taken away from myself.

It is too late for myself, I have been put in a lose lose situation. I have had to take the 1st dose of the trial vaccine in order to keep all that I have worked for, my career, my home, my security. I have felt ashamed and disgusted ever since. However, I would like these mandates to be retracted. I would like society, Australians, to be given back their freedoms and not have the choice of freedoms dangled in front of them as some reward for compliance.

My final message to you is simple. Are you speaking up for your beliefs? Are you making a stand for what is right? Are you living up to the characteristics that the Australian identity was built upon? Or are you simply just doing what you have to do to keep your job?

Educator 34

I am an experienced female teacher employed full-time at a Special School on the Gold Coast. My first year of teaching was in 1980, and since then I have worked across many sectors: my passion is early childhood (19yrs), but I have also worked in outdoor education (7yrs), Distance Ed (2yrs), and internationally in Vietnam, then Kuwait under the Reggio Emilia philosophy (6yrs). I have a Masters in Special Education and have worked in that sector for 8 years. I have taught for a total of 42 years and am not done yet! My gift to the students is my ability to 'tweak' the curriculum so that it is personally relevant to their own developing skills and interests. I draw inspiration from the world we are immersed in and see myself as a facilitator to developing life-long learners and problem solvers.

I am currently on Work Cover due to stresses from my toxic work environment. 'Vulnerable people' were strongly recommended to have 'the jab' which I did mid-year. Since then I have done a lot of personal research and am horrified at what I have learnt. Thankfully, my four adult children and their families remain unvaccinated. However, their decisions have come at great personal cost as mandates are enforced and rights and privileges are taken.

My son, an Environmental Scientist and Manager of his company, was terminated on Christmas Eve. His wife supports a high-needs student two days a week at a local school and is not permitted to return to the school. They support two baby sons. Two of my daughters are teachers, and are agonizingly trying to re-structure their finances and their lives to accommodate the very real prospect of losing their jobs over the next few weeks. One is a single parent supporting her 10yr old son, who will have to be taken from his lovely school as fees will go unpaid without her regular salary. The other is in the process of cancelling her wedding as restrictions imposed due to her 'unvaxxed' family mean that few of us are able to attend; nor will they be able to 'afford' if she has no income. Not only that, she and her fiancé live in a rural location in Departmental housing – they face eviction and the cost of uplifting their belongings themselves. Both girls have shared the holiday period with endless texts and emails from the Department, demanding they reveal their vaccination status to avoid the 'consequences'. My third daughter works privately, supporting a household which includes a cancer patient who is undergoing treatment. Now not able to accompany her into appointments etc. challenges her ability to fulfil her duties and so she, too, faces the very real prospect of unemployment should these restrictions and mandates against the 'unvaxxed' continue.

Clearly my whole family is suffering immensely under the mandates with every one of us impacted by the discriminatory measures in place. A close tribe, our collective mental health has most certainly deteriorated, our saving grace being the support and understanding we are able to give each other. All five adults are currently receiving treatment from the doctor, psychologist or psychiatrist; all five on medication to manage the anxiety we are experiencing.

The news that QEd had mandated staff vaccinations begat one of the worst days of my whole teaching career. I knew that it had been done in other states, and yet I held out on the belief that we were as extraordinarily appreciated as the Director General claimed in his many updates, and that his sincerity would ensure our protection. However, the Departments REAL attitude toward staff, their dedication, and the many years of service was reflected when they stooped so low. I felt totally devalued, worthless, powerless, and even ashamed that I had believed in the authenticity of our administration. I was 'just a number' after all.

The crippling feelings of loss of control over our lives and careers, in particular that of making educated decisions and choices around our own health fills me with great concern. Nor do I like that we are expected to reveal our most intimate and private details to all and sundry. I resent the discrimination shown to those who are unvaccinated, and I detest the bullying and coercion used to achieve Government percentages and goals. The tactics employed by the Qld. Education Department disgust me. So much money and time has been invested in implementing anti-bullying programmes and behaviour management initiatives to children across the state, and yet we see them resort to the very behaviours we have been discouraging for years. Shame on you!

I want to see these mandates dropped immediately. How dare you take away the rights and privileges our 'Diggers' fought for a hundred years ago. Shame on you for holding professionals to ransom and using emotional blackmail to threaten their families and careers. Our country is being robbed of its heart and soul. The mandates are discriminatory and inequitable and have eroded and destroyed friendships and family relationships, nor are they working for the good and well-being of all Australians.

Educator 35

I am a female teacher working in a rural primary school setting. After studying my Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) I continued my studies to complete my Graduate Certificate in Counselling Loss, Grief and Trauma. Soon after I began my Masters in Social Work before taking a full-time teaching position abroad. During my summer vacation back in Australia I was offered a position in a rural town. I jumped at the opportunity to move back to Australia and embrace life in a small town. I did 6 months there before relocating to the Whitsunday Region to teach in another small school, where I stayed for 5 years. Central Queensland had many perks for me, although I was a minimum of 10 hours drive to my family, however there was always fun to be had in the beautiful surroundings. My fiancé and I decided to commit to another 3 year stint in another rural location before settling down to start our next chapter, so I applied for a transfer. For the past year, we have been living and working in the small rural mining town.

On Thursday 9th December I received an email from the Director General of my employer the Queensland Department of Education to advise me that all workers in high risk settings, including schools and early childhood settings, are required to have received at least one COVID-19 vaccination dose by 17 December 2021, and be fully vaccinated by 11:59 pm on 23 January 2022. To receive this notification on the second last day of the school year, amidst packing up, moving classrooms and finalising things for the end of the year was shocking to say the least. With no time to digest this information, or converse with school leaders it has been a difficult few first weeks of school holidays. I am still yet to hear from my line managers, not even a well-being checks to see how staff are travelling, or to discuss the matter further. The constant generalised text messages during a time of celebration that should be spent relaxing and focussing on family have dampened the Christmas spirit and caused constant anxiety about what my future holds. My anxiety has caused me to have troubles sleeping as I wake regularly worrying about how we will afford to live off one salary because I don't feel comfortable taking a trial vaccination and therefore I potentially face losing my career. The impacts go deeper than that seen on the surface; due to teaching in a rural location our home is a departmental house which means should these mandates prevail we could be asked to leave our housing. This is a scary thought as housing is in a crisis at the moment and we would not be able to afford the rental prices in town on one salary, along with our commitments. This mandate has caused huge strains on my relationships as well as we juggle what our finances could potentially look like and are now having to make a terrible decision to cancel our wedding due to the fact we will not be able to afford the costs should I lose my job.

I worry that through implementing these mandates children and other teachers across Queensland will suffer, particularly in small rural and remote locations. These towns find it difficult enough to attract teachers without these restrictions, I can only imagine the shortage of teachers if this mandate is successful. I am an empathetic and compassionate teacher who enjoys the thrill of teaching in places most people wouldn't dream of living. The support and engagement of the close-knit communities have made these towns become a home to me. Now that we are at 80% vaccination rates and we know that all people can still contract and carry the virus, does it actually matter whether the educators are or not? I don't see how this is any different to staff being immunised or not and still teaching. When I registered as a teacher, I did not have to provide my medical history, so why now? I believe I should still be able to do what I love and what I am good at and follow the same advice as now – should you show symptoms, get tested and isolate.

I lay awake at night wondering how it is possible that I worked tirelessly for 4 years working between two and four jobs to support myself throughout University, yet because I believe in my own immunity and not being coerced in to something (which is what we teach children – your body, your right!) I now face being stripped of my degree. My question to you is – if you can take away my profession, will you take away my HECS debt too?

Educator 36

My name is S and I work part time as a teacher in a very small school in Moreton Bay region. I have been a teacher for 25 years. I have a Bachelor of Education in secondary Health, Physical Education and English and I have a Masters in Outdoor Education. I have worked in primary and secondary schools and in both state and private sectors. The strengths I bring to my role as a teacher include empathy and I see relationships as very important in my role. I am optimistic and I encourage students to challenge themselves and do their own personal best. I like to come up with fresh ideas to keep my students engaged and make my lessons fun as well as informative. I enjoy working in team and in our small school, I find this extremely rewarding. I love to incorporate stories and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games, concepts and traditions into my health and physical education lessons.

The Queensland Education Department has sent me multiple email and text communications stating that all workers in education settings must be fully vaccinated by 11.59pm on 23 January 2022. I have completed the vaccination declaration survey that QED has requested. My health decision is not to have the vaccines that are currently available. I would like to continue working for the Queensland Education Department and my school would very much like for me to continue there. There was not an option to fill in on the survey for my vaccination status. My status is that I am continually seeking advice from my doctor. I'm waiting for the Novavax or the Covax-19 vaccination and I would like to stay attached to X for the duration of time that I'm mandated not to work.

The vaccine mandates have impacted my personal and professional relationships. My husband and four children are concerned that I will not be able to work as a teacher this year. I am finding this stressful and I feel as though it has caused unnecessary strain on my marriage and on relationships with my colleagues. I am concerned that my students will also find this difficult and the small school that I work at will be challenged to replace me. This small school will be greatly impacted if the mandates proceed. Being a small school, it relies heavily on parent volunteers and involvement. A number of parents will be prevented from helping and might consider other education options for their children. I am concerned that the mandates will be detrimental to relationships within the school and more burden will be placed on the staff, particularly the principal.

I would like for the Queensland Education Department to reconsider the approach being taken. I would like a review of the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines that are currently available and in light of that, provide options for staff such as testing and remote working. I would like to clarify that I am in excellent health and I am ready, willing, and able to work in my role and will remain so into the future.

Educator 37

My name is K, female, 37 years old and I have a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Middle Schooling). I have given 13 years of service to the Education Department, teaching in both State and Independent Schools over remote and semi-rural Queensland. I have extensive experience in various roles including classroom teaching, Learning Support, Head of Department and student well-being roles across both Primary and High School environments. I currently hold a permanent teaching position with Department of Education Queensland, Sunshine Coast Region.

My teaching gifts include empathy, compassion and the yearning to understand and connect with the individual child. I prioritize establishing a genuine connection with each child before any learning commences. I strive to ensure every student feels safe, seen and heard to provide a secure and non-judgmental space for students to express themselves as an individual.

Last month Michael De'Ath the Director-General for Education Queensland emailed all staff enforcing the vaccination mandate for all Department of Education staff. Must be fully vaccinated before Term 1, 2022 or result in termination of employment, then several emails following requesting to complete the Covid-19 vaccination survey. I have yet to complete this survey as I have been on medical leave and I haven't received any correspondence personally addressed to me requesting Covid-19 vaccination status.

However, since receiving this information that I won't have a job as I refuse to have this vaccination has affected my already fragile mental health as I face the possibility of being unemployed. I am raising my young son who has a disability on my own. Enforcing these mandates with no option of free choice will mean I have no employment, no income, losing my car and face the prospect of becoming homeless with a young child.

I strongly urge that the vaccination mandate be lifted so that I can return to my role as a passionate teacher, sharing my gifts of compassion, nurturing and empathy to those who need it most, the children.

Educator 38

My name is T. I am a Teacher Aide at a X School working in the Mackay area. I love helping out students who are struggling and trying to find ways for them to have their light bulb moment. I love the conversations I can have with the parents so we can build the relationship as we both work together for the benefit of the student. I have been with this school for the last 3 years.

Our employer is doing what he can but also feels the pressure from the government to quietly enforce that the staff be vaccinated. He is talking about a short-term plan and then is gets a bit foggy from there. He should not have been put into the situation.

Both my wife (who also works for the school) and I have had many concerns over the vaccine. We have many concerns over the effectiveness and morality being the vaccine. We are both unsure how this will affect our working status in 2022.

I feel that I am a valued asset in our area and my work is appreciated in the words of our students and parents. If I was forced to resign, our parents would lose their Teacher Aide, their PE lessons, their Music lessons, and their resource library. As a team (my wife and I), we have poured our hearts and souls into the Mackay area and have also been able to offer a Swimming Carnival, Cross Country, and Athletics Carnival. In having conversations with our parents, they are bemused at what is happening to educators around Queensland and the majority of our families are also not choosing to be vaccinated.

I am asking that the Queensland government step back from trying to rule and oppress the people they are meant to serve. I am asking that the Queensland government wake up and see how many amazing educators they are going to be without in the "SMART STATE". I am asking for the government to stop lying and trying to induce a spirit of fear over the state and allow people to do what they feel called to do, without the fear they could lose their employment over a medical choice.

I love my job and I love the families and staff that I have the absolute privilege to work alongside. I am so appreciative of the roles I have been given and the trust from my employer to do them. I hope truth prevails and that the people who have been called to educate are given the freedom to do so.

God bless.

Educator 39

My name is S and I have been a Teacher Aide for 9 years. I work full time in Rockhampton in a State School. I have been a specialty teacher aide for many years, working in special needs, where the student numbers are increasing every year. Last year I studied my Cert 111 in Education Support and was looking forward to continuing my career in education, nurturing and supporting our most vulnerable students. I have found that I have a particular gift working with the more “difficult” students; the ones that are disengaged and disheartened with the school system. I have had amazing results working one on one with these students to improve their confidence and attendance at school.

I expressed my concern, asking for a risk assessment, to my employer (the school at which I am based), who passed on an email address to contact. Upon doing this, I received an automated response that a case management had been set up for me. Another email from the Department of Education has indicated that those who do not comply will be terminated from their careers.

My husband, who has been a long-term employee in the mining industry has recently received permanent position. Unfortunately, his work has also recently mandated that to continue working, all employees must be vaccinated for Covid. Consequently, he has had to forgo his hard-earned permanent position, and take a casual job further from home. This was hard enough, but then for the Education sector to receive the same mandate, means that we will now be down to one income which will make it extremely difficult to cover the mortgage and other living expenses. Recent extensions to mandates mean that students over 12 are required to wear masks at school. This means my son will not be returning to school, as I am aware how unsafe wearing a mask for long periods of time can be. The government mandates are taking a huge toll on all areas of family life.

The loss of careers and finding alternative schooling for our son is causing huge emotional and mental stress on me and my family. I have been having difficulty sleeping, I find it difficult to leave the house and get emotional very quickly.

My greatest concern in the schooling community is for students with high needs, who require familiar one-on-one support. I feel they will regress in their emotional, social and educational capacities as it has always been difficult to find specialised teacher aides to work with these students and this will be even more difficult in 2022.

I am asking that the government considers doing Rapid Antigen Testing for school staff, instead of continuing the mandates for vaccinations for all school staff.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story.

Educator 40

My name is N I've been a teacher since 1999 with a BCom, Grad.Dip.Ed, and Master Special Needs Education. I have worked in the private, public, and international sectors. I've taught Year 1 to Year 12, I've been a Deputy Principal, an Associate Dean of Teaching and currently I am a Special Needs Teacher. I've worked in metropolitan and vastly remote communities, one of which was only accessible by boat and plane for six months of each year. My placements have been diverse, each has taught me new skills in my love for learning, learners and bringing those two loves together.

I live in a small, country town, where I support my husband and two, teenaged children from a previous marriage. My husband finds work when he can. X, in North Queensland is one of those country towns where if you are not employed by the services, it's difficult to find consistent work. Unemployment is high. My daughter is starting Year 11 and my son is in his 2nd year as a building apprentice. My income supports all of us.

I've shared with my family that I may be stood down in the new year. My daughter's response was, "Just get vaccinated." I tried to explain the ethics within the situation as best I could. She offered to drop out of school and get an apprenticeship to help make ends meet – bless her. It was a difficult conversation to have, as my actions may have placed the people that mean the most to me, in direct risk of not having a roof over their head or food on the table. I feel extremely apprehensive and guilty about that.

Early 2021, I gave up my permanent position with Catholic Education to take a contract with back Education Queensland (I had previously been a permanent employee with EQ). I took this personally, unwise, leap of faith because of a student I had taught four years earlier – he needed me. He had become violent often destroying learning spaces and physically hurting staff as well as himself. He was permanently placed in the Special Education Unit, the situation was dire, and the parent was called (often several times a week) to collect her son due to the threat he was posing to himself and others.

Almost immediately, the behaviour stopped. I know the student's frustration with not being understood, not being included, being made to complete tasks with little to no relevance to himself. I have the skill set, years of experience, patience, and determination to make a massive difference. We worked hard on many things including developing language to be able to name emotions. The student went from being largely non-verbal to expressing three- and four-word sentences in a matter of months. Lashing out to show disagreement, became, "No thank you." The family, school and I worked together to find support outside of school.

Sometimes this meant supporting mum and the student in transporting to and attending medical appointments. We organise NDIS funding. Together we managed to get the student seen by a pediatrician, examined by a dentist and have much needed x-rays taken. All tasks no-one, including mum thought were possible. This is my gift and as Picasso once wisely commented, "The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."

Why then, would I put my family and the students that need me at risk by potentially being stood down in January? Why should I not "just get vaccinated" as my daughter suggested; after all, I'm not against vaccinations and have received many? It took me several days to work through these questions. The following is condensed summary of the journey I took.

The day before my surgery, you could have pushed me over with a feather, I was astounded. I sat, trying to process what had just been said by our Principal, "You will need to be vaccinated or you will not be permitted on campus" and then came the written mandate. To be served an ultimatum; be injected or face being stood down ... I was in a state of shock. It seemed as if all my receptors had shut down, and I had no idea why.

I'd been told before that I give too much to my job. That I "was just a number, and I could be replaced," and I would defend my viewpoint. "Education as a calling, something you are," I'd say. However, I was now faced with a cold and heartless reality; I am a number. It hurt, it hurt deep and felt foolish for having believed differently. That night I wept.

The next morning, I put the grief and the shame I felt from having my ideology shattered on a shelf to be unpacked later, I had to make sense of this situation. This is what I learnt:

I have absolutely no doubt that vaccines are a highly effective tool in protecting us against a variety of diseases and I consider myself to be pro-vaccination. I am however, concerned about the justification of mandatory COVID vaccination policies as to do so imposes on other laws, liberties and rights that currently still exist in Australia.

I learnt that consent of medicine was penned in the Nuremburg Code, in 1974 (The Nuremburg Code, 2021) as a response to doctors performing medical experiments on people during WWII; it states: *The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential. This means that the person involved should have legal capacity to give consent; should be so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, overreaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him to make an understanding and enlightened decision.*

I read the Australian Government's Consumer Guide to Clinical Trials, and it states, "It is important that you never feel forced to take part in a trial" (CHF, 2021).

My intrinsic awareness that vaccines should not be mandated was further reinforced when I learnt COVID vaccinations were only provisionally approved for use in Australia by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and are hence still part of a clinical trial (COVID-19 vaccines undergoing evaluation, 2021). This status brings with it legal and internationally binding requirements encompassing clinical trials; a participant in such a trial must provide consent free from coercion or duress.

The knowledge that important and influential bodies emphasise the importance of informed, voluntary consent encouraged me. However, I still could not make sense of the public health orders. If their purpose was to reduce the spread of COVID, the practice of banning people who do not have COVID (which is easily established with a rapid antigen test) from their workplace, has no foundation (vaccinated or unvaccinated). Similarly, a vaccinated person who contracts COVID should be required to isolate.

I found solace in the words of Vice President Hatcher and Commissioner Riordan when they summarised their recent findings:

In making blanket rules in PHOs which deny people their fundamental right to work or operate to "lock them out of society", and which denies them freedoms which are a fundamental and essential part of any democracy, concepts of reasonableness, necessity and proportionality arise. Teachers and school staff more generally continue to work in the EU without a COVID vaccination and can instead participate in regular testing. What, then, is the basis for mandating the vaccine for all school staff? There is no justification for doing so when other measures are available and are widely in use across the world. Such a mandate will not be the 'minimum necessary' to achieve public health aims ([2021] FWCFB 6015, 2021).

One thing was clear, the science that COVID is less serious in those that are young and otherwise healthy compared to those who are elderly or have co-morbidities. The World Health Organisation has stated that most people will recover from COVID without the need for any medical attention

(Coronavirus, 2021). If you combine this knowledge with known side-effects and unknown long-term effects of the new technology found in viral vector or mRNA injections (COVID-19 vaccines undergoing evaluation, 2021), the vaccine hesitant not only have a right but good reason to feel apprehensive. Perhaps TGA approval of the Novavax, a protein-based vaccine will alleviate some of the hesitancy. Personally, it would be my choice of vaccination and many of my colleagues have expressed they would, “compromise and take a protein-based vaccination to save my (their) job.”

Through this process, I have learnt that my intrinsic response to the mandate was warranted as coerced vaccination of people though denying them the ability to work is the converse of all we know and value in our democracy. To deny a person the ability to work unless they comply with a mandate to be vaccinated is not only ethically but legally unjust.

A far more democratic way of addressing the possible spread of COVID and arguably a better control measure to vaccines is being tested with a rapid antigen test because you can determine if someone does or does not have the virus regardless of vaccination status.

It is through developing the above understandings that I began to comprehend the intensity with which I wept the night of the mandate. It was not because of the realisation I was a number. It was for humanity. All Australians, vaccinated, unvaccinated, those that can't be vaccinated and those who are vaccine hesitant should reject a system of segregation. Denying people the ability to work is not a measure to protect public health and is not warranted or reasonable as such action does not address the actual risk of COVID. The answer to managing COVID does not lie in removing rights and civil liberties that are fundamental to our democratic way of life and it certainly does not lie in the use of highly coercive, undemocratic, unethical mandates as “no jab = no job”.

It is my hope that you will help right this wrong.

My position does not concern the status of vaccination but rather the status of our democracy, that is the reason I risk the wellbeing of my family and students by being stood down.

Educator 41

My name is T, I am 48 years old, and I am a secondary English, Geography, History and Learning Support teacher. I currently work in Cairns and have a total of 18 years teaching experience in Queensland. I have attained both my Bachelor of Education and a Master of Education and am currently working on a second Master of Education.

I have received no assistance from my management to help me to retain my position. They were unable to offer any alternate working arrangements so that I may remain in my position. Each response that I was provided began with 'As per the health directive...' not allowing them to offer any other possible solutions.

I am a single mother with one grown and one dependent child. I will be left without an income when the 2022 school year commences because of schools having to following the government health mandates. My anxiety regarding my future has reached high levels adding to the stress I am currently feeling. I am stressed as I will have no way to pay my rent, food and bills leaving me with an uncertain future. Not knowing if I will have a working income is increasing my anxiety and making me sick from worry.

As I work in an independent school, we have a small staff base currently looking to fill 4 positions, 2 of which are mine and another unvaccinated teacher. The school requires 6 teachers to run, currently 2 of those positions will not be filled at the start of 2022 due to the government's health mandates. I am the learning support teacher, a position they also now need to fill, to assist students with their learning difficulties and medical diagnosis (ADHD, ADD, Anxiety, PTSD and so on). The school has a 3rd of the students enrolled under my supervision and I worry that without this support they will start to fail in their studies and begin to truant school again without my assistance. I work with both the student and the parent to ensure that their child will achieve their best both with their schooling and with their wellbeing. When mine, and the other teaching position have not been filled due to lack of available staff these student's anxiety and stress levels will heighten as they look to the staff for support, and this will not be available when they return in 2022. There are over 100 education positions in Cairns alone that need to be filled.

Due to the current health mandates 'no jab no job' schools are being left with skeleton staff which will have a detrimental effect on the students, my daughter included, with fewer teachers available to work in the classroom the student's learning and wellbeing will suffer greatly. School is not just a place for learning, it is to help student's develop their confidence, support their wellbeing, and provide them with assistance in beginning employment pathways and entering into further study.

What I would love is to keep my job and see other education staff keep their jobs regardless of being double vaccinated, or not. I would like to see schools with full teacher quotas and not scrambling to find enough staff to allow their school to run effectively. Education is the right of all and 2022 is currently not able to offer this due to the critical staff shortages within the education system that will need to be filled for this schooling year because of the government's vaccine mandates.

I love working with my students and would love to be working with them in 2022.

Educator 42

My name is, C, I am 44 years of age, a Mother of four, three of which have disabilities. I am a permanent, full time, Teacher's Aide at X High School, near Toowoomba, in the Special Education Unit, where I have been working for roughly 5 years. All three of my boys have attended, excelled and completed their schooling with the guidance of the wonderful staff of this unit. It is not just a Special Education Unit, it is a second family.

I believe there are a number of qualities that make me a gifted Teacher Aide, especially with children with disabilities and children that learn differently to others and don't fit into the so called "normal" category. Being a Mum of three boys aged, 23, 21 and 18, with many verification and diagnosis such as , ASD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, PDD and short term memory retention issues, has given me years of experience, a unique insight, knowledge and understanding of how to encourage and help students reach their full potential. My patience, kind heartedness, caring nature and willful determination are of great use also.

I was in disbelief when the mandate came out, my Principal and BSM had not hinted at anything and their response was an email the next day. This response was very cold and matter of fact, almost implying that of course we had already gone and had our vaccinations and if we hadn't this is what was expected. I made contact via email as suggested and directed by Red Union however both the Principal and BSM replied in email saying they were just doing what they were told and all further emails were to be sent to a Queensland Education email address.

I am a very considerate, kind hearted person. I do not like to make life hard for people. Quite the opposite, if I can help and make someone's life easier I would always choose to do that. Even at my own detriment at times. I currently feel like a burden and a trouble maker and almost ashamed to say that I am not vaccinated and for not complying with the governments mandate at this point. I don't feel that this is fair.

I respect everyone's decision vaccinated or unvaccinated. It is and should be personal choice just as every other medical procedure is.

The mandate has impacted my family and me greatly. As if the end of year as a teacher or support staff isn't full on and stressful enough (especially in special needs). Then add the extra pressure and stress by mandating a vaccine or lose your job has been horrific and triggered a very sharp decline in my mental health.

This in turn has had a huge impact on my family. Putting extra stress and worry onto my husband and children. Christmas is a time that is supposed to be joyous; I have found it very difficult to see that joy.

The first week of the school holidays were meant for my family and my sisters family to come together to celebrate Christmas and spend much needed time together, first time this year because of COVID and the fact that she is also a dedicated teacher who devotes her entire year to her class and school.

I spent my entire family holiday away crying, confused, in a spiral of emotional decline wondering;

Is this actually legal? Is a mandate a law? Why is this actually happening to me? Will GOD understand if I go and get vaccinated? Why do I feel like I'm the villain and being judged about this? Why have the government decided to take away my freedom to choose what I put into my body?

Why do I have to disclose my medical information to my employer? I don't have to do this for the Flu vaccine or any other medical conditions. I could have AIDS or Cancer and still work within the school environment and not be expected to disclose that information. Why is this different? Am I doing the right thing for myself and my family? Why, after working through 2 years of a pandemic, where children are not high risk, do I now have to be vaccinated? What will happen to me and my job that I love? Does my work team feel like I am letting them down? Are they going to hate me for not wanting to be vaccinated and standing up for what I believe is right? Needless to say my holiday was not a holiday....

I spoke to my Doctor for a 2nd time that week, as I sat on the beach with a towel over my head crying uncontrollably. I asked him many questions about the vaccine to which he could not answer. I asked him if he could tell me that it was safe and the right option, He wouldn't. His advice was to continue to consider it and lay low while the virus spreads once the borders open. He told me that he would be happy to write necessary medical certificates and inform my super and place of work, of my decline in mental health due to mandatory vaccination.

After starting to think uncharacteristic thoughts of hopelessness and feeling like maybe it was better I was not here, I decide to do a DAS (Depression, Anxiety, Stress Test). To which returned with results of, extremely high depression, moderate anxiety and severe stress..

I have many concerns for the students of X State High School and in particular within the Special Needs Unit. These children thrive on routine and structure; they rely on their support network at school very heavily to get them through their day with as little stress and anxiety as possible. They rely on us as their support network to help them feel comfortable within a mainstream setting, especially at the beginning of a school year. To be down several teacher aides will be extremely disruptive and detrimental to the start of the student's year and their learning. It will cause a great deal of emotional upheaval and stress to the children, not having the people they are most familiar with to help them through their day.

I love my job; I am proud member of The Special Education Unit at X High School. I feel privileged to work with such an amazing diverse group of people from my HOSES, the Teaching staff, Teacher Aides and of course our students. I want to have the right and the freedom to choose if I want to be vaccinated or to choose which vaccine I put into my body and not to be rushed into a decision that could be more detrimental to my health than the virus itself. I want this ridiculous mandate to be overturned. I want to work in my job, the job I love and worked hard to progress to and keep, from a Mother of children in the unit, to a volunteer working 100 hours to go towards my TA certificate. Then blessed with a part time contract and eventually interviewing for my full time position. The very first permanent job I have had. A job I can no longer do because of a mandate.

None of this makes any sense at all, surely you can see that..

Educator 43

My name is Mrs. R, I was an Early Childhood teacher from 1987 and in the last 6 years I have been a Guidance Officer in many Central Qld State Primary schools and more recently permanently working full time at a State High School for the last 4 years in the Rockhampton region. I am 56 years old and have 30 years' experience in education, some private and mostly Public.

I am very passionate about education and the wellbeing of our students. I absolutely love providing opportunities for students and families to succeed in many challenging situations. I love working as a team and collaborating with students, family, educators and a variety of community organisations and businesses to surround our students with many supporting resources.

I understand our Government was trying to protect us, however I did a lot of research and I am a healthy person with huge concerns about injecting an experiment into my body and my families. I told my employer I needed more time to work this out. My Principal was very understanding however Education Qld head office have been incredibly coercive and for me personally abusive. I feel abused because I'm being forced to put something in my body that I will not be able to remove (it could be compared to rape). Consent is when I choose, when I do not want something to enter my body that no one knows a lot about, then there's no consent. Education Qld have told me I am required to be double vaccinated by 23 January by 11.59 pm AEST 2022 . If I have not received vaccinations by this date, I will not be permitted to enter a school or early childhood setting.

Holiday? What holiday? This mandate has consumed much of our families time throughout this break. My medical choice should be my choice especially with a treatment that has so many adverse effects including death. The therapeutic Goods administrative (tga.gov.au) data base of adverse event notification has stated 5-10% of cases are reported. From January 2021-November 2021 there were 685 deaths due to COVID vaccines and 89,018 adverse reactions. This evidence in Australia and around the world shows me I would have less chance of staying healthy taking this vaccine than I would getting COVID-19. It would be crazy for me to think this is okay for myself and healthy children and adults. I would be very willing to complete risk assessments so I can keep working.

It feels like the Government does not trust us to think for ourselves. I would dearly love to return to work however without following their medical coercion; they are preventing me from returning. Freedom of choice is important, however freedom is never free and I am choosing to surrender an income, possibly lose a home, car and eat very simply to stand the line for my health and many others, when it comes to an emergency experimental vaccine. Research is key!!!

Fatigued, lack of concentration, Grief, forgetful-due to stress regarding changes of employment, teary, not sleeping then waking up at very early hours, headaches, lethargy.

My whole family have been impacted as I am a financial supporter in my family as I have a daughter who suffers significantly with an immune disorder. We are busy making sustainable gardens and going on a whole new journey.

I have spent over 5 years working in this local community within the Primary and High School. In this time I have developed trust and rapport with students, families and the school community. I am concerned access to needed wellbeing support such as counseling for self-harming and preparing suicide safety plans will decline significantly. I'm also concerned they will miss opportunities I provide to develop strategies and confidence to walk through the challenges of life. To journey with families and their children through disability and mental health challenges. Another one of my roles is to assist with career pathways and meaningful employment. I also provide students with well-being tools through programs, camps external agencies and community support groups that have taken years to develop and fine tune.

We encourage students to think for themselves, to research theories and provide both sides to an argument and then have the ability to make choices that ultimately will affect their personal journeys. I would dearly like the same respect to make a personal decision in regards to my medical journey particularly when it is a provisional vaccine. I would like more time to make a decision on my own health and my families' health journey. I would like to be able to commence my job again in 2022 as a Guidance Officer, bringing a wealth of 30 years' experience.

Education Qld take pride in promoting excellent wellbeing support for their students. As a Guidance officer my role is to support students and families, through: grief, fear, loss, and significant wellbeing concerns. Especially at this time, they need hope to find career pathways and meaningful employment. My job makes a huge difference in the lives of our students.

Our students need all staff on deck. We need the pressure of mandates to be removed so our students, families and staff can be free to make their own medical choices and not coerced.

Educator 44

I am a female teacher who started as a secondary Home Economics teacher 30 years ago. During my teaching career, I have taught in Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales in both private and public schools. I have taught both primary and secondary students and have worked full-time, part-time and casually over this time. I am currently teaching Senior (10, 11, 12) distance education from my home in Toowoomba, through a private school that is based in Far North Queensland. The current subjects I teach include, Food Technology, Career Education, Essential English, Literacy Short Course and History. I believe my gift as an educator is my experience: both professional and life experience. I am a strong woman of faith, who loves to encourage students and families when challenges arise. I like to share my own challenging stories demonstrating persistence and determination as well as frailty and humanity.

My employer has expressed their sadness and frustration over the government's mandates. Being a private Christian school, it has been fighting the government's red tape for a few years. The school consists of a P-12 campus as well as a Distance Education unit where teacher's either work with students from P-9 or senior phase. As a senior phase teacher, the majority of my work is done online. Part of the role of the P-9 teacher's is to visit families in their homes at least once a term. My employer has asked for all staff to be vaccinated despite their role. So even though I work from home, online and have never stepped foot on the school grounds since I have been working for them for the past five years, I am required to be vaccinated to keep my job. I have been told that I will go on a term by term contract while my position is being advertised.

The mandates have put me in a difficult position. I am currently building my first home. A massive feat in itself, as I have been a sole parent for the past 18 years. I thought my job was secure and would enable me to pay my mortgage. I didn't realise I would have to take part in an irreversible experimental invasive medical procedure to keep it.

My mental health has declined since the mandates were introduced. I am currently already on medication for depression and anxiety due to past trauma and I have noticed that I have had tightness in my chest and trouble breathing, which according to my doctor are both symptoms of anxiety. I love my job and working with my students and their families and I don't want to lose it.

I am concerned for my students and their families. A lot of students who choose to do distance education have been bullied at regular schools. They often comment that they feel that I am caring and supportive and go the extra mile to help them with their school work. I don't want to let them down and want to continue to be a positive role model in their life.

I want to see the mandates dropped. Everyone should be able to be free to choose whether they have an experimental vaccine. I want to be able to continue to teach and to help to develop resilience and determination in the next generation. I want to be able to move into my own house that I have worked so hard for. Teaching is a tough occupation. It takes a certain kind of person to be a great teacher. I believe that this is my purpose in life.

Educator 45

To Whom It May Concern, My Name is TD and I have been working as a Teacher at a Private School on the Gold Coast for the past 5 years. I have a Graduate Diploma Degree in Education (Secondary) specialising in English and HPE, however my real gift as a teacher is to connect with the students I teach and be a role model, someone they can look up to, and someone they can confide in and trust. This is what makes me a great educator.

Over the past 3-6 months I have had many challenges at work due to government health mandates imposed upon us from time to time. The inconsistency with the approach has been a challenge for both myself, the students, school families, and school leadership. While I have been met with understanding from work colleagues, students and school families, ultimately my employers have told me that their hands are tied and they have “no say” in what happens at our school regarding health initiatives. This is a complete overreach by the government and there is no consideration for the individual.

As my husband and I are both teachers, tis newest mandate “no jab no job” in the education sector, has seen that we are both now out of work and unable to provide for our family, SIMPLY because we chose not to take part in a known trial phase for the COVID-19 vaccine. We have 5 children of our own and feel the risk was just too high to take part in such an experiment. As you can imagine this is extremely stressful for our family, as we now have to look elsewhere for income, after YEARS of studying at uni followed by years of dedicated service to the children and education system. It is heartbreaking to say the least.

I am deeply concerned with the path we are on, as I have seen first hand the ill effects such measures have on the children I teach and the school community in general. Parents have been COMPLETELY cut off from their children schooling experience. The younger children especially find this difficult and unsettling to not even have their own parents allowed on to school grounds. On top of that, all other adults waking around the school grounds are masked up, completely void of any emotional response when speaking with kids. Its like a zombie land. There has been a noticeable drop in the level of socialisation between students themselves, leading to isolation and depression among already vulnerable students. It is so sad to see.

I am asking that you seriously consider what these health implications are doing to our schools and our students. Please consider how many of our teachers REALLY want to follow the health directives because they believe it is the right thing to do, versus feeling pressured, coerced and manipulated into doing so. I personally know 15 people from my own school (of only about 60 staff members) who have left the education system due to the impending vaccine mandate. Out of those who stayed, I do not know ONE staff member who chose to get vaccinated because they WANTED to! They did it because they felt they had no other option. No other way to provide for their family. Out of those who were vaccinated, I know personally some who have DIED, and many others who have had serious health complications days following their vaccination. THIS CANNOT CONTINUE TO FALL ON DEAF EARS!!! PLEASE!!!!

Educator 46

My name is Miss A. For the past thirty years I have grown up in the beautiful city of Cairns. I have worked hard to build a life for myself. Working hard at school to achieve the OP I needed to get into the University degree I desired. Spending seven years working at McDonalds to support myself in High School and University. For the past eight years, I have worked as a Primary teacher at a local Christian school. I love my job. It is my passion and my purpose in life. Building relationships with my students, witnessing their curiosity burn, seeing the light flicker in their eyes as they finally grasp that concept they have been struggling to understand are just some of the things that make my job more than a career, but a calling.

During the last week of school for the year. The week in which we celebrate our successes and the achievements of the year; the week in which we begin to wind down and prepare for a well-deserved rest, we were told of the mandates put forth by the Queensland Government. I am sure you can imagine that this news put quite a damper on our celebrations. The school leadership did their best to answer any questions we had, but were not very well-informed themselves to help us. Their main message to us as a staff was that these mandates were from the Queensland Government, not from the school. They sought advice from lawyers and Christian schools Australia and spoke to principals in Victoria to try and help them navigate through this. Unfortunately, their response has been that they must comply and thus I must receive the COVID-19 vaccine if I wish to keep doing the job that I love.

These holidays have not been the restful, relaxing break that I was expecting and feel I deserved after a long year. Instead, I have not slept well, my eating habits have been unusual, I have felt nauseous and been under a great deal of stress as I wrestle with what I should do. Being told that I must take a vaccine or lose my job is not a choice, it is coercion. If I was to take the vaccine it would not be for health reasons, but because the government is coercing me into doing so. My livelihood will be taken away. I do not know how I will pay my mortgage, pay my bills, put food on my table.

I am worried for what will happen to my students, my school community. Queensland already has a shortage of teachers, I do not know how my school will stay open. I do not know how my students will receive the education they require. These mandates are providing undue stress on schools, on school leadership, on teachers and ultimately on students. I ask that the Queensland government rescind these mandates immediately and let us get back to doing what we love.

Educator 47

Kindergarten Teacher, 16yr in Early Childhood, Diploma Qualified -working towards Bachelor of Education. As an educator I strive to be a voice for young children, I enjoy being able to help them learn and grow through their play and allow them to self-discover their worth.

My employer did not want to mandate the vaccines, they were only following government protocol. My employer was hoping that I would change my stance as I have worked for them for 10yrs and I was one of few senior staff that they could rely on.

As of the 17/12 I resigned from my job as the thought of taking the injection made me feel physically ill and quite stressed. My husband and I are trying to tie up all of our financial commitments to allow us not to stress too much while living on one income.

This has affected not only my mental health towards not being able to provide for my family but also my husband, he has been quite ill due to the stress of not having a second income in our family and that we don't even qualify for any assistance from the government.

I worry the impact that this will have for children particularly if they begin to force the younger age brackets for the injection. Or the impacts on the children if they lose a parent/friend from the injections.

I wish for this to stop; I want to continue to work in my field of expertise. I want to be able to freely go to work without having to do daily testing to ensure that I'm not 'sick'.

Educator 48

My name is A, I am a 21-year-old female who works in the Early Childhood Sector, Tully. The centre I work at is privately owned. I started working there voluntarily while completing my Certificate three in 2016, I am now fully qualified with my diploma. I recently had the responsibility of the running of the Nursery Room within the centre I work at before Covid Vaccination mandates were put into place.

The director at my centre has been wonderfully supportive in my decision throughout my journey, however the owners of the centre (my bosses) have been quite coercive. On the 23rd of November, I was confronted by one of my bosses asking me about the vaccine and whether I was going to have my vaccination by the 17th of December. I responded with 'I'm going to wait and see what happens.' She then came back at me with 'well do you want to end up in hospital with tubes down your throat'. This made me quite upset. As a child I spent quite some time in hospital being diagnosed with leukemia. My young body was pumped with drugs and the trauma of this has left me with fears of hospitals and particular injections. My medical history is not something I openly discuss with anyone, and I found all of this very upsetting.

My bosses then invited me back into the office at 9am on the 1st of December questioning me again on whether I am getting the vaccine or not, I explained my thoughts and the reasons why I was hesitant but not once said that I refuse to have it. They proceeded to tell me I would need to talk to my Brisbane doctors to try to get an exemption. They then told me that if I don't have the Vaccine by the 17th of December that I would need to resign. I told them I wasn't resigning and that I would like all of this in writing.

The vaccine mandates have affected my family. There has been lots of tension within the family, and we've found ourselves snapping at each other. We have had lots of tears; I have faced losing my job.

This has affected my mental health by giving me anxiety and feeling agitated. With a loss of income and payments that need to be made.

I would like vaccine mandates to cease and have Australia to go back to how it was with freedom of choice and not being forced into something that doesn't feel right for many of us.

Educator 49

I am a 37 year old female that has worked as an ECT in the early childcare sector for 16 years. I have always worked full time in the private section in North West Queensland. I have received many compliments for bringing the community together and my services have always got a waitlist of children. The children are always ready to start their formal schooling years when they leave my service and teachers and principals all give this feedback to the service.

X service does not want to implement the mandates as it goes against their core values of everyone being treated equally within our service.

I have been given the choice to have the vaccine (in which I am waiting on another vaccine that I believe will be safer option) or lose my job. I am the main income earner for my family and I have 3 small children. I have recently built a brand new home however with my loss of income my children and myself could be living out of my car.

From the 30.11.21 when the mandates were released I have cried myself to sleep most days, I am consistently on edge and I have not had 1 day that I have enjoyed my holiday time with my family. In a general school time I work 11 hour days to ensure that my students are receiving the best they can, so generally my holiday are for my family. This year this has not happened and this sadden me more.

What concerns me the most is that we can already see the small community falling apart. Most of the hospitality venue are running on limited hours some are trying to do the right thing and not discriminate however they are being shut down or detained by the police. These people like myself are generally compliant but our bodies are telling us that this is not right.

I am asking that you trust the Australian people to make choices for themselves, no more mandates on working environments and separating people because of their personal health choices in venues. This is causing a lot more mental illness within smaller communities than people realise.

I am really hoping that you consider these letters and let Australian people make their own choices and drop the mandates and segregation and blaming people for making choices for their own bodies.

Educator 50

My name is K and I have been a teacher for 19 years and working in a Community Kindergarten in X, near Gladstone, Queensland for the last 10 years. During my time at X Kindergarten I have been lucky enough to teach 10 groups of amazing children and these include children of children that I originally taught at X Primary School. At X Kindergarten we take pride in the fact that we make amazing connections with the families of the children and incorporate the whole family's needs when planning our kindergarten program.

As X Kindergarten is a community kindergarten, it is run by a volunteer committee made up of parents of the children attending. The committee have unfortunately been put in an extremely difficult situation and have been guided by CMS and Lady Gowrie. I was fortunate enough to have my long service approved for first term of 2022. 2 other staff members at our kindy are going through the risk assessment process and waiting to have unpaid leave approved or denied.

These mandates have had a huge impact on my life and the lives of my family and extended family. I have been feeling physically sick since the announcement. I have not been sleeping well and find I am lacking energy and momentum to continue day to day activities. I travelled to my parents house where I stayed for a week, where I was supported emotionally and spiritually in order to regain some composure and normality to my life. At this stage I have not succumbed to the coercion and have not had the 'vaccine'. I am hoping not to have to have it at all, and am considering a different path for future employment to avoid these mandates. We have my father in-law living on our property and he has just built a shed and had a cabin built at our place. If we were to sell our place to attempt to save money he would lose all that he has put into his retirement.

The stress of these compounding situations above have had such a negative impact on the lives of everyone in our household. Christmas holidays are normally a fun, relaxing time of year and unfortunately these mandates have taken this precious time away from our family. Our two girls are aware of the stress we are under and are now having to live a life we never expected them to live. A two tiered community.

In 2022 I was to have 2 children return for another year of kindy and for continuity of learning and development I was to be their teacher again. Now they will have a new teacher and the families will need to begin new connections with new staff. I am concerned that the kindy where I teach will struggle to find staff in an already stretched profession, and that the other staff members will be stressed due to the increased workload and loss of familiar, loved co-workers.

I am asking that the government reconsider the mandates that are imposed across the state and country, to allow free choice, to allow us to have the right to earn a living and the right to continue to have a positive impact on the children that we teach.

Educator 51

My name is M and I have been a teacher for almost 12 years-including my studies. I live in beautiful X, having moved here in 2013 after completing my teaching degree as a single parent. Studying to be a teacher was a huge financial (whilst completing my degree and ongoing repaying HECS, not earning an income/super during this time etc) and emotional struggle however, I absolutely love my job and believe that all my previous experiences have made me what I am today. I am a qualified Secondary teacher in Music and Geography-having graduated with a ranking 1 and also have a certificate in Training and Assessment, currently studying a Certificate IV in Leader of Adults with Scouts Australia and enrolled to start my post graduate studies in Autism, (Graduate Certificate in Autism, then to Masters of Education).

My employer is the Toowoomba Catholic Education office and I work at X -a primary school for prep-Year 6 students. My principal has been made aware of my pre-existing medical conditions (blot clots in myself and my immediate family including the death of my mother from DVT) and that my GP has stated that I should not receive the mRNA vaccine due to this. My principal has been very supportive, speaking with HR on my behalf etc. However, the response from the diocese is that they are following all mandates as stipulated by the Queensland Government.

Although it's been made clear to me that the expectation is that I receive two vaccinations prior to returning to work otherwise I will have consequences, I cannot in all good faith, take these as per medical advice and my family's history. I am the main income source in my family and as such, it will make a huge dint in our budget. I suspect that I will need to go onto Centrelink payments-something that I've worked extremely hard not to do. I am more than willing and capable of working and hope that I am able to continue.

My mental health has been severely impacted by these mandates. I've been in tears almost daily since finding out about these mandates rolling out in educational settings. I cannot sleep very well and at almost 46, am struggling to think of alternative occupations for the next 20 years. I have not been able to enjoy my Christmas 'holidays' due to the constant overwhelming fears of no job or income. My son whose almost 7, goes to the same school as me and I am dreading the drop offs and collection-seeing all my work colleagues who I adore, but being excluded due to the choice of not receiving this injection.

At the end of the school term this year, I have spent many hours researching and preparing for my Year 3 class for next year. I've had them in a 'transition' day, where they spent the morning getting to know me and I've spoken with the current teachers in depth, to find out any necessary support systems to have to be put in place to ensure a safe and smooth start of the year. A new teacher unknown to these students, will not have this knowledge or bond with the students and it will be extremely challenging to both parties. Living in a rural town, it is also difficult for me to no longer be part of this tight knit school community-I usually see at least two of my students (or students I've taught) in town or sports etc.) and I have a close connection with many of them. I work in a flexible learning, co teaching situation and my colleague is also impacted if I don't return. It will create a very high work load on her if she is expected to work with a new teacher unfamiliar with co teaching and all the specialized areas that X school teaches.

Ideally, I would be more than happy to take weekly tests, temperature checks etc. so that I can return to school next year. The teaching staff are aware that I wasn't intending on getting this particular vaccine and are more than happy to work with me. I'm also very open and willing to take a protein-based vaccine once it becomes approved.

In summary, my teaching role isn't just standing in front of the class and teaching content. I've had to wipe tears off students who've lost family members, worked in a school where there was a suicide, cleaned up broken bones and called ambulances, cried when one of my former students died this year, cried when another got diagnosed with a potentially fatal disease. I've worked late nights and weekends, with my own family missing out my time because I've wanted to have my students having the best possible educational experiences possible. We're highly qualified and experienced professionals who not only have a connection to their students, but also to the parents and community-especially in regional and rural areas such as X and I'm imploring you to reconsider this mandate. It will particularly hurt regional towns.

Educator 52

My name is D, I'm 39 and was recently stood down from my job as groundskeeper at my boys local catholic primary school.

My employer called me on the 13/12/21 and asked if I intended to take the vaccine to keep my job as he had been directed by Queensland catholic education to ensure all staff had received their first dose by the 17th. He didn't want to have to have the conversation, feeling that it is wrong and doesn't make sense. He did not want to lose me as an employee as he, the staff and parents see the value in the hard work I do around the school, keeping it a clean and safe environment for the kids. Informing me that his hands are tied, and there is nothing he can do about it once I informed him I wouldn't be, he regrettably stood me down effective from the 16/12.

The current mandates that Queensland Education employees having to be vaccinated have effected my family and myself in so many ways. I have thought about caving and getting it done many times. For me, the risk of not receiving it far outweighs the benefits of having it. I was in an accident a few years back and was unable to physically do anything for a long time. Being an extremely active (CrossFit trainer/competitor) and healthy man, I was becoming more and more depressed and ended up in a dark place. If something was to put me in this place again, I don't think I could mentally get through it. In saying that, the anxiety these mandates have bought on my wife and I have been almost intolerable. The feelings we are going through are like nothing before. Scared, terrified, sick, worried and not knowing if financially we will be able to recover if we do get through this. Years of hard work and saving are being chewed up just to pay rent and put food on the table.

For me, I am my boys role model. I practice what I preach. I have huge concerns for my kids, all kids. Two reasons; if I resort to taking the vaccine due to the current mandates, I am showing them that it is ok. It's ok to receive it because I am being forced, to keep my job. It demonstrates that freedom only comes from being forced to do something. This is not what I want to teach our children. I am scared what this means for their future. No more free rights to choose. The other reason is that there simply has not been enough time for data and testing to be done on these vaccines and not enough evidence that they work. Don't get me wrong, I'm a big believer in vaccines and have received them all prior to this. Due to the fact that they have been researched and tested over years, side effects have been monitored and they are made to stop strains/virus. There is evidence and data behind them over years and years. The covid vaccines have been proven that they don't stop you from transmitting the virus or receiving it. I don't feel like I need to elaborate on this any further as the facts are there.

I am asking for the free will to choose without being punished. It is our god given birthright and has been stripped from underneath us. I'm asking that you let us choose without being coerced. Because that is not a choice. It is forced. A healthy, young, energetic, friendly man being stood down because he won't surrender his basic rights and take a vaccine that can make him sick isn't right. I can do my job, I don't need to be within 10meters of anyone. But you have taken that right away.

'For we are are young and free.' At least, we used to be.

Educator 53

I am a 39 year old, female teacher from Rockhampton, QLD. I have been a teacher for 17 years. I am a passionate Early Childhood Teacher who constantly strives to bring more play-based learning into the classrooms. I have a particular interest in early literacy and just love to see the light in a child's eyes when they realize that they too, are a reader or a writer! I have special keepsakes from families from every year that I have taught, including a beautiful necklace given to me by a little boy named Jake in X, on my very first year of teaching. I named my son after this beautiful child. I have been fortunate enough to work in remote and indigenous schools in the Northern Territory, including School of the Air where I taught the kids from X Station as well as some beautiful little girls living in Czech Republic (whilst at School of the Air). I taught at a station school on X Station, NT. I absolutely love my job and I am GREAT at it.

At the end of the last school term my school advised that the department (Catholic Education) were mandating the Covid Vaccine for all staff and that without the vaccine, we would be unable to work in the following year. This has devastated my working life. I cannot give clear and informed consent on a vaccine that is still in the trial stages. I personally know far too many people who have been harmed by this vaccine. I have been safe working with children all through the last two years of Covid. And now, apparently, I am not. I believe that this is clear coercion, to lose one's job unless you agree to receiving a trial vaccine. As I said, I cannot give clear and informed consent.

I haven't lost my job. I will simply not have my contract renewed once school goes back. Something that has happened every year at the same school for three years. I will not be able to see my kids. I will not be able to be their writing teacher. I will not be able to read them stories written by my fabulous author friends – authors who have encouraged 'my kids' to be writers too. I will not be able to earn an income to support my family.

This has been an incredibly stressful time for myself and my family. I wake at night and worry about the possibility of having to homeschool my four children because I am distrustful of our schools – what if they start vaccinating students at school without parent consent? It's incredible that the government has said that children at age 12 can give consent to this procedure! We don't know the long term side effects. It is simply not ok. I wake at night worrying for mankind. I worry for the division and segregation that is occurring. For the suicide rates which have skyrocketed and for the small business owners that will have to close (that's me too) with these mandates.

I truly respect any person that has chosen to make choice to take this vaccine and actually wish that could be me. But I can't give clear and informed consent. Anyone that wanted this vaccine has already gone out and done it. Months ago. With clear, informed consent. The rest are being bullied and coerced into it and that is most definitely not ok. What sort of country are we leaving to our children?

I urge you to listen to the people speaking up for freedom. I urge you to support pro-choice and work to abolish these draconian mandates, which are causing endless grief. A person's medical choices are theirs alone and should be held sacred. Please, use whatever influence you have to put an end to this madness. My children deserve better.

Educator 54

I am a 37yr old female, mother of two young boys and wife, and like so many others (my husband included), just a number on the payroll who can be replaced. I have been a primary teacher, within the Far North Qld Region, with the department since 2006, in various roles including: Classroom & Instrumental Music Teacher, Classroom Teacher, Arts & Technology Specialist, acting HOC, TRS, NCT Specialist, also including admin roles.

According to the Department of Education, unless I am fully vaxxed (currently only 2 jabs but potentially 3) I am unable to fulfill my duties. Due to other personal circumstances, not excluding the stress of the mandate against my own health, I have taken leave for the beginning of 2022 and potentially into the foreseeable future, until I can feel comfortable within my workplace.

I am personally, and rightfully so, asking a lot of questions. Currently, as it stands, we have been told that we can be suspended without pay should we not comply with the vaccination mandate, however there are ways that people can still work without it, as clearly stated on the government health page, should there be staff shortages. What right does the department have to refuse any of our well-earned leaves and entitlements?

As a family, we are concerned, we do not wish to be sick, nor do we wish anyone to be sick, yet at the same time we also do not want to risk our own health without knowing that these injections, called vaccines are 100% safe and will have no long term or immediate effects, unlike so many we know who have suffered (& lost loved ones) after their vaccinations.

Although my own personal & family life can be somewhat stressful and mentally challenging, being told that I am no longer able to do what I love and have done for the past 15 years, is now not allowed. I am not allowed because the government apparently is clearly all over and knowing of my personal health and wellbeing - apparently more so than my own doctors. They have asked us all to jump, yet I am asking how high? The government says we have a choice, however right now, it is not a choice for many - it is a matter of surviving and taking the risk to survive, to ensure they can still provide for their families.

At this point in time, I am in fear. Not only for my own self, but also for my children. I am not sure schools are a safe place to be anymore. I am scared that my children will go to school and be given the vaccination, without me being present, without my consent - as it is happening elsewhere in the world. Who would be responsible for any reactions? Immediate or not.

Currently every contact tracing site listed, within in my region, is somewhere that I am not allowed to go. I am not sure I even want to send my own children to school, based on the current climate of assuming that places only fully vaccinated people are allowed is okay. Let alone stress about whether my students will be sharing with me from elsewhere, or myself to them. How am I, unvaccinated, a bigger risk? None of these mandates make sense. The mandates have created division and developed low morals within our workplaces, as some people have had no choice but to abide by these mandates. These mandates change so often - how are we to continue trusting or believing anything our government says. How is a mandate being treated as law?

How is having a choice, not having a choice when we have our own livelihoods held against us. Why can't we have alternatives? Knowing that vaccination suppresses symptoms - a teacher who falls sick will immediately know that they may possibly have a case of COVID and can isolate, stay home, get tested; compared to one who is vaccinated and unknowingly sharing with everyone. Before the mandate, there was already a high population of departmental staff vaccinated. Cases are not ceasing because more people have agreed to taking the option of so-called vaccination. The data is clear, you cannot make this stuff up!

Educator 55

My name is E; 44 year old female who loves to teach. I graduated with my Bachelor of Education in 1999 from the University of Tasmania. I have built a career both within a leadership and classroom teaching capacity, doing what I love. I have taught for 22 years in both Tasmania and Queensland and touched thousands of students. My expertise varies from Years 1 through to adult learning.

My expertise ranges from:

10 years – primary school Years 3-6, as well as Advanced Skills Teacher for 4 years

2 years – specialist Science teacher

7 years – special education expertise – Senior Transition Officer for 2 years

3 years – Years 9-10 English/SOSE/Graphic Design/Journalism and VET teacher – as well as Advanced Skills Teacher – Head of Year 9/10 behaviour.

Since the mandate was announced, I have never been under so much stress. During the final two weeks of term, I had to go to the doctor due to stress related issues and could not speak without crying. This is an extreme reaction and anyone who knows me personally, would realise that this is behaviour that they would have never seen from me under normal circumstances. I was administering anxiety medication in the last two weeks of term and was given a doctor's certificate for severe stress/anxiety of which I did not exercise, due to my commitment to the school and the students in which I teach. I was given a medical exemption for a number of health-related issues which conflict with the current selection of vaccinations that are available. This is due to expire on the 30th May 2022. This exemption has since been put forward to the Department of Education and to my understanding will go a panel (who will then scrutinise the exemption) to see whether I can still safely teach. This again, has caused extreme anxiety and un-ease. I currently suffer regular insomnia, due to the worry of my loss of income and the effect that this will have on my family and the financial commitments that we have. These mandates have caused extreme separation in my family and extended family. My husband is supportive and has been an excellent confidant. I have had counselling from the EAP program. This was of little help.

The constant stream of emails and texts about mandates have been nothing short of stressful, as a constant reminder of the unsettled future that has been set before us. I have concerns about the void that will be left and how this will impact my children as well as the children that I have had in my care up until now. In a region that already suffers teacher shortages, I am concerned that this will further damage an already broken system of opportunities. By gaining teachers internationally, this then impedes further by varying dialects of which hinder a young students speech development. This is NOT the answer.

My employer has stuck to department policy, and I can appreciate that he has been placed in an awkward position. As much as he respects my right to choose, he has made it clear that he does not understand my choice NOT to have the mandated vaccine.

I am requesting that we can exercise our right to choose. If we live in a free country, we should be able to choose what is right for OUR body. I have read so much about covid and the available treatments, I have a healthy diet, I keep fit and I boost my immune system. My body is currently running at its optimum. Previously, I have suffered chronic illness; 10 years of infertility as well as a time where it was difficult for me to function and even walk prior to being diagnosed with multiple autoimmune diseases. With a lack of longitudinal evidence and no intergenerational evidence, this is not an option for me to return to this level of potential health. Having critically scrutinising up to date statistics and possible injuries from the vaccines, not to mention the impact of the vaccine with autoimmune issues, I believe I have more chance of surviving covid than the vaccines and the long-term effects. My health choices do not impede on my ability to be a teacher, to care and to make a difference. I can still do my job, vaccinated or not! My body... my choice... the end!

Educator 56

My name is M. I am a 45 year old female teacher, trained in secondary science, specialising in Chemistry and Biology, however my most recent experience of 5 years was in the primary sector. I live in X, and have taught across much of the area during my 15 years of teaching service. I have two Bachelors degrees; Bachelor of Science (Chemistry and Biology) and Bachelor of Education (Grad)(Sec). I also have previously attained Certificate IV Trainer and Assessor, I am a qualified and registered Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety, as well as an intermediate Qualified Coach and Judge in both Men's and Women's Artistic Gymnastics. These sporting qualifications have been invaluable to the primary school to which I had been loyally giving service to. I have been proactive in gaining qualifications and certifications in both Gifted Education and Autism. I have lived experience in both areas, with 4 of my own children coming under the banner of being twice exceptional. My greatest gift as an educator, is being able to see each child for who they are and where they are at, regardless of where the education system decides what that should be. In doing so, I see children grow and thrive to be the best version of themselves. Most recently, I came across a woman with 2 small children. "X" She says. "You were the best Biology teacher!". I taught her over 12 years ago, and I still impact. I didn't do anything special. I just taught from the heart.

My employer has made it a condition of my employment to undertake an experimental medical trial, regardless of my concerns. Without participation in this clinical trial, I will no longer be considered employable. This has nothing to do with teaching.

The impact this had on me is profound. Financially, this is devastating. Being unable to pay my bills, worrying if I am going to be able to house, clothe and feed my children, now and in the future. I will become a financial burden on society, requiring government welfare support to carve some new existence for my family. Emotionally and psychologically, I now lose my identity; the core of who I am. I am a teacher, a nurturer, a grower of minds. I lose the right to share my knowledge and gifts with my students and colleagues. I have lost my sense of self and am struggling to comprehend what my future holds. The bulk of my adult life has been teaching, I know nothing else. It is who I am.

The impact on on the community is boundless. It will not just be schools themselves that are impacted, but also the wider community. The loss of so much knowledge and skill as teachers are forced to walk away from their schools, their careers. I think of the loss of the highly experienced teachers with their deep knowledge and lived experience. I think of the loss of the teachers just finding their groove, ready to take on the world. I think of the loss of the just graduated or still studying, with their excitement and passion, their knowledge of the now technological world and what they were to bring to education. I think of the loss of the mentors, that support and drive all that knowledge forward. There is no way to put a value to that loss. When we lose valuable educators...we lose valuable outcomes. We lose valuable connections with students, families, communities. We lose future leaders. We will lose students from schools. We are dividing and segregating society.

Educators and education must not be included in coercing medical procedures and decisions. Education is education. It is not a hospital, it is not a medical practitioner. An education department cannot know any individual person's medical history. Participation in a medical trial or medical procedures bears no weight on a person's ability to teach effectively or care for their students. Education and coercion do not go together. This must stop now.

My job, my life, my passion. All taken away due to government mandates!

Educator 57

I am a 67 year old female physiotherapist and have been providing services to students with disabilities for over 20 years, both in the independent and state schools. Currently I am employed by DoE and am based in the North Qld region. Previously I have been Physiotherapist-In-Charge at 2 major regional Qld Health hospitals, and have worked as physio with Autism Qld so I bring a wealth of experience to DoE.

I have always taken an interest in human rights and empowerment by the people and never ever dreamed I would be challenged by bullying and coercion by my employer, the Qld government. Such behaviours are contrary to WHS expectations as per DoE policy. However at no stage have I felt any coercion from my line manager or senior advisor.

Since the notification on 1 Dec, my overall wellbeing has been dramatically affected and it has triggered anxiety as I am torn between following my beliefs of pro-choice and consultation and my fear of losing a job I love. At my stage in life, I feel I should be continuing to pursue my interests and passions, which includes the right to continue working in schools with children who require support to access, participate and achieve in their school life. My right to choose to continue working is being eroded by DoE by placing these mandates upon me and all education staff. I am saddened when I realise how many teachers and education staff are literally being forced to end our careers, as I know how dedicated and professional these staff are. We all have the everyday financial, emotional, physical stressors that life brings and the majority have families to support as well. I found the timing that these mandates have been announced, at a time when staff are enjoying end of year celebrations at school and anticipating holiday time with their precious families and grandchildren was very challenging and stressful. I have felt bullied and harassed by vaccinated staff, adding to a decline in my wellbeing and mental health. I feel constant exhaustion over this holiday break. Despite trying not to, I find I am constantly thinking about the mandates. It is constantly "in our face". I feel a heavy shadow is engulfing me affecting all areas of my life.

I cannot accept that our children may need to have a medical procedure to continue their right to an education, to play sport etc. when no one can possibly answer questions and concerns about the long term or intergenerational health impacts, because the data quite simply doesn't yet exist. Where there is risk, there must be choice.

I am also saddened when I speak to many young families who are confused and distraught, knowing in their hearts that vaccination may not be the best outcome for their family, knowing the plethora of adverse reactions from teens who have taken the vaccination. They have also learned of the hidden health dangers of mask wearing. They are being forced to choose between their child's health or education. I see limited patience in adults and have witnessed adults taking out their frustrations on their own children. Our nerves are constantly on edge.

I encouraged my own children to make informed decisions based on evidence and with the mandates, I consider the right for our students and their families to look at situations subjectively is being eroded especially as vaccinated teachers may impart their own views as they continue to teach the Australian curriculum on all matters that may not always be based on level 1 evidence.

If only we could know what the long term health outcomes will be from a EUA vaccination (mRNA technology). I believe we have the right to choose our destiny and this choice should never be taken away from us by our own government. Please fight for our FREEDOM and unite Australia again.

Educator 58

My name is X and I am a high school mathematics teacher in South-East Queensland. I have been teaching Mathematics for many years in Queensland. I was drawn to the profession and brought a wealth of real-world experience to my classroom from a wide range of industries such as technology, hospitality, business, entrepreneurship and trade occupations. In my previous careers, I often gravitated to a coaching/training/instructor role and my strong desire to help others meant teaching was the final logical step in that progression.

As an educator, my gift to my students is empowering them with the ability to think critically and make logical, unbiased decisions based on evidence, not emotions or dogmatic belief. I always try to engage students in the difficult subject of Mathematics which requires them to work hard and make substantial conceptual leaps – not an easy task in this flashy, instant-gratification dominated world. Every year, I receive a slew of cards from my students of all grades with statements such as the following... "You have been an awesome teacher this year! Your real-life stories and teaching ways have made me so much better and confident at maths." "You always made maths fun and understandable." "Thank you for putting up with our crazy class and still being so generous to us, even though we were a pain. I look forward to having you in the senior years."

When compulsory vaccine mandates were introduced for all Queensland teachers & staff, I had not been consulted or given any opportunity to provide input during the process. Education Queensland had not considered my individual circumstances and my school principal had no understanding of the details for this mandate. My Principal simply told me that it had "nothing to do with them" and was referred to Education Queensland's website which quoted the basic details regarding vaccination requirements. When I contacted Education Queensland, I was transferred between a number of sections with no staff member being able to answer any of my questions and in fact they knew very little about the situation at all. When I received an email response from the Department, it simply restated elements of the directive that I had already located myself.

This mandate was planned and announced with no warning at an extremely stressful time for Teachers with many commitments still to be completed less than two weeks before the end of the school year. Despite what the Education Department may believe, the vast majority of my staff colleagues who are fully vaccinated, are not in support of the mandate and do not agree that I should be coerced into taking an unwanted medical treatment or face losing my career that I have put my heart and soul into for many years, creating amazing resources and lessons.

My family has been placed under intense stress during the last five weeks as I am the sole breadwinner for my partner and young child. At a time when we should be recharging from a difficult year, we are not in a good way emotionally and I fear for the mental health of my partner who has just suffered a miscarriage yesterday. The extreme stress caused by the implementation of this mandate and the constant harassment by the Education Department (multiple text messages and emails) has certainly not helped my partner to provide a low stress environment for a healthy pregnancy.

My main concern is that my students will be disappointed and disadvantaged by not having me in front of them anymore and a potential option being entertained by the Education Department is to replace me with unqualified student teachers. I am a well-respected, highly skilled and critical lynchpin in my school's Mathematics faculty, which relies on me to do much of the heavy lifting in a Mathematics Department already hobbled by a high proportion of temporary, part-time and new teachers who are not as committed to delivering a champagne service on a beer budget as I do. I am burnt out and now feel used and abused by an Education Department, who only recently, was recognising my recent successes with underachieving students.

As teachers, we must complete risk assessments for all types of activities and where hazards exist, consider any hazard reduction options. These have not been discussed or even suggested and many options exist in this situation such as PPE, regular temperature checks or Rapid Antigen Tests which ensure that an unvaccinated person who tests negative poses no more risk than an unvaccinated person on that day. If these tests are good enough for travellers to enter Queensland now, why are they not being considered in a controlled school environment where the general population involves children who have been identified by medical experts as a very low risk population throughout the entire pandemic. This is even more pertinent given the apparent mild nature of the latest Omicron variant.

I ask that you voice opposition to the Queensland Education Department's knee-jerk, sledgehammer approach to this very manageable situation and please support any legislation calling for an end to these heavy-handed mandates so we can go back to what we do best, educating our kids for the future.

Educator 59

I got into teaching for the love of teaching kids, mainly through physical activity and health. I have found that teaching is a God - given gift, as mentioned in the book of Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:28. Our democracy is founded on Christian values, yet I'm struggling to see them in this situation.

For privacy, I wish for my identity to remain anonymous. However, I will give some information. I am in my mid 20's and 5th year primary school teacher. I for the last few years, I have been employed at an Education QLD small, rural school in the Wide Bay area. This school has under 40 students for Prep to grade 6. Prior to this I did supply teaching to gain experience and find a school I liked working at.

I was lucky and was fortunate to have the luxury to choose to work at this school. I felt it had the best administrative and school support; An environment that was flexible, understanding and allowed me to grow and develop as a young teacher in the profession.

Yet since this 'pandemic' came to existence, the staffroom talk has been all of the same boring, repetitive, media fed information. COVID become boring small talk just like asking someone 'how the weather has been' or 'how much rain one got'. So much for schools being places to stimulate minds and evoking thinking. Needless to say, in the last 2 years, I have had to isolate myself from conversations and professional relationships and place myself in other areas of the school to escape the monotonous, unstimulating talk. This is sad as we need our co-workers in this career to work with!

To add to the paragraph above, I was also anxious to go to work for the fear of toxic workplace talk. In the most recent weeks before school ended, these looming deadlines on my mental health have been caused anxiety, to the point where I would rather call in and not go to work, yet I needed to bite the bullet and show up with a smile on my face for the kids. As this subject of teacher mandates has caused undue division between even the best of people! We have been told since university that teaching is about relationships and sadly, this topic has put lots of strain on even the best workplace relations.

I have also directly witnessed other staff dobbing in staff who weren't in attendance, and who couldn't speak for themselves, who had in private conversations told other parties, they 'would not get the vaccine'. They reported this to the principal in front of a staffroom full of people ... Needless to say that was a couple jobs that will now need to be filled as plans on how to cover the loss of staff were made then and there. I was disgusted and furious this was coming from adults in a professional workplace. Never have I witnessed such a thing!

I found I can't speak up to anyone except my immediate family and the new union I have joined, for if I did, it would compromise my employment for the following year given I am a contract teacher and my contract ended on the December 12th, 2021. My new contract was verbally agreed upon prior to this mandate being release, but I didn't sign anything and without anything being signed, legal grounds are harder to be granted. I know this as my job could easily be opened up to anyone should I not comply what the government mandate, and school is wanting me to inject my already healthy body with. I am even more fearful as it is a popular district for teachers to want to transfer to, which would leave me out of a job. If my contract doesn't get renewed, according to the government, I cannot be employed at a private school or early childhood place, for the same government direction has been enforced there too.

Never have I felt so required to remain silent of something so personal, like one's medical choices or needing to explain myself for my own medical choices. Wouldn't it be invasive if your principal directly asked you when your last Pap smear was or if they're circumcised, so how is this any different? It hasn't even been a requirement of the job to have the flu needle, so how can an experimental guised injectable substance, given under a state of emergency, be forced upon workers.

Teachers have strong immune systems given we are around children and their developing immune systems. I have found we eventually grow immune to the recurrent cold or belly bug that goes around, getting less symptoms and quicker recovery time the more years, I get into my career. However, now after hundreds of years of teachers in Australia, the government tells us we mustn't be strong enough to fight this on our own, without injections?

As teachers we know that repeating information is the lowest level of critical thinking as according to Bloom's Taxonomy. I have found that many other people, teachers included, who use higher order thinking, such as analyse and evaluate are shut down. Does the government not want the next generation to have these critical thinking

skills? Do we not have a right to question things? I teach my students in science lessons, that all good scientists start with a question. However, we teachers who have a right to question science are now being insulted, put down and mocked – sounds like bullying right? Something which is unlawful in a workplace

We have been told that the teachers were first, then the students to get 'vaccinated', at first I didn't know what to think of this and now look what has happened. The 'vaccine' rollout will occur very shortly in Australia for 5 - 12-year-olds. Given the lack of long-term studies, and the rushed clinical trials, where all animals who were tested with the experimental 'vaccine' died, our students are next!? I fear for the day a student has an adverse reaction in my classroom, like a seizure or heart attack. We are 30 minutes highway drive from a hospital who can provide care for such an event. What a devastating and traumatic event for other staff and students to have to witness. Counselling will be required.

I have had kids as young as 9 stressing in the classroom, saying 'we're next to get our vaccination' or pushes them to fear without being 'vaccinated' they will miss out on important events, such as what one student told me of 'not allowed to travel to my family's wedding interstate next year without the 'vaccination''. How sad your mandates have also affected their personal lives too.

It is a fact that children do not have developed brains and therefore cannot reason, process or make judgements to the level of an adult. These children are placed in the trust of their parents to make these health decision for them, and if those parents haven't done research and just go by the main stream media narrative of what the news companies have been feeding them, they're not going to make an informed or critical thought through decision to what's actually the best choice for their child.

These people have been fear mongered enough. The children have been watching the news the last 2 years, and I can only imagine the damage it's caused their psyche, but we won't see the long term effects on their brains for many more years. We know video games, social media, pokie machines have the ability to influence mood and behaviour, this is no different. People are acting out of fear and feel coerced into taking this experimental 'vaccine' or have their freedoms removed. This will cause teachers to be excluded.

Education is a right of a child under the federal law, yet these mandates are scaring parents away for the fear of those who are shedding toxins from their vaccination, forced vaccination at school or to be in school or not parents not exploiting their child to the stress and playground talk. Our working families cannot afford to home school as many use working hours to get their own income. Other students, including those in my school, come because school is a safe place.

The education system is already an over worked, underpaid sector that has been dealing with government agendas infiltrating how our students learn. NAPLAN stress anyone? What about the bullying from parents and students or those students who are so far behind 'academic standard for their age group', they are lost in the system, yet we cannot afford to make smaller classes to support their needs!? We need more teachers and this is not going to entice any new teachers who have concerns or questions, join this profession!

We teachers have been harassed every few days by the government, sending ever more demanding messages to our personal mobile phones and emails, requesting us to respond to a 'survey' to declare our health history. Our QLD teachers union has left us high and dry. Usually, they are a force to be reckoned with at any other time, yet they have turned their backs on the members who fund them!

So I'm asking that the government and workplaces:

**STOP THE HARRASSMENT. STOP THE DISCRIMINATION. STOP THE COHERSION. STOP THE THREATS
STOP THE BULLYING. GIVE US OUR RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF MEDICAL CHOICE TO CHOOSE WHAT'S RIGHT FOR US.**

Our forefathers did not fight 2 World Wars for us to allow our society & freedoms to crumble. Our nation is founded on freedom, but here we are again, fighting for our rights which we thought were protected by our Constitution. We need to see visible support for all teachers to return to work as we did for the last 24 months of this 'pandemic', by being able to work with our own immune system against illness and making medical decisions for ourselves. Let us teachers work in a face to face setting with our classes and support staff. Do not make us be tested to be on school grounds for work or other events on school grounds. Vaccinations should not be required in any way, nor become mandatory for in person, or online attendance. There are other ways to fight COVID 19.

I hope you review all of this very seriously.

Educator 60

I am L. A female, teacher aide in Maryborough Q, aged 55 with 20 years of service. I have a Certificate III in Education Support. As an educator I am able to make learning enjoyable for my students. They are able to expand their learning through my consistent approach to our fun activities. To be inclusive of all, I ensure every student receives a positive consequence for their good choice. This can range from their standard of work, to the student just being able to sit with the group today.

After the education sector mandate was announced and prior to school break up, there were no staff meetings at my educational site and I did not receive any communications from my Principal, regarding this. In response to my enquiry my employer has stated that they, 'have requested the information for me and others, from the Department of Education dedicated team, managing this area of work. They are yet to receive a reply but will forward it as soon as they have the updated documentation.'

Quite simply, I have not had the injection and face losing my job. I am the sole wage earner for my family. Consequently, this causes concern and stress for my immediate family but also my extended family, regarding why is this happening, can they really do this and how will we cope?

Also, unofficially, I'd heard that a local State H.S. was seeking teacher aides and as I state in my application, I was looking for more diverse opportunities and experiences to support my needs to further expand my skills as a teacher aide. I had a high chance of a successful transfer. I lodged transfer papers with my B.S.M. on the 17th November, 21. Just over a week later I received confirmation that HR had my application. Soon after, the education sector mandate was announced. On the 11th December, 21 during a texting conversation with a colleague of mine, it was revealed that in a conversation, my name was on a list of people at the local H.S. who wouldn't be able to return to work in 2022. This colleague then mentioned that apparently I'd been phoned and asked about my vaccination status and was told they couldn't offer me a job unless I was vaccinated. When I advised my colleague I'd had no such call, my colleague said they were confused. They explained that, that's maybe what they would've done and that the local H.S. knew my vaccination status because I'd shared it with my colleague and they'd shared the information with someone at the local H.S. and/or that I may have been seen at a rally by another connected person.

As a result, not only have I lost sleep and been in various states of anxiety but my husband, along with our extended family have also suffered. There are extended periods of no communication, arguments over minor things and a distinct decline in the level of happiness around us, as a whole. I personally have avoided my computer so that I don't have to deal with any social media, etc., since before Christmas.

I am worried about the future of our students, our whole community. How will their education be impacted? Will they be able to continue to receive the same high and consistent standard of education they have been accustomed to, particularly at my educational site or will their education become someone else's responsibility? What will manifest?

My hope is that we will continue to have students that are inquisitive, pro-active and free thinking, who will take us into a future that we can be excited about and look forward to. I want them to be able to make decisions confidently with open information, identification of corruption and comprehension of biases, that they will also learn from should things go awry.

As a well informed adult I believe in making my own choices regarding the management of my health. Deciding what goes into my body, whether it's the food I consume or a medical procedure, for myself."

Educator 61

I would like to introduce myself. My name is S. I am 41 years old single mum of two young teens, living in the Wide Bay area. I am diploma qualified and have dedicated the past 26 years to working within the early childhood care and education sector, collaboratively caring and educating 100's of young children alongside their families and fellow educators.

I have a strong passion for ensuring children feel valued and loved. I work with the children to build a strong self-esteem and resilience as they move onto their formal education. Creating a sense of wonder and joy is something that I am passionate about as I believe that through this the children will learn and thrive whilst feeling a sense of self-worth and belonging.

At the beginning of this pandemic, March 2020, the early childhood sector was deemed a low-risk sector, we were classed as 'essential workers' and told that it was safe for us to work through what was a worldwide pandemic. Fast forward to 2021 and things had changed, we were now classed as a high-risk sector and mandated to take two doses of a trial vaccine, a vaccine that has been proven to not stop the virus, only lowering the severity of symptoms. If we do not comply, we would essentially lose our jobs.

No Jab – No Job.

This mandate has not only affected me emotionally, but it has caused major disruptions within my home life. My children are also feeling the pressures of what I am facing as they are aware THAT this is GOING TO AFFECT THEM GREATLY. They also have only ever known their Mum as a mother that works every day and puts 110% into her work. Who am I without being an educator, without being Miss Sarah?

So what should I do? I research, I take notes, I question. And although I have always been one to follow all of the 'rules' set out by authority; I went to the doctor's office to 'do what I have been told I must do to keep my employment', to get the vaccine that the government have mandated for me to have if I wish to continue working in the industry that I have dedicated so many years of my life to. but couldn't follow through.

Leaving the doctors surgery unvaccinated, meant that not only did I have to come to terms with huge possibility that I would no longer be employed, having to contact my management team, but I also had to return home and tell my two young teens that I am going to lose my job, the sole income that supports them, and the harsh reality that it is likely to be difficult to acquire a rental property due to me looking at being jobless. Yes, I am also needing to find a rental property within 6 weeks as the house that we reside in has now been sold. I had to tell my children that we may soon be without a home, homeless, couch surfing, however you would like to put it, because I cannot bring myself to take this vaccine that I HAVE to have if I wish to continue to work in my job.

I am faced with the possibility that at the age of 41 years, it is likely that for the first time since I was 15 years old, that I will be unemployed and looking for a place to sleep with my two children, aged 12 and 15 years old.

Unfortunately, due to the segregation that this mandate has created between society, people who once allowed others to have voice and make their own choices regarding medical issues, now have a strong opinion, and families are becoming divided everywhere. My entire family are vaccinated, leaving me being the one that is not. I am completely segregated, to the point that I am unwelcomed at family lunches and catchups for fear that I will transmit the virus to one of them. How is this fair?

Once it was inappropriate to ask someone of their vaccine status, now it seems to be the first question out of people's mouths. Again, this is causing a lot of segregation and social disconnection due to a choice that I have made regarding my body.

Emotionally I am all over the place, I am now seeing a therapist, I am unwell medically and going through a range of tests, I now have high blood pressure and a very high heart rate, possibly due to anxiety, as stated by my doctor. And this is before even having the covid – 19 vaccines.

Educator 62

My name is S, I am a 52yr old single mother from the Redlands who teaches at a state primary school in a very multicultural and low socioeconomic community. My passion is to educate and therefore empower children to break the cycle of poverty, just like I have. In order to accomplish this I tap into my experience in public relations, administration, care for the elderly in independent living housing and supporting people with disabilities to lead meaningful lives in their community. As a fairly new teacher, 3 years as a relief teacher and now 2 as a full-time mainstream teacher, I quickly learned to use my sense of humour, flair for dramatics and personal experience of learning other languages, music and cultural norms from the many countries I've lived in before settling down in Australia, to build rapport and develop positive relationships with my students and their caregivers. In my opinion, students learn and retain information best when they feel safe, at ease and confident.

The acting principal at my school is data driven and vocally pro-vaccination. She was asking staff directly whether they had been vaccinated and asked staff who were adamant that they would not be vaccinated to email her directly as soon as possible, as a common courtesy, so that she could find a replacement for them before the break and wouldn't have to work over the holidays. I did not feel comfortable approaching her on the subject of mandates and vaccinations as I believe, from seeing her deal with other issues at the school, that she would have strongly attempted to 'encourage' me to be vaccinated or simply dismissed me on the spot and as a single parent of a 16 year old daughter with Autism with no family in Australia I cannot stress enough how overwhelmingly anxious and apprehensive I am about the prospect of not having a stable income in the new year.

These mandates have meant that I was unable to spend Christmas Day with my 'adopted' family down in New South Wales, they are friends I made when I first arrived in Australia in 2003. Well, I could have at that time got into NSW but would have been unable to come back into Queensland. My daughter was extremely concerned and anxious that we would be unable to come home. I was heartbroken as I just wanted hugs and reassurance after an extremely stressful year in both my personal and professional life. We have not been able to see each other in 2 years due to lockdowns. Other friends? Most went to places I cannot enter, some don't want to mix with un-vaccinated people or are afraid their family members will be upset if we attend. So I spent it alone. My daughter was at her dad's so at least she had people around her.

As the mandate has come into action my anxiety and sense of isolation has significantly increased. Especially at work. This was my home away from home. I had support if when I was stressed. I could openly talk to the Guidance officer and other staff if I was feeling overwhelmed or just needed to debrief about an incident or some personal challenges from home. Suddenly I felt like an outsider. Who can I trust? Who can I ask for advice on this? As more staff were openly sharing their vaccination status I felt myself withdrawing. When the mandate was announced I clamped up even more. My immediate team knew I wasn't vaccinated, and only one knows that it is by choice not medical exemption and I found myself having to ask them not to divulge my status to anyone. I begged. That was a very low moment for me. During the last two weeks I withdrew even further into myself as I became more apprehensive about my job. What if someone tells the acting principal? What will she do? There were days I literally had to force myself to school and remind myself that I do this job for the kids. My beautiful innocent students.

The students. I am so concerned about the students, their families and their communities. Do they have the support they need? I know of a few families who lost one or both incomes during the lockdowns. What will happen if there's another one? How will the parents and caregivers support themselves and look after the children? Many of these families are already struggling to make ends meet and their children come to school without lunch and having had no breakfast either.

I really miss my students more than ever time because I don't know if I will see them again. I had to be so careful about how I talked to them about seeing them next year. Especially my students with Autism who need that consistency and truth. My students with intellectual disabilities and high anxiety asking me again and again if I'll be there so they can come and visit me to chill out if they needed to while settling into their new class. I am simply heartbroken because I feel like I have lied to them.

In a democratic society everyone has a voice and a choice. I strongly advocated to end Apartheid in South Africa, for every man and women to be treated equally regardless of colour, race or ethnicity. And here I am again advocating to end the new apartheid and discriminating against people because of their vaccination status. Families and life-long friendships are being destroyed because of the mandate. This is wrong. Simple as that.

Educator 63

I write this letter expressing my troubled thoughts in light with the COVID-19 vaccination mandate all personnel in the Queensland Education sector must follow to maintain employment.

I have just completed my first year as a full-time senior school Physical Education teacher in X.

In 2021, I took the opportunity of leaving my hometown of Brisbane to develop my teaching expertise in a regional community. Taking this opportunity proved to be a significant milestone in my professional career, as I developed and refined my teaching skills to make a lasting impact on the attitudes, beliefs and mindsets of societies next generation.

After hearing the Chief Health Officer's advice on mandatory vaccination for Queensland School Teachers, my future as an educator was placed in jeopardy, as I did not wish to take part in an experimental medical procedure. Failing to take part in such procedure, resulted in my employer standing me down without pay from the 20th of January 2022.

This decision caused significant financial hardship, as I now have to consider finding another job opportunity that accepts and accommodates for my health decisions. This could potentially mean relocating from X and saying farewell to community members, who were monumental in my development as a first-year teacher. The flow on effects of this has greatly impacted the emotions of my friends and family, as they are truly devastated that my teaching career was unnecessarily cut short. What I consider to be most upsetting, is knowing that I may not be able to watch the students I teach grow up and reach their aspiring potential in the future.

I write to you questioning the validity of the vaccination mandate for all workers in the education sector, during the current COVID-19 pandemic. From researching the COVID-19 mRNA vaccine, I was overwhelmed with the ineffectiveness of it decreasing transmission of COVID. I am also left dumfounded seeing members of parliament, including Anastasia Palaszczuk, coercing people of Australia to receive an ineffective, unnecessary, and potentially deadly vaccine.

I ask for John Gerrard to publicly announce how the COVID-19 vaccine supersedes all other health alternatives when treating and counteracting symptoms of COVID. With parliament members publicizing this information, myself and others, can make a more informed and consensual decision on receiving the vaccine.

Moving forward throughout 2022, I would like to see more acceptance, compassion and understanding for people's health choices. This will end the division, discrimination, segregation and medical apartheid many Australian's, including myself, face today.

I write this in faith of rebuilding a broken society.

Educator 64

My name is B, I've been a teacher aide at a P-12 state school in the Cairns area for 14 years. I'm a 58 year old female and prior to becoming a learning support teacher aide I taught English as a second language in the Middle East. I have a Certificate IV in Education Support, Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults & Young Learners and I have an old Train the Trainer qualification. In total I have over 25 years experience as an educator in various settings; at language schools and universities internationally, in the workplace and with Education Queensland.

My passion is reading and helping students access the national curriculum by working with them to improve their reading which in turn improves their learning outcomes. I have witnessed time and again the transformation of students, when after years of failing school they can finally read well enough to understand the work that's in front of them. This is totally life changing for these students, to give them the tools to be able to see a positive future for themselves is priceless. I may be 'just a teacher aide' but I know I have made a difference to countless students and would continue to do so without these vaccination mandates. It is a very sad situation.

My employers response has been silence. I've gone from being an important member of a school community to being invisible. As a long standing staff member who has worked with students at all year levels from Prep to year 12, the silence is deafening.

Despite the attempts via email and text by Education Queensland (EQ) to coerce me into taking the Covid vaccination I have not done so. The correspondence from EQ that I have received threatening suspension if I don't comply are insulting. I submitted a long service leave request for term 1 2022 but this has not even been acknowledged let alone approved! Unlike teachers, Teacher aides do not need to give lengthy notice for LSL so I should have received a response. To go from being a respected and valued team member to being treated the same or worse than a disobedient student is soul destroying.

Where once was a sense of achievement and pride in the positive contribution I've made to our students' outcomes there is now a sense of worthlessness. I've been discarded because I've chosen for personal reasons not to take a vaccination.

My family faces an uncertain future as my husband has also been mandated to have the vaccinations after almost 40 years as an aviation engineer. He is currently on stress leave due to the mandates, some days he can barely drag himself out of bed. As a family we also give back to our community by volunteering many hours a week to Scouting. We are good citizens, we work hard, we contribute to our community but now due to vaccine mandates we are outcasts where we were once respected.

I know there'll be more students that will 'fall through the cracks' and not achieve what they could because of these vaccine mandates. Our school has a high percentage of English as a Second Language or Dialect students who simply cannot learn in large classes which are sure to be the outcome of staff shortages because of the vaccine mandates.

The vaccine mandates need to be removed; at the beginning of Covid we were told that children are not at risk and that schools are a low risk environment. That has all changed, schools are now deemed as high risk! For the sake of our children and their futures please remove the vaccine mandates for all education settings and let us get back to school.

Educator 65

My name is A, I am a 21-year-old female who works in the Early Childhood Sector, Tully. The centre I work at is privately owned. I started working there voluntarily while completing my Certificate three in 2016, I am now fully qualified with my diploma. I recently had the responsibility of the running of the Nursery Room within the centre I work at before Covid Vaccination mandates were put into place.

The director at my centre has been wonderfully supportive in my decision throughout my journey, however the owners of the centre (my bosses) have been quite coercive. On the 23rd of November, I was confronted by one of my bosses asking me about the vaccine and whether I was going to have my vaccination by the 17th of December. I responded with I'm going to wait and see what happens. She then came back at me with 'well do you want to end up in hospital with tubes down your throat'. This made me quite upset. As a child I spent quite some time in hospital being diagnosed with leukemia. My young body was pumped with drugs and the trauma of this has left me with fears of hospitals and particular injections. My medical history is not something I openly discuss with anyone, and I found all of this very upsetting.

My bosses then invited me back into the office at 9am on the 1st of December questioning me again on whether I am getting the vaccine or not, I explained my thoughts and the reasons why I was hesitant but not once said that I refuse to have it. They proceeded to tell me I would need to talk to my Brisbane doctors to try to get an exemption. They then told me that if I don't have the Vaccine by the 17th of December that I would need to resign. I told them I wasn't resigning and that I would like all of this in writing.

The vaccine mandates have affected my family. There has been lots of tension within the family, and we've found ourselves snapping at each other. We have had lots of tears; I have faced losing my job.

This has affected my mental health by giving me anxiety and feeling agitated. With a loss of income and payments that need to be made.

I would like vaccine mandates to cease and have Australia to go back to how it was with freedom of choice and not being forced into something that doesn't feel right for many of us.

Educator 66

I am E, a female Secondary Science Teacher in Ipswich QLD and have acted as Head of Department for the past three years. I have over 11 years of teaching and leading experience within the Education sector. I have a Bachelors degree in Secondary Education, a Certificate IV TAE and several post grad courses in Science and Philosophical Inquiry in Education.

I am a gifted Science teacher, able to make connections between the different fields of science (something a lot of teachers struggle with) in a way that is easy for students to understand. I am an enthusiastic teacher and make learning fun for all. I am have experience running QCS preparatory programs, external exam preparatory programs, as well as running wellbeing, time management and study skill sessions for Year 11 and 12 students (something that schools can pay thousands of dollars for from external providers). I have led schoolwide programs around student outcomes and teacher performance. As a Head of Department, I have taught over 200 teachers in areas such as pedagogy, inquiry and philosophy for learning. I have also lead departments schoolwide in mapping curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to ensure alignment and student success.

My employer has mandated that I get the COVID-19 vaccinations before the beginning of the 2022 school year. From when the mandate was released, to when both vaccinations must be administered by does not allow teachers to receive the AstraZeneca Vaccine. It pigeonholes us into getting either the Moderna or Pfizer Vaccines, both of which are still in trial phase. I was waiting for the Novavax, as from my research, this is a more viable and safer alternative. However, I have been coerced into receiving the Pfizer Vaccine, which goes against informed consent, a concept I teach thoroughly in my Year 11 and 12 Psychology classes. As a teacher who stresses the importance of informed consent to Psychology students, I am a walking, talking contradiction and it makes me sick to my stomach that our own employer and government are able to wield this level of power over us. This is not a democracy.

I have no option but to receive the vaccine as I am the sole earner in my household. My husband served the Defence Force and was injured. He was medically discharged in 2014 and has had 33 surgeries since 2013, with more coming. He is on a defence pension, which is not enough for us to get by, and he is unable to work due to his injuries. I have no option but to get the vaccine to remain employed.

My mental health has deteriorated during COVID, and especially after the vaccination mandates. I see the impact the fear-mongering from the government and media have had on our students as well. Their mental health and wellbeing has been ruined by the mass hysteria created by the government. Mandates on vaccinations, masks, social distancing etc. has confused our children greatly. It needs to stop. At least as an adult, I am able to sort through the information and make informed decisions for me and my family. However, I have had to increase the frequency that I see my Psychologist and Psychiatrist to help me get through this time.

I NEVER would have thought about quitting education during COVID, because I have a duty of care to my students. However, when the vaccine mandate was released, I was ready to throw in the towel and leave education. I cannot due to financial reasons though. That is the ONLY reason I am staying in education now. Because I have been coerced.

I am concerned by the segregation that vaccine mandates have brought in our community. Working in a low socioeconomic area, this is exacerbated, as are the mental health concerns. I have seen firsthand how our students are not coping in this "new world". They do not have the strategies or mental health to deal with the changes they are witnessing. I am also witnessing our teachers burning out at a faster rate. We are front line workers, I don't care what you think. We are the ones that students are coming to with their questions and concerns. We are the ones that are modelling the behaviours that we want them to have in society. Yet we were told not to wear masks, when other front line workers were. We were the ones, out of all other public servants, to NOT get a pay rise last year. We were the ones that were NOT allowed to work from home or in other flexible working alternatives. We were told that students "couldn't catch COVID", so it was fine to not socially distance in classrooms. School have been the biggest contradiction for mandates and health directives over the past two years, and teachers are tired. We are over it. And now enforcing vaccinations to teachers, this late in the picture? It is not because you are concerned about our health! It is so you can get your vaccination number up to 80%. It is disgusting. If you actually cared about the health of teachers and educators, you would have enforced vaccinations a year ago, like other front line workers.

Informed consent and choice are the backbone of a democracy. Well done, you have just removed our rights and therefore our respect. I just hope we do not have a generational effect where an entire generation (or more) are severely damaged psychologically, emotionally and socially from this. I hope that our children will not resent us for not being able to do more. I hope that they will be able to rise above this and create real sustainable change for the better.

So yes, I will be getting the vaccine. Not because I think it will protect me from COVID, because all research shows that it wont. Not because I am concerned about passing on COVID to those who are immune-compromised, because again, research shows that I will still do this with the vaccine. No, I am getting the vaccine to keep my job, to keep a roof over my head, to pay for my husbands medical bills, and to help build our economy. No, I will be getting the vaccine so that I can remain in education and teach students how to be critical and creative thinkers that can analyse information and make informed decisions for themselves, their family, their community and their country.

Educator 67

I have been employed as a School Receptionist/Administration Officer for the past 8 years (on both a part-time and full-time basis), spanning across 3 different schools – 2 state schools, followed by a private school.

Due to the recently mandated COVID-19 vaccination for workers in education, and my subsequent objection to receiving this vaccination, I was advised by my employer that I would be no longer able to work there after 17th December 2021, and I actually received a termination letter in early January 2022.

In Premier Palaszczuk's statement on 30th November, 2021, she referred to schools as a "high-risk setting", and went on to say that "these measures are about protecting our most vulnerable... To keep our children safe, we must ensure our teachers and frontline education workers are vaccinated". However, throughout the COVID pandemic, it has been continually proven that children are the group who are least affected by the virus! So, Ms Palaszczuk's statement is totally unsubstantiated and this vaccine mandate for workers in education makes no logical sense!

I am also deeply concerned that these vaccines were rushed to market in the space of about 12 months. They have only been provisionally approved, which means they are still in the experimental phase – the trials are incomplete and provisional approvals were given without long-term safety and efficacy data being available. As stated on the TGA's website, "Many of the large-scale clinical trials that will provide evidence of safety and effectiveness are still progressing and these results will be provided to the TGA as they become available. The TGA will also evaluate quality data (such as how the vaccines are manufactured). The TGA will only be in a position to make a provisional registration decision for a vaccine once all required data relating to safety, quality and efficacy has been provided and assessed."

Another very concerning factor has been the many reported adverse reactions caused by the vaccine, as recorded on the TGA website (Weekly Safety Reports). Due to the high number of adverse reactions, a 'COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme' is being developed by the Australian Government "to reimburse people who suffer a moderate to significant impact following an adverse reaction to an approved COVID-19 vaccine". Some of the documented adverse reactions include heart problems such as myocarditis and pericarditis, thrombosis (blood clots), Guillain-Barre Syndrome, immune thrombocytopenia, and death!

As a result of this mandate, I am now facing an uncertain future, with sudden loss of income and a very slim chance of gaining further employment in the short-term future. This has caused an immense amount of stress on myself and my husband, which in turn has caused stress on our marriage.

These mandates have also caused division in the community, with the unvaccinated being discriminated against and treated as second-class citizens. Our rights and freedoms are quickly being pulled out from under us.

As a valuable member of my community, I ask that my voice be heard and my right to decline a medical procedure (namely, the COVID vaccine) be respected. As with any medical procedure, there are risks associated with it, and where there is risk there must be choice.

I ask that you remove the COVID-19 vaccination mandate immediately and return our right to choose what goes into our bodies, without being coerced into partaking in an experimental medical procedure!

Educator 68

Hi my name is J I am 56 years of age. I live in X a small lovely, friendly, family orientated place, in Somerset. I have been a 30 hour cleaner at X state school for 15 years, I loved working there. Staff and kids are one big family.

But it all changed when these vaccination mandates came in. You see I lost the job that I loved because I decided not to get the covid vaccination. I like to have a choice what I put in my body. My principal told me I could not work any more because of my decision. But he also stated it was not because of my work ethic. He did not want to terminate me.

Since then my life has been very stressed wondering how I am going to pay rent, eat, pay bills. I was terminated from my doctor receptionists job as well because of the same mandate. So my stress levels are high and so are my grown up families they are worried about me.

I am very concerned for the children since the mandate came in for them to be vaccinated for covid. Where did "children don't get Covid" go?

I ask you please stop these vaccination mandates. Queensland education staff love our jobs, love the children. I used to have great pride working in Queensland Education. PLEASE LET ME HAVE MY JOB BACK.

Educator 69

My name is D and I've been a teacher since the 80's. I have experience and qualifications in Primary, Early Childhood and I have a Master of Special Education. Over my decades of teaching in Victoria and Queensland, I have nurtured thousands of children and discovered their personalities, talents, strengths and needs. My teaching career has spanned Primary schools, kindergartens, Special schools, Special Ed units in Primary, Early Childhood Development Programs and Secondary. I also ran my own dance school for 20 years and have been a tutor and Performing Arts Consultant.

My whole life has revolved around helping children to create a love of learning, do their best and achieve in their own way. I have helped children in a myriad of ways to grow, thrive, to be resilient, to show respect for all and to go on and become their own wonderful person in their own special, unique way.

Due to vaccination mandates, I am not allowed to teach anywhere or be involved at schools in any capacity whatsoever. I have no job and no future. Why? I am now on the 'scrap heap', just because I have made my own decision to do what is best for my own health.

I've been teaching casually or on short contracts throughout this 'pandemic' on Gold Coast, Far North Queensland, Gulf of Carpentaria and I've just returned from a contract on an island in Torres Strait but all of a sudden, I'm deemed unsuitable to teach..... because I haven't had one, two plus more vaccinations for a virus with a survival rate of over 99%?

The effect on choosing to do what is right for my individual circumstances and health has resulted in:

- no money since early December so cannot pay bills, food (I am just eating eggs, rice and noodles)
- severe family conflict due to being 'unjabbed', alienation by some extended interstate family so could not visit elderly mum and sons in Victoria over Christmas, due to hotel quarantine restrictions on return to Queensland and segregation/propaganda stating I am a 'risk'
- being treated like a 'leper', resulting in deteriorated mental state and being alienated by society
- am prevented from going out for a coffee, to socialise or attend sport or leisure activities
- as a casual teacher, I can no longer teach in any capacity or setting though I have many qualifications and am extremely experienced – no job, no future, no money, no life

Children are scared and not able to enjoy their childhood since scaremongering tactics by politicians, celebrities and mainstream media is causing anxiety. Their parents are worried too but by allowing all teachers to do their job and be a constant positive influence, then this would alleviate some concerns for families, knowing that experienced, respected, caring teachers will be there for their children. Teachers that have values and integrity to do the 'right' thing for themselves and to teach by example, that coercion and bullying by government, politicians, Premiers, Health Officers etc. is not ok and that interference into peoples' health situations by mandating 'vaccinations', is wrong and should never be allowed.

All teachers, vaccinated or not, must be allowed to teach without government interference or being dictated to. Teachers must not be coerced and bullied into vaccinations, just to keep their jobs. Please allow me to teach and to make my own decision for what is right for my own personal health situation. Children deserve to have great teachers like me, in their lives – to encourage, trust and guide, to care and mentor. We will never put children at risk as vaccinations do not stop the spread of Covid or transmitting it to others. There are other effective measures that could be utilised. I am willing to continually take precautions and even have a Rapid Antigen test regularly, in order to work but not experimental 'vaccinations', with no long-term data and horrendous side effects for some people.

Please STOP the mandates/orders that force teachers to be vaccinated or lose their jobs. Please allow me to teach, without having all those vaccinations and please do not dictate to me and tell me what I must do with my body. Everyone is different and no one knows how a vaccination may affect them.

I am begging you to allow myself and other teachers, to make our own choices about health and to make decisions for ourselves. Let us teach.

Educator 70

My name is A and I am a 38 year old primary Experienced Teacher in Toowoomba, Queensland. I have been employed by Education Queensland for 16 years, though have returned to part-time teaching this year after extended leave to start and raise a young family. I have worked in a variety of schools and roles having started as a Physical Education teacher, before moving to distance education and finally settling in the mainstream classroom. Working in these various contexts has enabled me to develop a range of effective pedagogical and management skills and as a result I am well-liked and respected by students, parents and staff. In fact, one principal described me as “one of the most requested teachers by parents”. I believe my greatest attribute as a teacher is my compassion and care for my students’ well-being.

While the vaccination mandate for teachers in Queensland came as a shock to many, I was expecting the announcement. This gave me time to decide upon a course of action in advance – unpaid leave. Thankfully my principal was understanding and approved my leave almost immediately, however not before I was made to feel like a conspiracy theorist for sharing my concerns about being injected with a vaccination that has only been provisionally approved for a virus that has over a 99% recovery rate, a vaccination that has legitimate questions regarding its short-term safety, a vaccination which the long-term safety is unknown.

Although I was expecting the mandate, when the announcement was made, it was like a punch in the stomach. I was overwhelmed with anxiety at the thought of lost income, the stigma of having colleagues thinking I was an “anti-vaxxer” and the fear of what on earth is going on in the great nation of Australia. Some days I was basically incapacitated with anxiety. I have also experienced panic attacks. I have been made to feel like I am an uneducated, fringe-dweller, a selfish individual who doesn't care about anyone other than myself and a person who does not care about the well-being of the children in my charge, when in fact, the opposite could not be truer.

I have serious concerns about how these mandates will negatively impact children and other school staff. The government and unions spruik their commitment to improving educational outcomes, however they are prepared to, on the back of these mandates, lose thousands of committed teachers. Graduate teachers and those teachers who previously weren't employed (because they either couldn't cut it or didn't make the cut!) might be able to take the place of the teachers who will be lost, but there is no way that they can replace the decades of experience and knowledge that those teachers will take with them. The system is already struggling and teachers are already in short supply. Can we really afford to watch thousands of teachers walk away? Also, let us not forget the thousands and thousands of teachers, who begrudgingly received a vaccination that they did not want and did not agree with, to keep their job. Those suffering adverse effects from a vaccine that they took for no other reason than to keep their jobs. These factors are going to combine to have a huge negative impact on students all over the nation. Students are going to have to deal with many of their teachers no longer being at school. Teachers who are intelligent, capable people who could have chosen other easier, higher-paying careers, but instead chose to teach because they had a calling to shape and mould our children. Children that they teach, they nurture, they care for, they encourage, they support, they sometimes even feed, they LOVE, every single day! Many students will be taught by inexperienced or incompetent teachers, as the department will be scraping the bottom of the barrel just to meet numbers.

These mandates need to be stopped immediately. Children deserve to be taught by knowledgeable and experienced teachers, regardless of their medical status. No one should lose their ability to earn an income, for simply exercising their right to bodily autonomy. Many doctors in the US have stated that teaching is the safest profession due to the low risk of transmission in the school context. This madness needs to end. I implore you to do whatever you can within your power to help overturn these mandates.

Educator 71

I have spent 47 of my 52 years here on this Earth in an education institute. My teaching career spanning 30 years. A career I have been grateful for and cherished. I know I have many good years left in me and many young minds and hearts to touch. My indigenous beliefs, knowledge and values are a key to my strengths as an educator in this ever-changing world.

Sadly, at the end of term we were informed that we needed to be vaccinated if we were to continue employment with the Queensland Education Department in our respective teaching roles in 2022.

I did not, and still do not decline the request to receive the vaccination, therefore, I requested from my Principal to provide me with the following information in accordance with the statutory legal requirements to ease my concerns.

Once I had received the information in full, and signed by a registered doctor, guaranteeing no harm or fatality would come to me, I would then be satisfied that there is no threat to my health, I would be happy to accept the offer to receive the vaccination. (This was also on the back of me having cancer surgery in June)

1. Can you please advise me of any approved legal status of my required vaccination and if it is experimental?
2. Can you please confirm and assure me that the vaccine has been fully, independently and rigorously tested against control groups for both short-term and long-term effects, and the outcomes of those tests.
3. Can you please advise me of all of the adverse reactions associated with the required vaccination since its introduction?
4. Can you please advise me the likely risk of severe illness or fatality from the required vaccine?
5. Can you please advise me the likely risk of severe illness or fatality if I am unfortunate to contract Covid19 from someone who is vaccinated?
6. Can you please advise if I will be covered fully for medical, or funeral expenses if I was to fall ill or have a fatal reaction to the vaccination?
7. Could you please advise me of your findings by 16 December, 2021.

Below is the response from my Principal:

Questions relating to vaccine risk assessments are outside of the remit of the Department of Education in Queensland. Information regarding risks associated with vaccinations is available from the Federal Department of Health <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/is-it-true> and from the Therapeutic Goods Administrator <https://www.tga.gov.au/safety-information/covid-19>

I can also suggest the following key contacts:

Questions regarding vaccinations – StaffVaccinationStatus@qed.qld.gov.au

I thanked the Principal for the links, requesting answers and a signed response within the next 24 hours accepting full liability before I would comply with the current mandate.

Also stating that in the event that I do not receive a signed response, I would take this as confirmation that my current contract and permanent teaching position at this school will not be compromised and remain legally binding and that my un-inalienable rights were reserved.

As the dates have now well and truly lapsed, the mental stress on what will happen to my career, my students, my family and home are more than I can bare.

I have spent every day of my 'holiday' either working, selling personal items, to make extra cash in the thought that I will not have a job in 2022. When I have not been working I have been researching possible solutions and also taking part in an online course in the hopes to create alternative employment opportunities.

The feeling I once had as a respected teacher in my local community has been over-shadowed by judgement of others who don't understand my questions and need for clarity and confirmation.

Educator 72

My name is S. I am a female teacher and have been in the primary sector of the State system for 35 years.

I have been working full time in Bundaberg for 20 years at the same school.

Most of my experience has been in the early years and I received my Bachelor of Early Childhood before the year 2000.

I have built very strong relationships within the school community and formed powerful bonds with the children and their families.

I am married and a mother of four.

My husband has had two detached retinas and is now on a disability pension so I am the major breadwinner for the family.

When the mandates were announced my Principal was very sympathetic and offered some work around suggestions as in LSL, but I felt that LSL should be used for my special time with family and friends not avoiding a mandate.

Educator 73

My name is Mrs G, I am a female primary teacher and I currently teach grade 1. I have a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and am currently employed at a public school in the Moreton Bay region. Ever since I was in grade 6, it was my dream to become a primary school teacher. I am now 47 years old and I absolutely love my job as a teacher in a low socio-economic school. My background was of low socio-economic foundations, and therefore I feel I understand my student's challenges on a deeper level. I am passionate about helping them blossom into beautiful, educated members of society.

My current principal was very compassionate with my aversion to taking this vaccine. However, she made it very clear that if I did not comply with Government mandates, I would not be able to continue teaching when school resumed in 2022.

I have recently purchased a house and have been doing some major structural and cosmetic renovations to the property. As such I do not have the option of not working; I need a regular income to keep a roof over my families head and food on the table. I have been coerced into having the COVID-19 injection in order to keep my current position. I have had the first injection in December 2021, and it was a very traumatic experience for me. My family has a history of adverse reactions from two of the current vaccines and I was quite terrified to have it myself. I had minor reactions to my first injection (including tightening around the heart, high fever and body aches/pains). I have a history of mild heart problems, including heart ectopics and a heart murmur; therefore having the next injection concerns me quite significantly.

My mental state has been adversely affected by being mandated into taking this injection for fear of losing my job, my house and being unable to care for my family. I went to a vaccination hub and I had to sign a document and give consent to an injection that I did not personally consent to, but was mandated to have. I was quite visually upset when I was given the injection; I tried to maintain composure, but was very publicly sobbing and was unable to stop. This was extremely embarrassing. It was (and still is) a very traumatic experience and my mental health has been greatly impacted from this mandate.

I am worried about all the teachers and school staff that have been forced to leave their profession because of these mandates. I am concerned for their mental wellbeing, but also their current and future economic loss. Students are losing very passionate and well educated teachers whom form an integral part of their childhood and schooling. I feel that children of today have already been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and taking away passionate teachers from a career they love is going to have far greater impact on these beautiful little minds than they have already endured.

I would like the mandates to be removed. Having a medical procedure performed should be a personal choice based on your own experiences and everybody should have body autonomy. The mental health of education staff matters, our personal beliefs matter and our fears and medical history matter.

Educator 74

My name is D. I have had the privilege to work for Education Queensland for 18 years. I am located in Brisbane. I started my career in North Queensland, working in the Aboriginal Community of Doomadgee and Mornington Island. I am early childhood trained but have worked in all year levels and In the last two years, I have been focusing a lot of my time in Special Needs. My gift as an educator would be that I love to go on the learning journey with the children. I love to see them engage in a "lightbulb" moment and endeavour to always make learning fun.

Ever since the Premier of Queensland announced the Mandate, I don't feel that the Education Department has been empathetic. The response from them has been to get the job, and if you don't, too bad, (NO matter what years of service you have provided or how you may have impacted the lives of the children around you).

As for my principal, cannot fault her, nothing but empathy.

The mandates have impacted greatly on my family. I am now having to look for new employment (something I haven't had to do since starting teaching). Due to undue stress and anxiety, I almost went three times to get the job. Thankfully I have a supportive family, so I didn't go.

When the mandate was announced, I suffered for about a week solid with stress and anxiety. (I am not known for having anxiety) I try to smile, but underneath there is always just bubbling under the surface to need to cry and the constant grieving of losing a job that I love and a steady income.

My concerns for the students are that they will get quality teachers. (where is the GOVERNMENT getting enough teachers to replace the ones that have left??) teachers who know them well. What about those children who are in Special Needs, who have had the same person working with them for years, someone they trust etc, and now they won't be back? Has the mental of children losing stable adults in their life been considered? is there enough mental health care within Queensland to deal with a surge in patients?

What I am asking for is this - that the well-being of children is looked at. The well-being of children is to have what's best for them... That's teachers who they know and are familiar faces. As an unvaccinated teacher, I would have no issues with doing a Rapid Antigen Test on a regular basis, if it meant that I was allowed to teach.

My final message would be this - if not for anyone else, then think of the children and how it is affecting them.

Educator 75

My Name is Z. I am a 24 year old, female, Early Childhood educator living in X, Gladstone Region, Queensland. I have been working as a casual education assistant at X Early Learning Centre for 5 ½ years. Prior to this I obtained my Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and did a placement at X Learning Centre, X. I also work as a casual in a retail setting and also face losing this position very soon.

I find the work I do with young children very rewarding and love working in a field where I am able to build relationships with children from infancy often right through to kindergarten age. I connect very well with young children and the children are always happy to see me. I think my gift as an educator is that I am a very empathetic person who enjoys sitting down and spending time with the children. It has been a very distressing time for me having to give up this job which I have held since leaving school.

Both my Mum and I work at this childcare centre. It has taken a huge toll on our mental health and we worry about finances and the future. A total of 7 other staff members at Bambini also left due to the vaccine mandate and a further 2 staff were very distressed at being forced into taking the vaccine. I am asking that you remove the mandate for vaccination in the education sector so that unvaccinated educators and teachers can get back to the important jobs which they perform in the community. At the very least please give us some hope for the future and provide us with a time frame for when the mandates may reasonably be removed.

Educator 76

My name is X. I am a 47 year old mother (and Grandmother) who has been blessed enough to have worked at my children's school x for the past three years, in our Enrolments as an Admissions Officer - a job that has been VERY busy over the past 2 years as people from all over the country (and ex-pats trying to get home) are trying to move to x. Whilst my time on staff has been relatively brief to this point, I have a VERY long association with the school I work at, having watched as a nine year old as my father drove off everyday from X to grow a Christian school x, and that is why he was never home. It became my school when I was old enough to attend High School, and I then returned as a parent with my children and due to the gaps in their ages, by the time my children all graduate, I will have been doing the school run for 26 years! This will make my association with my much beloved school, over 40 years.

Sadly, despite all this history and genuine love for my school, I have never been more heartbroken in the way the Executive have treated their staff, many of whom, are making a choice not to be vaccinated based on their Christian Faith and such commitment has in the past, always been something to be respected and encouraged, rather than trivialised, ignored and controlled. Staff who have loved and cared for students within the school campus for decades, were being shunned and bullied by pro-vaccine staff and whilst the school leadership did not condone this behaviour, they are now enforcing a 'mandate' which disregards many staff's health conditions or faith convictions. The only support they are offering such devoted staff, is Long Service Leave (with minimum requirements only being considered), and not even entertaining possibilities to work from home or give unpaid leave for even a Term, for staff who would like to peruse the possibility of traditional protein vaccine options we are led to believe, may soon be available. Their lack of compassion for staff has been astounding, with one staff member x, terminated with only 3 weeks pay, 2 weeks before Christmas. My 40 year association is about to come to an end, and it has left a very bitter taste in my mouth for a school which is the reason I am even sacrificing to live x.

My family has bonded together at this difficult time with all of us strongly agreeing that the vaccine is too much of a risk, for a treatment proving now to cause more harm than good. I have a heart condition, my adult daughter has Crohn's disease, my husband and daughter have asthma, and we would all rather take our chance with Covid, than a vaccine which is morally reprehensible to me. We are happy to get take-away coffees and I am trying to get used to the idea of being 'on the dole' for the first time in my life, as I lose my job in January. Sadly however, my now elderly Father whose legacy I have been trying to protect at the school he helped to found, can't understand why I would choose now to go against the grain, having been a 'good girl' for all these years! It breaks my heart to do this to my precious Dad, so obviously, to be prepared to do so means I feel very strongly about my decision. Quite honestly, it is not something 'I' have done, but am being forced to do! It is my first thought every day or when I wake through the night, and I am up at 4am most mornings to 'do my homework' and research myself into anxiety, just so I can defend my position and justify why I would be prepared to loose a job that I love. My husband will now carry the load of trying to support a family on one income, including my adult daughter and grandchild who live with us having fled domestic violence, and the prospect of selling a home we haven't even finished building. To say I am anxious....mentally drained.... heartbroken... exhausted.... would be an understatement.

I feel like this is not even a choice anymore, but I have to sacrifice it all to be obedient to what I believe God is very strongly directing for me. I do know, beyond a shadow of any doubt, that whilst I may have been prepared to risk my own health to take a vaccine I don't trust, I will NEVER allow that risk to be placed on my precious 13 year old daughter. I have not agreed with people who in the past have said that they would never have children as they wouldn't want to bring them into this broken world....I can't believe I now see their point and how fearful I am for what my children and grandchildren will have to live with and repair, from the terrible job we have done in protecting their futures.

Please let us help ourselves, educate ourselves, prepare our bodies with OPTIONAL preventive measures and admit your mistakes, and let our community face this virus together instead of divided and bickering 'like schoolchildren!'

Educator 77

I, C, am a female Teacher Aide in the Gladstone region. I am 42 years old and I work permanent part time hours in a public State School. I have been working as a Teacher Aide for 6 years and have obtained a certificate in Education Support and an Orange card in that time. I love working with the students and helping them to believe in themselves! My gift as an educator is to give all students a space to be comfortable and thrive. Building relationships is the number one objective and the learning is exciting for both student and Teacher (Aide).

Earlier this year, my employer, told me that I needed to supply my private medical information and if I did not receive 2 vaccination injections that I would need to show cause and face termination. Despite having completed the survey, I have been receiving multiple text messages from my employer, whilst I am on holidays.

These mandates have had a large impact on myself and my family. I have been told no job no work. It makes me incredibly sad to think that I may have to walk away from a job that I love. I have been coerced into having 1 injection so far. It was a very traumatic event. I cried the whole time in the appointment and anytime I think about it since then. My husband has been made to have a test every second day by his employer, even though he is not symptomatic. He is always in a heightened mental state, as he thinks, is this the day that my employer will say I have to have the jab! My 15yo will lose his casual job in a couple months when he turns 16 if he is not vaccinated. He absolutely loves his job, and has not had an easy road at school due to bullying. This job has been such a confidence builder for him. The impact on him is going to be huge. Meanwhile, my 13yo is looking around at her world as she knows it and just senses all the tension and unease. Being a very empathetic child, she is struggling with all the angst in her own home. A place where she should feel safe and secure. Our future is very uncertain if I lose my job, and also my husband and son lose their jobs too.

The mental health impacts have been devastating for myself and my family. Before I finished work, I was crying everyday at work and in the Principals office. I cried having my injection and I cry often at home. I hate the burden I am putting on my family. My children are trying to comfort Mum as she wants to have the choice of what goes into her body. It's an out of body experience that no parent should be forced to endure. I love my precious children and how they are always there for hugs when I need comfort. However, it makes me feel guilty as kids should be out having fun and not lumped with this burden. My husband is a great support, however he is also constantly heightened with worry about what our future holds and how he will support his family. When my son is sacked, his mental health that we have worked so hard to achieve will definitely take a steep dive. The thoughts of his suicide plague me. I have engaged the services of our employee assistance program to receive counselling to try and improve my mental state.

I am also concerned for the well-being of community members. With the population being divided into the vaccinated and unvaccinated, I am deeply concerned that we as a society are taking a step backwards in humanity. Students in the region will also suffer. Losing so much experience in Teachers and Aides. Relationships and trust, all gone. Some students only have school as their safe place. Now they will go to school with the uncertainty that their special person will even be there. Please STOP THE MANDATES. The damage it is causing is great and may be lifelong. Please allow me to make the choice about what goes into my body without being in fear of my employment.

Thankyou for reading my story and concerns. I sincerely hope that you feel my pain as my family and I feel it every single day! Please put an action plan in place to STOP THE MANDATES.

Educator 78

My name is J, I'm a female employee of an early childhood not for profit organisation. I have been working in this field for 20 years and have just completed my Bachelor of Education (Early childhood). I am in my late 30's and have been meeting the needs of individual children aged from birth to five years for my whole career. I am an asset to an organisation as I am loyal, continually looking of ways to improve my practice as an educator and have been with my current organisation for nearly 15 years.

For all my service over the fifteen years, I could describe my response from my employer as one that was less than supportive. I faced pressure to give a decision every couple of days from the moment the mandates were announced. I was given the well, if you don't get the vaccine you will face the consequences speech. To date I still have no idea what they will do to me when work goes back end of January.

The mandates have impacted my family immensely. My son who is under 10 is constantly stressing about the places we can't go and saying that I should just get the injection so I can go back to work and things can return to normal. My health has been impacted by the stress of the whole situation and the fear of the unknown has us all up in the air.

During the end of last year when the mandates first came in I wasn't sleeping, I was working longer hours to get all my work done, feeling like what's the point to all this and feeling like I wasn't getting anywhere. The mounting pressure made me snappy and unkind. I had bowel problems and cold sores broke out all over my face. I began speaking to a councillor as I didn't know where to turn.

I am concerned for the safety of the children coming back into the environment without knowing any familiar staff and the effects on their emotional state. I have grave concerns for the community with the impacts all these shortages of professionals have on quality.

I am asking to be allowed to return to work or if not, be allowed to take leave without pay until an alternative vaccine is available. I would like to see mandates replaced with common sense. Where we deal with Covid-19 infections as they occur in an environment not isolate not injected workers in case.

If you take skilled workers from an environment you may find replacements but, are these the right people for the job. Passionate educators have made the toughest decision of their lives to place their own health over the care of children they have dedicated their lives to looking after.

Educator 79

My name is S, affectionately known in the classroom as Miss X. I am a 35 year old female, who works as a Teacher Aide at a Primary School on the Gold Coast. The Queensland Department of Education (DoE) governs my school. In 2019, I obtained my Certificate III in Education Support with TAFE Queensland and began working with the DoE in January 2020. During my employment, I have worked across all year levels from Prep to Year 6, including the Special Education Program (SEP) and with students at risk. In 2021, I worked five days a week in a Prep classroom and have been offered a role supporting Year 4 in 2022. Over the past few years, I also completed my Certificate IV in Education Support and am studying for a Bachelor of Education with Southern Cross University.

On 30th November, I received a department-wide email from the Queensland Department of Education advising of the Premier's announcement relating to a vaccine mandate. Shortly after, my Principal issued a message over the School's PA system, directing all staff to "an important email". I responded to the email requesting the written health orders from the CHO for my consideration.

On 1st December, during my "Exit Interview" with my School's Principal and Deputy, there was no mention of the vaccination mandate. However, I was cornered by the Deputy Principal, who asked me if I was vaccinated on my way to leave. I responded that I was not and would be discussing it with my General Practitioner. The Deputy Principal asked me to keep them updated.

On 4th December, I again emailed the Department of Education requesting the written health orders from the CHO for my consideration.

On 6th December, I received what appeared to be a system automated response from HR with a link to Frequently Asked Questions.

On 9th December, I received a department-wide email that advised "liability for discipline and proposed penalty of termination of employment" if evidence of vaccination is not provided by Friday 7th January 2022.

On 10th December, the last working day of 2021 the CHO health directive had not been provided.

From 13th December, I began receiving text messages and survey requests via my personal email from my employer regarding the vaccine mandate.

The vaccination mandate has severely impacted my family. As a result, I have faced the "choice" of coercion to receive a vaccine or lose my job, leaving me with no income to support my young son. Not only has my job been impacted, but I am also now in a position where I am unable to complete my degree and am fearful for my future.

My mental health has been brutally affected since the announcement. I have faced increased anxiety, depression and insomnia. The divide in the workplace and the barrage of emails and text messages from my employer over the holiday period has caused continued distress and concern.

I am greatly concerned for students who the vaccine mandate will severely impact. The immediate and long-term effect on their education and mental health heavily burdens me as someone so passionate about helping young people.

Based on my medical history and consideration for my future fertility, I observe my right to personal bodily autonomy. I strongly believe the vaccine mandate removes my freedom of choice and has been applied without my employer's regulated risk assessment or consultation opportunity. I would ask that my employment continue, free from medical coercion and if required, non-invasive risk mitigation be applied, e.g. Rapid Antigen Testing.

Educator 80

My name is H, and I am a female secondary teacher in Brisbane. I am aged 53 and have 33 years of service in teaching Maths, Music and English. (Dip Ed and ATCL) I graduated as a primary school teacher in 1988 but when QLD education moved year 7 into high school, I went with the students as a trial year and loved it. I've never looked back and have taught yr7 to 12 for the past 9 years. The beauty of being primary trained is being able to integrate subjects together and teach multiple subjects. I am the only high school teacher at school (approximately 100 staff) who teaches across both departments of Maths and English. Music is my passion, along with choir, musicals and bands, I'm heavily involved in the extracurricular programs and teach piano as well. No other teachers working in the music department teach Maths or English, so I guess I am a little unique in my teaching career.

The response from my employer has been very disheartening regarding the mandate. Before the holidays it was indicated that unless I was double vaccinated, then "there would not be a job for me in 2022." I asked, "What would happen if I obtained a medical exemption?" The surprise on my principal's face was priceless as he was not expecting that response from me and said he did not know. I have since gotten a medical exemption (and helped other teachers at my school do the same) and am in the process of sending that through. I will not know the outcome for a couple of weeks. I am expecting a positive outcome as medical exemptions from a doctor who has a Doctorate in Public Health cannot be argued with. (There was no positive outcome. I was still stood down. I did my absolute best to comply with the mandate, consulting with several doctors regarding my health issues to obtain a medical exemption. Throughout my quest, I discovered that the doctors governed by The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) are too afraid to write exemptions for fear of being deregistered and therefore being unable to work. They too are human, have mortgages to pay and families to support, so their hands are tied. There are no exemptions written for patients, no matter their health conditions. (People I personally know, who previously had "unable to be vaccinated" already recorded their Medicare file resulting from previous reactions and allergies occurring over ten years ago, have discovered that this information has been erased from the file and they too cannot obtain a medical exemption for COVID vaccinations, despite the exemption note previously existing.) Upon discovering this, I went to a doctor that was not governed by AHPRA and obtained a medical certificate. This exemption (previously provided) is not fraudulent and has worked for me many times to gain access to restaurants, cafes, theatres, sporting facilities, stadiums, flights, and boarder passes.

The simple truth is the government cannot control the covid narrative for practitioners that are not registered with AHPRA. Given the opportunity, these practitioners are publicly shamed through the mainstream media. (Mainstream media in Australia has been exempted from paying taxes during the last two years on the provision they report covid conditions as the government indicates the news to be reported). To control and push this matter further, the government has recently mandated all practitioners working outside AHPRA, directing that they cannot practice unless they too are double vaccinated. Do these circumstances not open up some questions for you? They definitely ring alarm bells for me.)

The mandates have affected my mental health as sometimes I find myself having a quiet coffee on my back deck, and my eyes simply leak. I am not crying, but my naturopath said my body is obviously grieving. Giving this some thought, I am grieving.

Grieving for the uncertainty of my job, grieving for my friends and family who have been vaccinated and grieving for what I'm about to lose. Sometimes I simply cannot breathe and must remind myself that everything is going to be alright.

The current set of recent holidays has not been relaxing. I am stressed as I'm a single mum with 5 young adult children of which 3 are still dependant on me as they're studying. Being responsible for young people and guiding them through this time is extremely stressful for me. None of my children are vaccinated and neither am I. I cannot bring myself to vaccinate as I have watched my students during term 3 and 4 of 2021 and the side effects have been horrific. 14-year-old boys having heart attacks and being left with myocarditis, 13-year-old girls having vertigo and not being able to walk for three weeks without assistance, students with their heads on the desks for weeks at a time because they cannot concentrate and have constant brain fog and headaches. Other students turning yellow in colour and many students having rashes, skin blotches of varying colours and shingles. These side effects horrify me, and my students had none of these issues prior to vaccination. The grades of my students have dropped by about 20%. In the last exam block, my vaccinated students performed approximately one grade lower than they usually achieve. My A students were B students and this pattern followed suit all the way down to my D students becoming E students. I find these results devastating as I put a lot of time and effort into my students. I've never given E's before. My concerns are for these students who are not only suffering physically, but also mentally.

I would like to see vaccinations as a choice. Why are we being coerced? There are far more concerns apart from health issues at stake here. We need to protect the children. My own children will be homeless if I cannot pay my mortgage. I've just gone through 8 years of court battles resulting from the ugliness of domestic violence to keep our home, so my family and I have somewhere to call home. No job could mean we lose that. Please do not take our home from us.

Educator 81

My name is J, and I am a female Teacher Aide from the Gold Coast who is 51 years of age. I completed my Certificate 3 in Education Support 12 years ago after volunteering in various roles across my children's primary school and I currently work as an Aide for the Queensland Department of Education.

The announcement of the vaccine mandate directive by the Chief Health Officer for the Education Sector has seen my inbox bombarded with emails and receipt of text messages from the Department of Education throughout the school holidays requesting my medical status regarding the Covid-19 injection.

The vaccination mandate means I will lose the job I love and wish to perform for the rest of my working life. Since my own children attended school, I have helped in the classroom, with excursions, in the library, the Uniform Shop, the P&C fundraising days, the Book Fair and School Banking. My love for being involved in the school led to a decision to complete my Certificate 3 in Education Support and pursue a career as a Teacher Aide.

These mandates have created undue pressure and stress as the Queensland Government is coercing people to undergo a medical procedure in order to keep a job which we love and no other alternatives, such as testing, are offered. Financial pressure is being placed on households as the prospect of a new year with no income is looming. These vaccination mandates are inflicting further mental health issues on our society which is already suffering. The mental health impact far exceeds the damage of the actual coronavirus infection.

As educators of the children who are the future of Australia, we encourage critical thinking and the importance of understanding why in all aspects of teaching, and yet in this situation of vaccination mandates, we are told there is only one way. Choice has been taken away from the individual which goes against the very essence of our country of democracy and what we teach our students. How can we teach children the Australian values of freedom of the individual and equal opportunity for all when the Queensland Government is dictating that people must receive a Covid-19 injection in order to do certain jobs? Why are people not able to do their own thorough research and come to their own informed decision? Instead, this is teaching segregation – only injected people can hold certain jobs or go to restaurants, cafes, concerts, sporting stadiums and so on. Additionally, it is critical for our quality of teaching in Australia not to lose experienced teaching staff in a period when our children have already had so much disruption and change.

People should not be forced to have an injection in order to keep a job they love. People should be given choice. If there is a risk of the spread of coronavirus in a particular area, people should be given a choice, such as performing a rapid antigen test before work, and the fact that the disease can be spread by vaccinated and unvaccinated equally is being ignored. The unvaccinated pose no additional risk to the school or any other community. I am personally struggling to make sense of a mandate for an injection which has not completed its long-term testing period and does not stop a person catching the infection and spreading the infection.

The vaccination mandates are unreasonable and take away our basic human rights to choose, to hold a job we are passionate about, and our ability to offer our talents and services to the community. Please abolish the vaccination mandates and return Australia to the country where the people's freedom is the very essence of being Australian.

Educator 82

I am Ms. E, female and presently working as a permanent cleaner for 5 years in State School in Maroochydore. As a 63-year-old public servant who is also a teacher in my home country doesn't mind being a cleaner for as long as I can contribute to the safety, protection, and wellness of every kid in school.

The issue on mandate was brought to the attention of our principal. He responded to every communication I sent to him but mostly he referred the communications to a higher rank. This mandate from the government applied pressure on me that threatened my job like everyone else and this have caused concern in losing income in the future.

Obviously, there is a certain amount of worry stress in the family. Not only my family but also to all parents and kids in the community that eventually caused stress physically, mentally, emotionally with this kind of situation.

I am hoping and wanting that I can still work in school to give service to the kids, teachers, and other staff. In my own little way, I can contribute this by giving some safety and protection by cleaning the premises.

Please do not take our job away from us!

Educator 83

My name is A and I am a Teacher's Aide at a private school in C. I transitioned to this occupation in 2020 during the Covid lockdowns after re-evaluating what job would be more meaningful to me in my life. I completed my Certificate 3 in Education Support while homeschooling my two children and was able to complete my hours of placement towards the end of 2020. At the start of 2021, I obtained my dream job! I was to be a TA in middle primary. Throughout this year I have worked hard, been stretched, but ultimately have done what I love, which is getting alongside young people to build them up, help them in their learning and encourage them to be the best they can be!

Towards the end of the year, I received an email stating that I need to provide my vaccination status to retain my employment. This was a kick in the guts after pouring my heart and soul into the school throughout the year and giving many, many unpaid hours. To me, being a TA was not an occupation; it was a calling. To tell me that all I had given was nothing unless I have a medical procedure that has no long-term safety data for a virus that is not statistically a danger to me or to the students I work with was heartbreaking. I felt that I was faced with giving up my bodily autonomy to keep a dream job that I love.

Both my children attend this school and my husband is also a teacher there. To say this government mandate has affected our family is an understatement. It has almost broken us. Our children are faced with having to leave a school and teachers that they love as both their parents are now unable to pay their school fees if they lose their employment.

Over the past few months, my husband and I have had to bear the burdens of tough decisions for our health and for our family's future. This has, to date, been the toughest hardship both of us have faced in our marriage, where we feel we either have to give up our personal convictions and morals or face being unable to provide for our family and continue to work in our calling. The burden has affected not only our mental health but our children also pick up on the stresses and emotions during this time.

Throughout this Christmas season, we are still in limbo, knowing we both have no leave to take and unaware if our jobs will indeed be terminated, although it looks most likely. The impact of these mandates on our school will be massive. We understand there is a significant percentage of staff that will not be back in the New Year. This will affect the operations of the school to be sure, but we foresee an even bigger impact on the community and our students. Teaching is very much a relational role and the trust and relationship that is built with students cannot be underestimated. We find that many of the staff being forced to leave are the ones who are positive role models and have helped to create a positive culture throughout the school.

We would like to see these government mandates repealed, much like we've been seeing other Covid pandemic requirements be repealed over the new year as we see the Covid-19 virus spread throughout Queensland with few ICU admissions. If this cannot be done, then we would like to see the proper Risk Assessments conducted showing the risk to education staff being forced to have a vaccine and also a Risk Assessment done for the risk to students having unvaccinated staff on the premises.

Terminating the employment of individuals whose only crime is to follow their conscience regarding their personal health choices is clearly an injustice. Australia is all about giving people a fair go, about freedom, and coming together as a community. These impacts of these mandates should be constantly re-assessed and re-evaluated to avoid massive costs to everyday Australians, to Australian communities, and to the freedoms that we all enjoy which came at a great cost.

Educator 84

My name is M, I'm 40 years old but young at heart. My small school is near X town where I'm the second teacher in a two-teacher school. I've just completed my third year at this school; my favourite of all my placements since graduating in 2001.

Since it's the two of us with a handful of our support staff, we're all very close. I think that's what is one of the hardest things about what this mandate means – losing close working relationships with my students and co-workers. I have four grades in my class, 3 to 6, and although early childhood trained, I prefer the older students. I love being able to share a joke with them and that they're able to understand sarcasm. I feel blessed that I have the same groups of students over several years, allowing me to develop strong relationships with them. We talk, I know their lives and their families and they know about mine. I know I'm good at my job. I get along well with my colleagues; my kids love me and they learn a lot while having fun. In saying this, I have never felt more like "just a number" than right now.

I recently sent my principal an email saying that I would be suspended sooner rather than later. I honestly couldn't bear to have that face-to-face conversation and cry in front of him again while he looks at me hopelessly.

I'm tired! So tired. Tired of crying, tired of thinking about who will have my class because I can't, tired of losing sleep, tired of physically aching, tired of worrying about my family and living on one income because I didn't give into coercion to take a vaccine in its experimental stages and tired of receiving pressuring texts and emails from Education Queensland demanding a response to my vaccination status that isn't changing.

My three boys and husband have been so supportive, but I see the worry on their faces. I'm usually the strong one, not the member of our household bursting into tears at seemingly random times. I feel no matter which decision I made: to be coerced into taking the vaccination or accepting a loss of employment (which is a very broad word that doesn't begin to describe my loss) my mental health is suffering. I can't remember the last time I went a whole day without thinking about it, without grieving or feeling resentment or pressure and it's been so hard. The timing of the mandate announcement couldn't have come at a worse time; the busiest time of the year: finishing assessment, marking, reporting, school concert preparation then heading home pretending to be excited about Christmas and school holidays. Once again, THE. WORST. TIME.

Probably one of the biggest worries – who am I kidding, everything is a big worry – is that my students and their families will think I have abandoned them and that I don't care. That my colleagues will think I don't care, that I'm selfish and that I am disrupting our well-oiled machine. I know there are a lot of good teachers out there that I could be replaced with but they're not me. Taking four grades is a huge job and one I'm good at, something I would go as far as saying I can specialise in. It's almost unique and it's gone. I'm not selfish and I shouldn't have to choose between my job and taking a medication that has unknown long-term side effects. I feel forced to make this choice and forced to let down my school and community.

Obviously, I would love to be able to keep my job but even more so I would appreciate my work valued by Education Queensland and the Queensland Government. I AM MORE than a number! I am cherished within my school community. To receive end-of-year emails from our premier saying our work is respected was hurtful, when it's clearly not. My work isn't appreciated but it's clear my vaccine status is. Staff mental health was definitely not thought of with the announcement of the mandate despite Education Queensland maintaining a stance that they value mental health. I'm not seeing it. I'm not seeing respect and value of how hard their teachers work to make a difference. So yes, I would love to be able to keep my job without taking a vaccination; it would be simply amazing, but it's also becoming clearer that I mean nothing to this system and it's not right imbuing people with despair.

I am more! We are more! My class is worth more! I'm tired. So tired. I don't even think this is written very well. My mind is a mess, I'm just a mess. The feeling of helplessness is overwhelming and all consuming. I thought my job was secure. I thought wrong.

Educator 85

My name is P. For the last 3 years, I have held the position of Director of Coaching – 'X (sport)' at X College on the Sunshine Coast. I am 53 years old, a qualified Teacher, former Olympic 'X' Coach, have coached multiple National champions, junior and senior teams. I was employed to develop a 'X' culture and program at the school and from all accounts have done a great job.

In November 2021, the Director of Sport made it a point to acknowledge the job that I had done as the participation numbers of the 'X' program have grown considerably and the competitive results and opportunities had also improved dramatically. He asked if I was willing to continue and verbally suggested that the school would 'roll on' my contract into next year.

I did not comply with the request to provide evidence of my vaccination status by 17 December 2021, and on 30 December 2021, I received a payslip stating that I had received 'Annual Leave on Termination'. I have since requested confirmation as to whether I have indeed been terminated as I had received no other notification of this, but have yet to receive a reply.

Whilst the income I receive from X College is not my primary source of income, if indeed I have been terminated, it will place my family under financial pressure as I will need to supplement this loss somehow. This is obviously concerning.

I took great pride and satisfaction in establishing a vibrant culture at this school and culture takes time. 3 years is significant and we had created a solid base to then build again from. This will be lost now and it is disappointing for the students who were beginning to grow in confidence through the programs that had been established.

I am disappointed that the school failed to protect my basic human rights and blindly follow these immoral mandates. It is clearly apparent that the vaccinations we are being coerced to take DO NOT prevent infection or transmission and that they come with very real and serious adverse reactions. To discriminate and make employment conditional based on taking something like this is simply wrong and these mandates must be stopped.

Educator 86

I would like to introduce myself as Mrs S. I am a 50 year old female and mum who has worked for the Department of Education for over 31 years. I have enjoyed the position of Business Manager at a school in X for the past 8 years. I have completed several courses during my working career some of which are: Certificate III, Asbestos Management Training, Corporate Card Training, Finance Training, Mandatory Training for the Department, First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis, Asthma, and various other professional development workshops. I have absolutely loved working for Education since I left school and had planned to stay in Education until I retire. I enjoy working in a school experiencing the amazing interactions daily with the principal, teachers, teacher aides, cleaners, schools officer, students and parents. I have a great rapport with my students and parents and have a very strong networking base with other schools, local businesses and within the department.

I was very disappointed when I contacted my Principal and asked for a risk assessment in relation to my position at the school and my ability to continue in that position in 2022 unvaccinated. I was advised to contact the vaccination email with any of my concerns and that the department would I'm sure be able to easily replace me next year if I chose not to get the COVID-19 vaccine. I was asked by some if I was anti-vaccine, which I explained I was not and that myself, husband, and children are up to date with all of our required immunisations. At this point, I am not agreeing to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and refuse to be told when and where I should be vaccinated by my employer.

My family relies on my income as I am the sole income earner as my husband is on a pension and I have three children. I am extremely concerned about my income and how I would continue to pay my mortgage and living expenses for my entire family. I never expected that 30 something years ago when I was encouraged to do the public service exam and get a job in government that it would all one day rely on me choosing not to be vaccinated in my private life.

My community and school rely on me heavily in my position as Business Manager and am often told by parents and staff that I am the glue that holds the school together. I have absolutely loved being the glue and developing amazing relationships and even friendships with the staff, parents, and students. The most amazing thing I love more than anything, is to run in to current or past students and their families around town and hear my name called out across the shop and a great big hello and how are you Mrs S.

Schools are amazing places and take all manner of people and systems to make work from very small to very large schools. As a Business Manager I believe that my work can be done within the confines of my office, with limited contact with the students. Students can be seen by Teacher Aides for any first aid issues and go directly to classrooms for signing in late and leaving early. I am still able to meet and greet parents and handle any issues as there is no mandate around parents coming onto the school grounds needing to be vaccinated. There could also be an option to work at home a few days a week with the support of the school community and school staff. All I was asking for is just an open line of communication and options for all members of staff.

During my time with Education, I have worked in Central Office, Regional Office, District Office, and Schools. I have loved every position and the managers and staff I have been fortunate enough to work with over the years. My positions in X have been the most rewarding as working in a small community is like no other. The love and compassion from community, staff, parents and especially students, is worth more than words could ever explain. If I have to leave my school forever it will be the saddest end to a part of my life, I was not quite ready to give up.

Educator 87

My name is D and I'm a Library teacher assistant from the Sunshine Coast. I am 65 years young and have been employed at my job in a school for 24 and a half years.

I assist in the everyday running of the Library – which I believe is the hub of any school. On a daily basis, I interact and assist teachers, admin and business staff and most of all students from year levels Pre-Kindy right through to Year 12, answering requests and giving out information on research, referencing and many other various topics. I am at the front desk and my role is quite varied and involves mostly customer relations. I love, love, love my job and my employer acknowledges this.

In the first week in December, 2021, all staff were advised that the Queensland Government had mandated double vaccinations for anyone working or even volunteering in education in any capacity. Anyone not fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by early January, 2022 would be unable to come onto the college campus. I have chosen not to take the vaccination for various reasons and face losing my job.

The prospect of losing my job has been very stressful for me as I am the one working in my family and bringing home a wage.

Since receiving the information from my employer regarding Government mandates for vaccinations, I have been quite stressed and at times depressed. I felt this Christmas had a big black cloud hovering over it.

I am very experienced at my role in the Library and having left in December for the holidays when school finished for the end of term 4, there will be no opportunity to hand over to someone taking over my job in January.

I don't want to be coerced into taking a vaccination that I feel won't be good for my health as I already have an autoimmune problem for which I take medication.

I would like the Queensland government to come to a compromise for those not wishing to take the vaccine.

Perhaps rapid antigen testing could be done prior to employees coming onto the campus each morning and if a negative result is achieved - being allowed to work at their usual role and perhaps wear a mask as well.

Educator 88

My name is R, I am a 63 year old female educator, who has been employed by Education Queensland for the last 40 years in the state schooling system. I have a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in Psychology, a Graduate Diploma in Education, and a Masters of Educational Psychology.

I have worked as a Teacher, a Support Teacher Learning Difficulties, a Guidance Officer, and a Guidance Officer Intensive Behaviour Support. More recently, I am employed as a Guidance Officer, but I have been deployed to manage the day to day running of a campus that supports 60 disengaged youth in the Cairns Region.

My Principal would say that my gift is my wisdom and enthusiasm for ethical and moral leadership of some of our most vulnerable young people in the region. I believe my gifts centre around working collaboratively with teams of people. I have a knack of bringing people together to work towards a common goal. I have high levels of expertise in areas of Guidance, Behaviour, Youth Engagement, Leadership and Solution Focused Brief Therapy.

I am not sure that my employer is aware of my situation at this stage, and I am not sure what the response will be, but I do know that my unique skill set will not be easy to replace with 1 person. It is my best guess that they will have to employ a Head of Campus to manage the 5 classes, and associated staff, as well as a Guidance Officer to manage the ongoing case management of the 60 students presenting with complex and challenging needs.

I am married with one son, and both my husband and son have acquiesced to the mandates to hold their employment in various industries, however, neither agreed with the mandates. I have struggled to comply with the mandates because of the hypocrisy between the ideals that we espouse within the Department and those displayed by the Government imposing the mandates. I am asked to manage 60 disengaged youth, using principles of Inclusion, strategies aligned with Non Restrictive Practices, while ensuring that we consider Human Rights within decision making. In stark contrast, the mandates imposed are non-Inclusive, Restrictive and do not align with the Human Rights of an individual, in fact, they are a form of coercive control. Coping with this ethical nightmare has impacted heavily on my state of health, with recent visits to my preferred medical practitioner, resulting in the provision of a medical certificate, preventing me from working in Semester 1, irrespective of my vaccination status.

My concerns for my community pertain to the Government sanction to discriminate, and to use coercive control to get others to comply with something they are clearly opposed to. Perhaps we have to go back to the old saying, do as I say (be inclusive) and not do as I do (be restrictive)!

Educator 89

Greetings, my name is S (50) from Brisbane, QLD. I have been employed in the Education Sector (administration) for 15 years, most recently holding the position of Registrar. I completed my legal studies (B.Proc, LLB) in South Africa and operated my own legal practice between 1998-2005. Arriving in Australia, I decided to utilise my managerial skills and accepted a managerial position at a Sydney school (3 years), continuing in Brisbane as Office Manager and Registrar's Assistant (12 years). As Registrar, I dealt extensively with international students, their visas and ensuring compliance with the ESOS Act and all other related Government legislation.

Apart from my administrative duties the last two years, I've spent many hours connecting on a very close and personal level with my international students (50 - 65 beautiful young people). Stepping up as emotional support person for these young people who, in many circumstances, have not seen their families for more than two long years, was a great honour! My school Board/Principal has been wonderful in implementing countless initiatives to keep going in the uncertain times. Being classified as "essential workers", we did our utmost to remain a 'calming constant' for our students in a volatile situation. My deepest concern is for our young students! No longer able to support my international students moving forward saddens me immensely and makes me worried for their social emotional wellbeing.

Teachers shortages in QLD was already critical and finding seasoned, highly educated staff is near impossible. Losing staff with many years of valuable experience due to mandates will exacerbate the shortage issues exponentially and negatively affect many students' education. Australian children already lag behind many other countries in their education - we can't afford to discard passionate, qualified staff deemed no longer suitable solely because they don't meet the requirement of a medical mandate. Losing volunteers, teacher aides or administrative staff is just as unfathomable. Who will run the uniform stores, canteens, organise the fundraising or support the vulnerable students? All negatively affecting students.

My life has been turned upside down because of my choice to forgo a vaccination on personal medical grounds. It has led to many negative impacts on my mental health and that of my family. Lately, I find myself questioning my sanity, principles and self-worth very often. I have always been a positive, persevering, hard-working person however losing a job (and the only extended family I have in Australia) has caused a loss of identity and put me in a very dark place. To go from a valued member of society (even an "essential worker") to being shunned for your medical status, has been unbearable. When I look in the mirror, I no longer recognise myself - my self-worth has been degraded. Becoming a burden to society, unable to provide for my family and being treated as a second-class citizen has taken away my dignity.

Some may say - "terminating teachers/staff that don't comply with mandates because they are selfish is good" and "choices have consequences". I say, I believe in freedom of choice, equality and no segregation or discrimination - coming from South Africa, this is hugely important to me. Australia stood against apartheid - what has happened to our nation??? Respect needs to be placed above all else.

With my legal background, I see many issues arising with these medical mandates which is totally unnecessary. In the decision of Kimber v Sapphire coast, Deputy President dean stated:

"The risk of spreading COVID only arises with a person who has COVID. This should be apparent and obvious. There is no risk associated with a person who is unvaccinated and doesn't have COVID." Mandatory vaccination does not eliminate any risk of COVID as both vaccinated and unvaccinated people can be infected and transmit COVID. Science does not support mandates and threats. Let's use science and all the tools at our disposal to create a strong, united and inclusive society.

Please, please I believe we can work together in many ways to maintain the Australia the ANZACs fought for - free and united!! I ask that we work together to find a solution, other than mandates, to protect our entire Australian community. Reverse the mandate requirements. I put to you that it would be far safer and more effective to allow rapid antigen tests instead of mandates. Let us implement new projects for example ventilation and air purifiers. These measures would restore the divide created in our society and stamp out division based on vaccination status.

Character is shown in how you treat those who can't do anything for you. I support peoples' choice to get vaccinated 100% (if it is their decision) however, I do not support tyrannical mandates. It was my duty and honour to be there for my students! I hope to continue this calling in future.

God bless

Educator 90

My name is J, I have just turned 50. I have been a Teacher Aide for the last 21 years. I have a Certificate IV in Education Support along with Supporting Students with Disabilities, and Mental Health First Aid. I gained these achievements in 2002. I currently work within the Department of Education, in the Gold Coast working with our high risk, disengaged and most vulnerable students to assist them with reflecting on their behaviour and attitude within the classroom setting. Building positive relationships with our disengaged and vulnerable students gives me a huge sense of satisfaction. From an early age I knew that I would always help those less fortunate than myself. While at school myself, I helped at out at a special needs school and in my early 30's became an organiser and active member of a local cancer charity.

As I'm sure you are aware, my job is at risk if we do not comply with the vaccination mandate. My employer has informed me that I am required to get this vaccination, as my role requires me to work with disadvantaged and behaviour challenged students in a "Hub" that has been specially set up for those students who find the mainstream classroom a challenging, fearful, or intimidating setting. While in this setting I am able to build relationships and trust with these students to enable them to feel safe and assist them in being the best they can be. As the Hub Coordinator I am told by my line manager, Heads of Department and Deputy Principals what an amazing job I do. But if I do not comply with the mandate that has been forced upon us and get the vaccine, I will lose the job that I am passionate about and good at.

I was raised by my parents to always stick up for myself, listen to my gut and intuition, its usually right. I am now being coerced and forced into a situation where I am having to choose between compromising my health to keep my job that I love or choose my health and family. I have always been an active financial contributor, and this is now being taken away from me, and the people who been everything to me will suffer because my income is being taken away from me. I have a husband and three children who are my world. I have spent many nights tossing and turning and have shed many tears over the last few months. My mental health has declined, and I have forgotten what it is like to sleep a full night. I am now filled with stress and anxiety, not only for myself but my husband and boys. My husband is self employed and his work fluctuates, he too is now feeling the strain of having to solely support our family if I am to lose my job because of these mandates. Our whole household is going to be affected by these mandates.

I have many concerns about the students that I have worked with and their families. I have seen firsthand the struggles that they are going through. Our students and families need our continued support now more than ever. I know only too well how COVID has impacted families. I have built up so much trust with some of our most vulnerable young people, building these relationships in some cases has taken many months and even years, to these students I am someone safe to talk to and school is their safe space. Don't take this away from them.

Please remove these mandates and let me and many others continue to do a job that we love. Let our students continue to get the support, guidance, and education that they deserve. Let us do the job we have trained to do. Let us continue to engage with our students and wider community. Humans are meant to interact with each other we are not supposed to be alone. Please don't cause a divide between us. Life is challenging enough, please let us be there for each other, we need each other now more than ever.

"You can't be human alone" Maggie Kuhn.

Educator 91

I am J, a female, Speech Language Pathologist (SLP). I am working part time (4 days a week) for the Department of Education across primary and secondary schools in Brisbane. I have also previously worked in Special Schools. I am 47 years old and have been working with the Queensland Education Department as a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) for over 8 years. I have 23 years experience as a Speech Pathologist having graduated with honours from the University of Queensland.

As a SLP I support teachers to adjust the curriculum for students with communication and literacy difficulties in their classroom. I also work individually with students to diagnose communication disorders and provide intervention to develop their communication skills. I love being a part of the school team working together so that students can talk, read, and write with confidence. I love seeing students blossom as they gain confidence in using their voice. I love seeing students start advocating for themselves and telling teachers the strategies which help them to learn.

The Education Department mandated the vaccine from December 17th. The Department reports that an email address was set up to support staff with their decision making by answering any questions about the vaccine. I sent in my questions on 9th December. However, there has still been no response to my questions and we are now in 2022. Due to health concerns, I am not yet vaccinated. I am now unable to return to my school over the holidays to work and I will face dismissal in a couple of weeks.

I am a single parent of two teenage sons wondering how I will pay the rent and put food on the table without a job. Where will I live if I have no income? How will we eat? This situation has caused extreme mental stress. I am seeing a psychologist for counselling to help me function but that is only monthly. I am crying constantly, have headaches, have a sleep disorder, and feel nauseous so am struggling to eat. This is also causing a lot of strain with my family relationships. My partner has been feeling suicidal from the stress of it all.

I love my job as a SLP in schools. My heart is breaking knowing that I can't continue. It has taken several years to build relationships with other staff in my schools to best meet the needs of the students. When you work well with the dynamics of a particular team environment, another person can't just fill in the gap that you leave. I've built relationships with my students and I know that they enjoy working with me as much as I enjoy working with them. I love seeing my students with communication difficulties have success in the classroom due to my pre-teaching of classroom content and helping teachers adjust assessment so they can achieve. I will miss them all so much! Please stop the mandates so I can continue to work to help all of my students and provide for my own family. I don't want to be unemployed. I want to work.

Educator 92

I am A, a 35 yr old female, middle school teacher. I am incredibly versatile and have worked in both secondary and primary schools. Currently I am NOT working, however 2022 was the year I was set to return to the classroom as a casual teacher after taking almost 2 years off to raise my 4th and final baby. My most valuable gift as an educator is my versatility. My areas of specialty are English and HASS; however, since 2012 when I graduated, I have taught Religious Education, Science, Maths, Art (Visual and Drama), HPE, ICT and special education.

My only employer correspondence has been Education Queensland. I have only received the generalised survey emails and TRACER has also sent a generic email, informing me that failure to complete the survey and get the vaccination will result in my removal from the system.

Initially the mandates didn't affect me, in fact, I went and got my first vaccination in November. This vaccination went against every fibre in my being, but I wanted to see my 90yr old Grandma for Christmas. My vaccination was on the 8th of November, I refused to talk to my family about it. I was ashamed that I got it. On the 10th of November, QLD border requirements were announced, stating that all travelers needed PCR testing. I was outraged as what was the point for the vaccination and I wasn't subjecting my 18month old to an unnecessary invasive procedure. I voiced my frustrations on Facebook, and a friend invited me to the groups opposing mandates, and here I learned the true nature of what is going on.

In addition to getting the first vaccination without thorough information and now the mandates my mental health has taken a huge toll.

Before I got the vaccination, I had a consultation with my regular GP who has since left the country. During this consultation I was not aware of the gag order on the medical profession; however I didn't leave full of enthusiasm either. I was also told my 12yr old was good to get it as well. Separately I requested a full blood check and my Pap results required a Gynaecologist referral.

Later, I went and got my blood results from a different doctor, as mine had left the country, where I was asked if I was under a lot of stress as my blood suggested so (BP was elevated too). I informed this Dr of my difficult domestic situation and it was suggested that I get a DVO.

Following this my 12yr old and I went to get our Pfizer shot at the same clinic. The paper work I had to sign was for AZ and the office lady told me "its all the same". The Dr appointment was with a different Dr all together and there was no thorough consultation, no discussion of implications for the heart, possible death or how it could negatively affect my current HPV diagnosis. The nurse that performed the injection selected a kidney dish from a Styrofoam box full of already drawn injections. I feel physically sick just thinking about the fact that I didn't walk away with my child. This was all before the mandates were announced.

In the days that passed, my son and I suffered no adverse reactions beyond a slight headache. I learned afterwards all the heart conditions that have come about for young people and the shame that I feel for putting my child at risk is indescribable.

Since, my research has led me to: 1.be concerned about the implications for my own health regarding my HPV which has been managed for 3yrs without incident. As a single mum who will compensate my children should anything happen? 2. revoke consent for both myself and my son as I believe the risks far outweigh any benefits for either of us.

In addition, I am unable to pursue the actions required to finalise the separation between my ex and I. This means I have to continue living in a psychological abusive household, which has been overshadowed by these mandates. My returning to work was to secure the necessary home loan to

put the house in my own name and then complete the renovations needed. Currently I have 3 little kids (5, 3 and 18months) sharing 1 room. I am left feeling hopeless and disappointed.

I live in an area where relief teachers are few. I'm concerned those who continue to work will not be supported due to lack of staff, in turn the students suffer as teachers are over worked and if they take time off for being ill there wont be anyone to fill their spot. I do not want to think about what this means for NCT. I have heard rumours of sourcing teachers who are not yet graduated to fill gaps. These young teachers will not have access to the staff, time or resources to be appropriately mentored and as a result I feel these new teachers will suffer from burnout well before their time. I'm particularly concerned for remote schools and whether the government will simply close them, which will not benefit the communities.

Ultimately I would like to see mandating vaccinations against Covid-19 scraped entirely. Those who want to get vaccinated for their own health, on appropriate and transparent information from their GP should be allowed to do so. I do not believe that waving a person's job as a reward for compliance is something that should be happening in a democratic and free society.

I fear for what the future will look like for my children, the loss of freedom, coercion, lies, betrayal, segregation, it all feels surreal and its not the world I want my babies to grow up in.

Educator 93

I have been doing supply teaching work for almost 13 years now. I love this teaching role of being able to support teachers this way, as well as support school children from across all ages, Prep to Yr 6 (and Yr 7 before).

My work as a teacher is my life. Together with my husband, my teaching job means life to my family sustaining us in more ways than one all these years.

To cut off our lifeline this way because I was supposed to have 'made a choice' by not getting vaccinated, is wrong however you look at it. I have come from the Philippines and migrated here to Australia in 1994. Back then PM John Howard was the Prime Minister and things were great for all Australians and I felt so privileged to be able to participate and enjoy this great country's freedoms and prosperity. I was blessed.

Fast forward to 2021, and all of a sudden, I no longer feel so 'free' and there's no hope ahead for me and my family, just because I have exercised my inalienable right to say "NO" to a medical procedure. I will not and will not knowingly be reckless. I am a teacher who follows by example. I could be trusted to do the right thing, and I'd like to be able to trust my government as well to lead by example. THIS IS NOT LEADING BY EXAMPLE. IMPOSING A MANDATE ON SCHOOL STAFF, INCLUDING TEACHERS AND NOT GIVING THEM A CHOICE IS WRONG AT ALL COUNTS.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF YOUR MANDATES IS ACROSS ALL PROFESSIONS AND BUSINESS AND WILL BE FELT FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

SURELY, YOU CANNOT FOREVER HIDE THE FACT THAT SO MANY HAVE QUESTIONED AND ARE STILL QUESTIONING YOUR DECISION. ISN'T IT WORTH STOPPING AT LEAST TO CONSIDER THAT THE GOVERNMENT MAY BE WRONG?

GOOD SENATORS, IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO TURN AROUND AND GET BACK TO US BEING "ONE AND FREE". YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. IT JUST TAKES ONE PERSON TO STEP OUT. YOU CAN DO IT FOR US AND FOR YOUR OWN CHILDREN AND CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.

PLEASE HELP GIVE US BACK OUR HOPE, OUR COUNTRY, OUR FREEDOM.

My own daughter who's worked ALL her young life, doing her best - from primary to her honours degree, and actually landed a probationary job as a clinical psychologist here in our town of Toowoomba to start in December, was also affected by this so-called health mandate. She shed a lot of tears and was very depressed about it. She's made a decision, and decided to turn in her resignation letter. She told me, SHE HAS ONLY ONE BODY, ONE LIFE. AND SHE IS STILL YOUNG. Good senators, a lot of people have taken the jab, but we have seen healthy young people come back with debilitating illnesses. And the healthy ones? Who knows what will happen to them 5 or 10 years down the track? THE RISKS ARE JUST TOO GREAT, YOU SEE. So when my daughter said 'NO' to the vaccine, I completely understood her decision to do so.

PLEASE WAKE UP TO OUR COLLECTIVE CALL. WE ARE NOT 'ANTI VAXXERS'. WE ARE PRO CHOICE, AND PRO COMMON SENSE AND ANTI SEGREGATION. SEGREGATING ALL AUSTRALIANS BETWEEN "VAXXED AND UNVAXXED" IS TOTALLY WRONG. SURELY, THIS WILL ALL UNRAVEL IN THE END. IT IS NEVER TOO LATE FOR YOU TO TURN AROUND AND DO THE RIGHT THING.

YOUR CHILDREN AND CHILDREN'S CHILDREN WILL REMEMBER YOU AS A PRINCIPLED PERSON WORTH EMULATING IF YOU DO THE RIGHT THING AND HELP PUT A STOP TO THIS MANDATES. IT'S TIME TO LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE WHOM YOU REPRESENT.

Educator 94

My name is P. I'm 43 years old and I have been a primary school teacher for 13 years. When I graduated with my Bachelor of Education: Primary Teaching in 2008 I didn't think I would go into teaching full time. The first seven years I was working on a casual basis whilst raising my three children. However, when I got my first long term contract I found my calling! When people ask me what my teaching philosophy is, my reply is always simple. I want my students to love coming to school every day. I want school to be a great experience for my students. I want them to learn and explore but also be amazing little humans. I want them to look back and think, that was such a great year! What's my special teaching gift? I make connections and build on it. I connect with parents, and we all know that's not always easy but we need them on our side. I make connections with all my students and it doesn't matter how big or small. They just need to know you genuinely care. If they like you they'll learn from you!

Six years ago, I gained permanency as a Year 1 teacher at X State School. During my time at this school I have added various roles to my toolkit. I'm an Under 8s Day coordinator; crazy but fun. I get to meet community members and promote my school and seeing the kids celebrate this day is always the highlight of my year. I'm also a Beginning Teacher Mentor. I love teaching and I want beginning teachers to love it as much as I do so they want to stay in the profession. Teaching can be stressful, especially the first couple of years so if I can help them get through that why wouldn't I help? I'm also our school profiler. Next year I was hoping to add a coaching role to my credentials.

An hour before the vaccination mandate for teachers were announced I had just been told I would be moving year levels but I was up for the challenge. After I read the mandate email I went into shock. Then being the person that I am, I was feeling guilty that I may leave the school in the lurch if I couldn't return. I was upfront with my line manager and my principal and told them that due to this mandate I may not return. At the time they were supportive and understanding. They told me not to worry as it was just the first email and they weren't quite sure where it would lead. During the last week of school, I explained my legitimate concerns and my principal said he can only follow the directives given to him but he would be very disappointed to lose an amazing teacher.

If this mandate continues I'm going to miss my students the most. 2022 was going to be a year of change. I was moving to Year 2 and some students from my 2021 class were moving up with me. When they found out I was going to be their teacher again they were so excited. Parents emailed me saying how happy they were that their kids were going to have me again. I'll also miss the students I've taught in previous years. Thursdays are my lunch date days for my 1A graduates; a mixture from different year levels. Sometimes I have 2, sometimes I have 10. I think it's pretty cool that Year 5 students still want to hang out with their Year 1 teacher. I'll miss continuing to build these connections with all my students. During our last week together, I didn't have the heart to tell them I may not return. I feel like I'm letting my students and my school community down.

Since the vaccination mandate I have shed more tears than I knew I had. I have always been a positive person but I have to admit, this has affected my mental health in a major way. I have had many sleepless nights and my regular GP will no longer see me as I am not vaccinated. What makes this situation worst is my husband, also a teacher is feeling the same pain. The hardest part was having to tell our children. As teenagers, they are old enough to understand the impact this will have on our family. Our career is being taken away from us and we will be left without an income! How will we keep up with our home loan? How will we feed our children? My eldest daughter will have to give up her first job! She is angry with us, but all we can ask from her at this time is to trust us. It has been a struggle on all fronts.

My biggest pain since the vaccination mandate has been for my husband. In 2015, at the age of 37, he was stressed and still not fulfilled in his career. So, with my encouragement he took a big risk and he left his project management position, returned to full time studies and completed his teaching degree. Being a manual arts and engineering teacher, combining his love for furniture making and sharing

that love with his students is his gift. Since this vaccination mandate he has been trying to stay strong for us but I know he is broken. He has had no support from his school. The last two weeks of school the Teacher Wellbeing officer was always 'too busy' to speak with him. This is the first time in five years I have seen him stressed. I am concerned for his well-being.

I want this vaccination mandate to end, not just for teachers but for everyone who is affected by this ridiculous mandate. What are we gaining from this? It is hard enough keeping teachers in this profession but now you want to discriminate against teachers who hold strong moral values, who believe in bodily autonomy and freedom to choose. If this doesn't end we are going to lose so many wonderful teachers. Teachers who truly love their job. Teachers who truly care about their students. Teachers who turn up every day and want to make a difference.

I want to end by saying, teaching is my second love. My first love will always be my family. I will not be coerced into getting vaccinated, my children will never be vaccinated for COVID-19. I will be turning up to every freedom march, standing up for a world I want my children to live in. A world where there is true freedom to choose. A world where their voices are heard. A world where they can stand up for what they believe in without fear of retribution, discrimination or shame! I will be fighting for our voices to be heard.

Educator 95

My name is S. I am a 55 year old female itinerant primary music teacher, working on the southern Sunshine Coast. I have been teaching since 1989, beginning as a primary classroom teacher, and changing to music in 1995. I have had the good fortune of teaching in various locations around our beautiful state: Deception Bay, Innisfail, Cairns, Gympie, and now the Sunshine Coast. Apart from the gift of sharing and making music, I have a deep connection with our disengaged and marginalised students, and I feel blessed that several of these students have reached out over the years to contact me as adults, sharing the impact I have had on their lives with friends and family. I am deeply touched and humbled by these stories, and they are a constant reminder to me that **I make a difference.**

My employer (base school principal) has been very supportive of my reluctance to comply with the vaccine mandate. One of his sons had ended up in hospital after the vaccine, with repeated vomiting. He has been very professional at all times, contacting the Department for advice when I had emailed about Risk Assessments, and sending on their inadequate responses to me. He believes the Department should be writing up the risk assessment for employees, rather than expecting individual administrations to deal with this difficult matter.

The vaccine mandates have caused immense stress on our family. My partner remains supportive of the decision I am forced to make in order to keep my job (I am the major breadwinner in the family, and we have just purchased a house, so I have no choice but to keep working). I feel angry that my employer now decides what I should do with my body, rather than it being a personal decision. I do not feel the vaccines have been through enough rigorous testing. I was prepared to wait for Novavax, as, according to my research, it seemed an alternative with fewer side effects and higher success rate, but that choice was taken away from me when the government decided not to release Novavax this year. Regardless of my vaccination status, I will continue to oppose the mandate and the forced segregation occurring in our society. I also hold grave concerns for the 'booster shots'. I was always prepared to have the flu shot, every year, but lining up every few months to be protected against a constantly mutating virus which could still land me in ICU appears futile.

This 'forcing of my hand' has had me speak with both my GP and a psychologist about my mental health. I am currently on a Mental Health Plan. I have also been taking natural remedies to try and relieve my stress. I cry often, and without warning, and can remain depressed for days on end. I experience feelings of hopelessness, and am always fatigued. Although a spiritual person, I don't know what to pray any more. We have turned off the news in our household, and I spend limited time on social media as I am sick of hearing the same narrative. I no longer trust our government, my employer, or the Queensland Teachers' Union who is supposed to work in their members' best interests. I find myself short tempered, and frequently arguing with family members. Today I have been to a dentist because I have started clenching my teeth at night and experiencing jaw pain.

After receiving my first injection (Pfizer), I got violently sick several times, and then slept for 24 hours. I had lost my appetite, was in a 'brain fog', and felt very lethargic, unable to do the simplest of household tasks. The last thing I want to do is have the followup injection in two weeks - I am very anxious about further side effects.

I am concerned for my colleagues and friends, who will not take the vaccine and are in danger of losing their jobs - excellent educators, volunteers and chaplains. I am worried as to how Education Queensland expects to fill these positions, as there will be many. I am concerned for the students I teach - being marched off to get vaccines, despite the fact that there have been many side effects in adults. How many boosters are our children going to have to line up for during their lifetime? How much longer do I have to teach behind a mask? Singing is exhausting. The students who have hearing impairments have been doubly disadvantaged. I personally teach students who are going to be home schooled in 2022 because they suffer anxiety when their teachers teach behind a mask. When I teach across the whole school it is

difficult to learn students' names. Will that be compounded by students eventually having to wear masks, obscuring half their face? If we go back to 'learning-at-home', music gets lower priority because it is not one of the 'key learning areas', and I find myself supervising the children of essential workers, rather than teaching in my subject area.

My hope in writing this letter is that vaccination mandates are lifted immediately, before I compromise my immune system further by being forced to have the second vaccine. The expectation was that 'herd immunity' would be achieved by an 80% vaccination rate. We have achieved this target, so what are we waiting for?

Educator 96

My name is S, female, have been employed full time at a public Secondary High School on the Gold Coast for the past 17 years. I am employed as a permanent teacher aide in a Special Education Unit. My qualifications are a Certificate IV in Education Support and as well have undertaken further studies in Disability.

I love working with young people, especially with special needs and learning support since every student is unique. My job is building trust and to find the best way to work and support the student to achieve their individual goals. This trust can only be achieved with great patience, consistency, experience, good insight and understanding each student's unique way of learning.

The only response from my employer was on the last day of school the support staff were called up to the office for a meeting. During the meeting we were informed that it was mandatory to answer your vaccination status survey and if you were not vaccinated by the 23 of January 2022 you were not allowed to set foot on the school premises, otherwise this would be unlawful and the police could be called in to remove you! This coercion and bullying tactic of being forced and not giving me any choice in the matter has certainly made my last day of 2021 feeling totally disappointed, angry, disrespected and disillusioned about my future with Qld Education. It made me feel totally unappreciated and certainly did not make me look forward to my Christmas break.

The mandates have certainly impacted everyone in the family since every single family member has been given the ultimatum of receiving the vaccination otherwise employment will be terminated. It has certainly put a lot of stress onto the family unit.

My mental health has suffered and I have a mental health care plan to see a Psychologist to cope with the stress and anxiety from this whole coercion and bullying tactics this whole situation has caused. I receive from work on a weekly basis a text message and an e-mail to answer the mandatory vaccination survey. This causes a great deal of stress due to pressure. As well I am stressed due to the uncertainty of my job and potentially loss of income.

The concern for the students and the community is the impact this will have with creating uncertainty for the future. The consistency of staff working with the students is essential since it takes time to build a trust/relationship between support staff, parents and students with disabilities and learning difficulties. The parents have the right to be able to expect and demand that their children are being cared for by experienced and professional staff that have built over time a strong and trustworthy relationship with their child/ren.

I am asking my employer to give me a choice and if vaccinated a vaccine that is safe. I would like to see my privacy, my medical history and my freedom of choice to be respected by my employer and especially the government. I believe we still live in a democratic country where I can choose to make my own decisions especially what is best for my body and my health.

Educator 97

My name is J and I am a teacher aide in Townsville, Nth Qld. After working casually for the first year I was offered a contract and became a permanent staff member in a catholic school for another two years. I have a lot of patience and absolutely love working with the littlest people in the school, the preps. I went to work every day not feeling as if I was working at all as I love my job!

The school wanted me to provide my vaccination status which I did not want to do. I emailed the principal with no reply. I then emailed HR and initially got one reply but no reply to my other three emails. I feel saddened and let down that as a leader of both campuses (P-6, 7-12) the principal could not take the time to talk with me about how I am feeling during all of this and neither could HR for that matter.

The mandates currently in place have upset me terribly. I feel like myself and all my other colleagues have been coerced into having the vaccination to be able to come to work. Some of the staff did NOT want to get the vaccination but felt like they had no other choice as they need to work to pay mortgages, have small children etc. I face losing the job I love, having no income and feel as if I am living in limbo. Not to mention the bills that need to be paid and the expenses of every day living. This brings tears to my eyes and a sick feeling to my stomach. The impact on my mental health has been hard. I have felt incredibly sad, possibly depressed when I think of not being able to come into work every day and see the beautiful smiles and silliness that is being a 4-5 year old. My husband has had to comfort me many times as I cried until I couldn't cry any more.

I do feel concerned for the students as I have watched how worried even prep students are at the mention of a lockdown. I do wonder has anyone taken into account the affect the teacher shortages are going to take on our children? Our small and big children who need the guidance in every day tasks and the ability to be able to handle emotional/ stressful situations on their own. Teachers and teacher aides are the ones there, always, to help and give love and guidance to our future generation.

I want to see segregation, discrimination, fear, coercion, masks, forced vaccinations, mandates and lockdowns eliminated. If we don't have a world with love, respect, peace, happiness and everything else that brings us together as a united world, what do we have? I ask that we can come together, go to work, go to school and live our lives as we deserve to, freely.

Educator 98

My name is K and I am a 48-year-old, female primary teacher in Gladstone Queensland. My teaching experience began when I qualified as a teacher back in 1993 after completing my Diploma of Teaching (Primary) through RMIT in Melbourne, Victoria. It was after this that I began relief teaching and whilst doing this was able to complete my Diploma of Education (Year 4) part time. So, now I was fully qualified and eager to enter into the workplace. I gained my first ever dream position as an Art and Physical Education teacher of a small school in Victoria. It was from here that I was able to broaden my experience and learn from many peers I had met along the way. My enthusiasm and passion for helping children grow continued and I began to want a class of my own. It was the very next year that my nurturing demeanour, my passion for helping challenging children and my positive outlook, landed me my first Grade 1/2 class. It was from here that I was also able to be nurtured as a teacher and was encouraged to grow. This dream found me wanting more. After many years, I decided to move over to England and continue my teaching career there. I was welcomed with open arms and the children were amazing. Having the FREEDOM and OPPORTUNITY to work in another country was and still is something I'll always cherish and recommend to young teachers starting out. It was over there that I met my South African husband. Once our time in England was over, we went and spent 18mths in his home town. My husband's mother is a teacher also. I had the privilege to do many weeks relief. WOW! This made me feel proud to be an Australian and be able to experience the freedom, flexibility of learning and just the simplicity of being able to take the children on a short excursion to the local shops to buy food when completing the "food" unit. My eyes were really opened and I was happy knowing that my son (who was born there), was going to be immersed in an education system that enabled and encouraged free thinking and supported many diverse learning styles. Now, I find myself having moved from my home in Victoria to a regional area of Central Queensland, back in the thick of things and having to face many new challenges of teaching. I have enjoyed and embraced the challenge and looked forward to many, many more years of freedom and giving my children the opportunities that I had and many my husband didn't. So overall, when you think about it, I have been teaching for over 26 years and still am proud to say that I LOVE MY JOB.

As a relief teacher here in Gladstone, I am currently not locked into a school. So, the response I have had from my employer has been minimal. In saying that, since the end of school year 2020, I have been bombarded with emails and text messages requesting my information. I have been unable to provide this and now have been receiving the same emails from the tracer unit. I only began receiving tracer emails after the close of the school year and I found this to be quite poor, as once the directive was announced, it left many of us TRS teachers not knowing who to speak to in regards to 2022. We felt left out and forgotten.

My family and I feel very unsupported and outcasted due to the imposed vaccinations on our jobs. As there are many teachers who are against the mandate (I for one), I have been approached by many schools asking if I would be available next year. I find this pressuring, as I am having to decide between my health, my family and that of an income, my job. I have never been mandated to have a flu shot every year and this has not affected my ability to work or impacted me on getting a job. I do feel pressured, but know that I have made a right choice in not being vaccinated and won't be bullied into getting it for a job. Schools know, that as a relief teacher, I am willing, ready and able to fill in when needed without the restrictions of mandates.

My family have been under a lot of pressure. My children know that I won't have a job this year in 2022, neither will my husband (in a different field) and they have picked up on this. They know that we won't be able to go places that we would have like to and were making plans to for both reasons, no income and the mandates. There has been talk with my children around the vaccinations and what their choices would be? We have had many discussions and it is worrying my children that they will be help down and forced to receive the vaccination. My eldest, in high school, has already asked if he is going to be mandated to have to go to school. I find this disgusting and already see him closing himself off. We don't at home mainstream news as the discussions, the reporting and the scare tactics are too much for their young

minds. I just want my boys to be able to plan our trips away as a family and use that time to bond and share memories, not "oh we can't go there as it's mandated."

I often worry about the children in our community, I have been a relief teacher in all State Schools in the Gladstone Region. I have seen many children already suffering with mental illness and the pressures of life in general. One of my positions for two years here in Gladstone, was supporting teachers and students with special needs. I was often their first point of call if they needed a debrief about anything. I was the one who encouraged them to go back to class and the one who often provided strategies for teachers to use to support the children and encourage them to be their best. Watching this growth was the best reward a teacher could ever ask for and now I worry, as there won't be as many teachers available to fill in these roles. I could be walking down the street with my boys and have a child call out to tell me a story about how they can now do something that they couldn't before, this reward cannot be measured. Then there are the parents, who are ever grateful for the support and encouragement that you give, not only their child, but them also. So, I do worry about where that leaves the schools when having to enforce these mandates and what impact it will have on the mental health of our community.

I guess what I am asking for is simple. Please, reconsider these mandates. Please don't force schools to lose wonderful, dedicated staff who care about the needs of not only the students, but their families as well. We, (as teachers) for the past two years have been following all the advice and requests the health department and education department have put out. Why is it NOW, that you care whether we are vaccinated or not? Why is it NOW, that you require these forced on us to keep our job? We are in our profession, not for the money, but for the love of watching little minds grow, expand and develop into the little humans and free thinkers they are.

In my line of work (as a relief), I can assure you that if a teacher is unwell, then they stay home and we are called in. Vice versa. I would love for you to put a stop to the mandating of vaccinations and leave it up to the schools to decide what is the best for their children. You have been doing this, not only for the past two years, but since schools opened. Trust in your staff, trust in your schools, trust in your principals and scrap the mandates on vaccinations for your jobs.

In closing, I would like to say that I hope that you can all find it in your hearts to think of the children, think of how school can often be a child's only safe haven. A child's only constant and a think that a child looks forward to daily. These children are now at home after having already been told who their new teacher for 2022 will be. They would have spent some time with their new class and teacher building up a rapport with them, getting to know them and where their classroom would be. How do you think some of those children are feeling now? Uncertain, scared, worried, unsupported and insecure. They don't know what they are going to go back to, let alone if they have finally gotten the teacher or friend they have wanted for ages. Imagine the teachers sitting at home not knowing how to inform the students that they may not be able to return to them, all because of a vaccination. Let's remove these mandates and not lose the wonderful educators we have.

Educator 99

My name is C and I am currently employed as a HPE teacher on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. As a 51-year-old, I have been part of this industry for almost 30 years. I have developed a highly effective and student focused approach, which has provided countless opportunities to assist disengaged, or at risk students to find purpose and direction. I have taught across a range of curriculum areas including Fine and applied Arts, Design and Technology, Physical Education and Outdoor/Experiential/Adventure learning. Throughout this process, I have completed over 40 external qualifications from Outdoor Activity Instructor/proficiencies to student wellbeing and counselling courses. I have held positions including Head of Department, Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Deputy/Acting Principal, in addition to regular classroom teaching. The rapport that I establish means that I receive ongoing contact from a huge number of past students seeking either advice, a reassuring word or just to let me know about their life.

I recently received several emails from my employer regarding my vaccination status and it's potential impact on my career. While professional in tone, these missives were written using legal terminology that resulted in a level of impersonal detachment. I was required to select from a list of strictly worded choices that failed to cover all potential situations or responses to the request. I arranged a meeting with my principal to discuss my situation. While this was polite and professional and allowed an explanation of my circumstances, it had little, if any, impact. I have subsequently been informed that by the 7th of January, I must provide one of the selected responses or face disciplinary action "... up to and including termination of employment." Additionally, I have been contacted several times requesting information that infers, if not indicates, that my administration team has already decided I won't be returning to my role.

This situation has had an enormous impact on both my family and myself. To be informed that, due to a personal health decision, I would be unable to continue to positively impact student lives was crushing. The resultant loss of identity and purpose, compounded by a sense of helplessness, caused high levels of anxiety for both my family and myself. Without my income, the family faces potential homelessness and financial hardship. The devastating consequences of this situation caused us to descend into a state of despair, resulting in the inability to think clearly or function effectively.

Of equal import to me is the potential disruption to students and their families. It comes as no surprise that the past two years have been the incredibly difficult for these groups. My grave concern is that the current situation drives this into the realm of crisis. Students face losing their teacher along with all the collected knowledge associated with learning style, personality and rapport at a critical time. While this impacts all classes/students, the real pressure point surrounds senior students who face this only days from final assessment deadlines.

I would ask that you give considerable thought to alternative processes and take immediate steps to abolish these mandates. While I have stated the personal impact, please also consider the generational impact on the young people whose futures, along with the nations, hinge on the quality of their educational experience that is founded on the support and highly skilled input of their classroom teacher.

Educator 100

My name is R and I am a secondary Agriculture, Science, Business, Digital technologies, English and junior Italian Teacher. I am a full time teacher and 51 years of age, I first started teaching in TAFE QLD partnering with Schools in 2005 then moved into Schools in 2009, I am a Teacher, a lifelong learner and I am qualified to teach the above areas as well as having qualifications in Sport & recreation, Management and additional qualifications in IT.

My Employers response to the mandate has been minimal, it has been very hard to find out any information by my employer, none of the concerns that I expressed, have been able to be addressed and I am simply left with the information that if I want to keep my job I need to be vaccinated. I have requested more information in writing although I am not being provided with any additional information and feel I gain more information by watching the news which makes me feel the situation is unclear and this makes me uncertain.

I am a single Mother with a son suffering with Proximal Femoral focal deficiency where he is unable to walk or stand unassisted and mobilises with prosthetics. As I am the only income earner, being faced with loss of my income is most alarming and emotionally difficult. I have clearly been told that if I do not take the injection I will not have a job for 2022.

My mental health has always been strong although, being faced with the mandates and not having a job, has me concerned about feeding my family. I have started having disturbed, minimal sleep combined with nightmares.

At my school I have had a strong connection with community and been the driving force in instigating transferrable skills into industry, this is due to my years of experience in TAFE and Senior pathways. I know my students rely on my experience and skills and I know they are going to feel let down, like I have abandoned them with the current mandate and not being allowed on site for 2022.

I love my students, my family and I would like to be able to look after my family, function in society by being able to pay my bills and put food on the table as well as continue to educate, support and guide my students into industry or further study.

I guess I am asking for a small miracle where I don't have to put my health at risk by taking the mandated vaccine and continue to help, guide and educate my current cohort of youth.

Educator 101

In 1998 I became one of the first behaviour management support aides in our region. I had worked with teenagers at risk for a few years and had a natural ability to build rapport with young people. This was recognised by a local high school on the Sunshine Coast and I was offered a part time position working as a behaviour management teacher aide on staff. Fast forward 24 years and I am now a fully qualified teacher at that same school and have worked with students with disabilities and high needs behaviour students for the past 10 years. My position is currently as a case manager for students on the primary campus of our college.

My gift is the ability to connect with students and families of all backgrounds and instill in them value and purpose. This is also the reward I take from the long days spent supporting the mental health needs of not only the students but the classroom teachers as well. Walking away from this has been the hardest thing I've done in my career. The constant focus on vaccines and the mandates has made it nearly impossible to get through the day untouched by the cloud of intimidation that is pervading the education system today and it has changed us at our core. After 24 years, the staff I work with have become family so when I see them complying to this mandate under duress, it breaks my heart. My principal has not supported my decision but has in fact reminded me that I will not "be safe from disciplinary action" should I try to resist the directive. These amazing people who I call family are now judging my choice and have turned away leaving me with little support. They fear for themselves and the threat of having no income has been a stronger threat than contracting the virus itself. This division has left its mark on us all, including the students.

I know I leave so many students without an advocate, without the safety net I provided for them and their family. The parents who I have developed a relationship of trust and support over the past few years will now be left wondering who will advocate for their child? Now I wonder, who will advocate for me?? I will be without an income in a society that puts vaccinated people above others. It is my mental health that is at risk – my inability to eat properly, to find strength to care for my elderly mother, the anxiety of being harassed into answering personal questions about my medical status... I face losing my job but the cost is greater than just my pay check.

I have spent my working life advocating for equal opportunity, and providing an inclusive environment regardless of disability, trauma, or family background. I also believed Education Qld stood for this. Now I am a victim of a system that has betrayed me by excluding me on the basis of a life choice that is MINE to make and I should not be punished or harassed for doing so. These mandates are unjust and unsupported by Federal law, so it is under your authority alone that these directives can be withdrawn and you can be responsible for uniting us once again. Remove the division and show courage to UNIFY.

Educator 102

My name is S, I have been working as a full-time educator in Queensland for the past three years, coming to the Australia from the United States. I taught in the US for over a decade in physical education and special education. Based on requirements in the US, I am uniquely qualified with a B.S. in PE; and an M.A. in special education. There is a drastic shortage of special education teachers in Queensland and, usually, unqualified and inexperienced educators are being placed in special education positions. I am now facing no longer being able to work for Education Queensland as a qualified special educator because of personal health choices I have made.

I have been extremely fortunate to work in a building where my principal does not believe that my personal choices are any of her business. However, Education Queensland, as a whole has been contacting me regularly. Like all employees, I have received frequent emails and texts compelling me to complete a survey that is not due until the 7th of January. The "reminders" are sent out regularly, and inundate my text messages and emails every 3-4 days - both a text and an email. The deadline is weeks away, but I keep getting these messages, essentially, harassing me to complete this survey that is not due for weeks.

The stress of the constant "reminders" from Education Queensland and the looming job loss have taken their toll. I have had difficulty falling asleep; found myself awake in the middle of the night with my mind racing considering what else I will do to replace a 6-figure income. I wake up and spend most days or portions of days feeling nauseous and unable to eat normally. My ability to self-regulate and come back to a state of calmness in my body has been wiped out. I have sought professional support to combat the overload on my fight/flight response.

I'm extremely concerned for the year ahead, not just for my family, but the families that I support, as a special education teacher. The comments I get from parents are along the lines of "finally, someone who knows what they are doing," messages of thanks saying that no one else has ever understood their child, in all their years of schooling (middle of primary school). They have been through a chain of ill-prepared special educators whose hearts are in the right place, but their knowledge and skill set are lacking. It is gut wrenching to think that I am leaving these kids and parents behind.

Given the notion of herd immunity, and the way we have understood vaccinations to work for the past 50 years, all of this is incomprehensible. The vaccinated are not, and have never been in danger from the unvaccinated. Never have I been asked about a flu shot or felt pressured to take one. The people who want the flu vaccine get one to provide them additional immune support. That's the entire idea of how vaccines work - a large number get vaccinated and the rest benefit from "herd immunity." In Queensland, we have had hundreds of thousands more deaths (prior to 2020) from influenza, as opposed to the mortality statistics from COVID-19.

The lack of choice, and coercion from my employer has to stop. Stop the mandates. Allow teachers and school employees who love their jobs to teach and work with children. The foundation of any society is the school system. Without a strong educational system, the future of our country will be in tatters. The choices and decisions we make now impact the state of the world to come.

Educator 103

Hi, I'm S. I'm a 44 year old mother and full time primary school teacher on the Gold Coast. I've loved my job and have poured my heart and soul into serving the families and community at this school for almost 10 years. Having previously worked in early childhood sector all over the Gold Coast for 16 years. There is no greater joy than supporting students development and learning. This joy is closely followed by supporting families and staff members in their respective skill development. I support many families in crisis and many disengaged at risk children. My deepest passion is to help these children believe in themselves and reengage in their education. Supporting individuals, small groups, whole classes, families and community groups to be empowered to improve their lives improves the future of our community. Education changes lives and it has been my passion from the time I was a teenager.

Unfortunately, I am being forced to choose between my health and my passion. I have a complex medical history and very early in this pandemic had been advised if I choose to vaccinate that I should wait for the Covax19 to become available, hopefully due sometime in 2022. So you can imagine my complete dismay at receiving emailed mandates with less than 9 working days before the end of the school year. I instantly called my doctors. I needed an appointment to review the previous advice and receive new advice now that we had so suddenly changed from low risk to high risk. I cannot get in to see my doctor until early February. This is of great concern as I cannot even receive the medical advice I need prior to this mandated deadline. I know many teachers and school staff and volunteers who are in similar positions or many who have not been able to wait for their appointments. The stories of coerced decisions and people receiving their vaccination while crying. How is this informed consent. The pressure of this decision. The timing of the notification and deadlines are questionable. The financial and mental health impacts are immense. This panic has disrupted what should have been a celebratory end of year for my year 1 class. These poor children have had their entire school life dominated by COVID-19. I have struggled to eat and sleep since reading the mandate email. I have been ignored by administration and receive constant and invasive reminders of the impending deadline continuing into the Christmas holidays. Our crisis call centre was down due to the high demand. This is the treatment we have received after loyal and devoted service. The decision I am forced to make is all I can think about. If I become ill from the vaccine as I was originally advised, I cannot work and who will care for my son and ageing mother. It has taken years to rebuild my health and maintain my remission. How can I possibly risk that? But how can I give up my job? How will I provide for my family? To walk away from my passion, all the study (2 bachelor degrees and multiple professional development course) all that hard work along with the pure delight of supporting students development.

Then there's the fear for the future. How can 26 years of experience be replaced? How many brilliant and experienced, passionate educators will Queensland loose? Who will educate our children? They are our future. The risk and damage of unqualified and under prepared staff will have an impact on all of Queensland long after this pandemic is gone. When our Prime Minister says, "We don't mandate vaccination." and medical professionals are suggesting many reliable risk management strategies, I can not understand why these provisionally approved vaccinations are mandated in education settings or any work place. For me the personal risk:reward ratio doesn't balance. As for society the long term risks these mandates pose seem to far outweigh the theoretical rewards. We already have an education crisis and yet they are prepared to fire thousands of teachers and education staff over a medical decision. We have worked through every lock down teaching online and face to face and have always been told children are low risk. We have managed our personal health and served our community consistently. We were yesterday's hero's and now anyone who can't or wants to wait for safety data or alternate options to become available is ridiculed and rejected. We will be stood down without access to our sick leave or other leave entitlements due to time restrictions being that we must apply 6 months in advance while these mandates can be applied within a few days or week without consultation or concerns for individuals circumstances.

These mandates impact all front line community workers, the police, medic's, fire services, mining and education. These are the people who keep our country and communities running. We need your help to bring commonsense back into the running of our states and country because these unfair mandates will have longstanding impacts in the health and financial capacity for our long and short term future. Please support body autonomy and personal choice of medical treatments. Please help remove these mandates and with community consultation help implement balanced, safe and respectful risk assessment and risk management strategies instead.

Educator 104

My name is I. I am 62 years old and I have been volunteering at my children's school since they were young. I have worked in a paid role at the after school care for 17 years.

Our school is on the Sunshine Coast. Previous to working at the after school care I was a farmer. Working with children is a joy for me. I love building relationships with the children and their families, and having the privilege of watching them grow throughout their schooling years.

My boss called a meeting with the staff to inform us all of the new mandates. We all were shocked and cried. At my workplace, there are 6 out of 8 of us who choose not to take the experimental vaccine. I am devastated to be losing my job. When I told the children that I would not be coming back to school next year, they all cried and their parents were furious with these mandates. I have known these families for many years, and they are angry that I am being forced to not return.

I no longer have an income. I have not been sleeping well since the mandates have been announced. I am surrounded with friends and family who these mandates have also affected. My daughter is a teacher with three children, and she now no longer has a job.

As her mother, I am also stressing about her livelihood. How are we all going to financially survive? The mandates for people in educational settings to be vaccinated is ludicrous. When vaccinated people can still spread Covid, why are unvaccinated people being punished? It is discrimination. Whole school communities will suffer. There will be no staff to open our after school care service.

Educator 105

I have dedicated 11 years to teaching lower primary children at our much-loved Independent Christian School in Townsville. Our college caters for students from Pre-Prep to Grade 12 with most grades consisting of three streams per year level. For the last 5 years I have held the position of lead teacher of our Grade 1 cohort. In the last year I have also taken on the role of literacy coordinator where I was responsible for implementing literacy programs and providing staff with resources and support. My passion is teaching children to read and spell and witnessing their daily successes!

When I discussed my concerns and hesitancy regarding the vaccination mandates with my upline it was received with a great deal of compassion and understanding. However, I have been told that there is nothing they can do. I received an email to say that if I miss the cut off date for the first vaccination, I would not be able to return to work until I was fully vaccinated and if I intended to not be vaccinated then unfortunately my employment would be terminated. I am still waiting for the official notice of their decision regarding my employment status.

The vaccine mandates have put an incredible amount of pressure on myself and my family. I am a single mother, and I am concerned about my long-term health if I take the vaccines. The thought of losing my job is extremely difficult, I have a mortgage to pay, and I feel that my purpose has been taken away from me. I am left to choose between these vaccines that are shrouded by uncertainty, or the threat of losing my job.

I am trying my best to stay optimistic, however my mental health has certainly suffered due to the mandates. I have experienced anxiety, tightness in my chest and restless sleep, as I worry about what the future holds. My family are naturally concerned for me, as well as themselves. My father is unwell and resides in another state so that has also compounded my feelings of anxiety.

I have serious concerns for my students and our college community. This has impacted every teacher on some level, and I am afraid the overall morale of our college community will suffer. Our college was already struggling to find teachers for 2022 before the mandates were put in place. I am extremely concerned for the safety of our students and their mental health. Many parents will feel pressure to unnecessarily vaccinate their healthy children which will make way for more confusion and fear, not to mention parents are already navigating the challenging questions children have around lockdowns, masks, and messages from the media.

I am making a heartfelt plea that these mandates be removed. Please allow me and others to get back to our lives, our work, and our families without medical discrimination. I fear more damage is being done that could potentially take years to recover from if we do not put an end to these mandates now. Please grant us the freedom to be responsible for our own health and to weigh up our own decisions regarding the risks and benefits.

I would like to finish with this. I pray that the leaders of our beautiful nation would take stock of the last 2 years and recognise the greater impact this is having on our families and communities. Many people are suffering and it's not from Covid 19, the 'fear' of death is doing much more harm. I understand the virus is a real and genuine concern and we need to be careful, but at what cost, I feel we have lost sight of life, family, true freedom, and all that is worth living for in this world.

Educator 106

My name is K. I am a 36 year old Kiwi born in New Zealand who migrated to Australia in 2008. I am a single mother to my son K (16) and daughter T (11). I have worked full time since 2003 when I left high school in the Early childhood sector in New Zealand and Australia. Studying my qualifications while working full time and raising a family. I live in Brisbane and have worked in areas such as Bray Park and north as Woodford.

I started my career in New Zealand where I grew up. I was bilingual by the time I moved to Australia in 2008. Then I completed my Diploma in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Bachelor of ECE. I have not only taught children in Australia for the last 14 years, I have also supported families through traumatic times, support families through domestic violence, advocated for children who needed specialised help and diagnoses, built children's resilience and ability to emotionally connect with others as well as get children ready for the school system which their families alone are not able to do. In my career I ran services, mentored other educators in day to day running as well as through the governments rating and assessment system. I have supported others into the industry and through their studies in their cert 3, diploma or Bachelor of ECE.

When the mandate came in for ECE to have their first vaccine by 17th December, everyone in the service went quiet. We were given a post on Microsoft teams (the way our service communicates in house), with a nine news link to Anastasia demanding us to be jabbed if we wanted to keep working in our current jobs. One of our owners commented on the post asking us all to send our vaccine proof to the Centre Director before Friday 10th to make sure we could be rostered on the following roster. I commented on this post saying I would like to see what happens after the 17th if we weren't vaccinated. The owner acknowledged my post and wrote back that he was happy to discuss further if I wanted to with his phone number. This must have alerted others that I wasn't vaccinated, so other staff started approaching me. Three of us, Me, Early Childhood Teacher (ECT), the chef and a float staff collaborated on a letter that we signed and handed to our Centre Director who handed it onto the owners. One owner tried to call all three of us while we were all at work that day to discuss matters. We never got a reply to our letter which asked why we needed to be vaccinated when the reason Anastasia gave didn't make any sense, and if we were to get a reaction from the medical trial, would they financially support us if we couldn't return to work as they were making us get it to keep hours. The silence continued for another few weeks until the Centre Director came around asking us one by one if we would be able to work past the 17th December as she needed to roster. I said I was happy to work, but wouldn't have my first shot by then. I then later that day received shifts leading right up until 24th December. Again silence. Our 2IC who was very pro the vaccine stopped talking to me and became very short and nasty if she had to speak to me. On Thursday 16th December I started work with a busy morning of gossip saying we may not be able to work on Friday 17th as I thought was assumed as the mandate started at 5am 17th. The Centre Director came around at lunchtime nearly in tears saying she might not be able to let me work on Friday 17th as the mandate starts at 5am. The educational leader later spoke to me on my lunch break and said I would be able to work Friday 17th and they would "play dumb" if anyone checked as they couldn't staff the service without the 4 of us no vaccinated being on the roster. We all finished our shift on Friday with not even a thank you. I left my room with \$1000 worth of my own money in resources left in the room for the children.

No one has told me I will "lose my job", I am just on leave without pay. As previously said, I wasn't spoken to much. This has massively impacted my family as I am currently going through citizenship in Australia. I need a clean bill of health to get citizenship for me and my children which is one reason why I can't afford to participate in a clinical trial. I also am a single mother with no security if I lose my job, so I need to find new employment to keep a roof over our heads and food in my children's tummies.

This mandate has caused many sleepless nights. I actually booked in to get the first jab on 10th December and that night I didn't sleep and went to work crying at nothing. I was a mess, I stopped eating. The thought of going into that hospital made me physically sick. I cancelled the appointment and felt a lot better, but still stressed about what this meant for my future and my children. My

parents back in New Zealand couldn't understand my point of view. They stopped talking to me as I wouldn't take the vaccine.

I told the children in my class that I wouldn't see the year out with them. They all cried. They couldn't understand at 4 and 5 years old why their teacher they had had all year couldn't stay and play anymore.

I want people to have a choice. The mass hysteria has to stop! The children are the ones suffering here! Their teachers have disappeared, their parents are losing their jobs, some children have lost their parents to adverse reactions. Why can't we choose to take an experimental drug? In childcare we aren't forced to take the flu shot every year, that's not a trial vaccine. We're not forced to take the whooping cough needle, and unlike Covid, whooping cough is fatal in children. This country has really lost its way, and with an education sector that is already failing our children and struggling to keep passionate teachers who definitely don't work for the money, this vaccine has destroyed the sector. It's not noticeable right now as most are on holidays, but once the school year starts and children return to early childhood, outside school hours care and school, it will really show the damage that has been done by forcing an experimental drug onto people who for whatever reason are willing to walk away from their passion.

Educator 107

I'm writing to share my experience and the impact the recent Covid-19 vaccination mandates have had on myself and my family.

K, female, specialist Learning Support Teacher's Aide. I'm in my early 40's and have been working as a T/A for 8 years. Prior to this, I worked as a manager in a vocational training organisation, assisting people with intellectual disabilities gain employment in the open workforce. I'm passionate about helping individuals reach their potential through data-informed, individualised support. I thrive on identifying their strengths and designing strategies to build confidence and capabilities to increase their skills and independence. I also have a special interest in proactively seeking to prevent challenging behaviours/behaviours of concern. I've undertaken professional development equipping me to train other staff effective methods and strategies to reduce challenging and disruptive behaviours.

My family were planning to relocate to the Sunshine Coast and I had been offered a full-time term-time position as a Teacher Assistant. I was excited about the new opportunity sharing my skills with a new set of colleagues and students. However, due to the mandate introduced by the Qld Government, I had to turn down the contract I was issued as I will not be permitted onto the school site to begin my new job offer. I am still waiting on a response from my potential employer since notifying them of my inability to commence on 24 Jan 2022 as anticipated.

The initial excitement I felt regarding the position has disappeared. I am now left without a job to support myself and my family. In addition, my family are stranded. We have to leave our previous housing, but are unable to move to our home on the Sunshine Coast, unless we spend almost \$9000 on hotel quarantine for the family. This equates to about the equivalent of a terms wages! The inability to start the job I had been offered has created significant financial pressure on our family. My children have no sense of certainty for the coming year or their ability to start their new school and make new friends. This has placed unnecessary stress on them as well as added pressure on us as parents as we contemplate how to best meet our children's needs. I personally have had previously well managed PTSD retriggered and required appointments with a psychologist (after several years not requiring this support). Availability of the psychologist have been insufficient to schedule regular appointments which has resulted in minimal assistance.

I'm concerned that students will be missing out on experienced specialist support to help support them with their learning needs and enable them to reach their potential. Students should be taught to be discerning thinkers, who can express their choice and freewill with matters relating to their health, wellbeing and bodily integrity. Education staff set an example and model these important qualities to young people. The current mandates however, instead are demonstrating to students that bullies are insisting staff undergo a medical procedure against their will in order to maintain their employment. This undermines what we attempt to teach children about respecting other people, their bodies and their choices.

It is my deep desire to see the current discriminatory mandates withdrawn to enable the highly qualified staff and volunteers who have been restricted from accessing school premises to return to use their skills and qualifications to best serve the students they are passionate about educating. Students deserve the best staff to educate them, regardless of if they opt to have a medical procedure or not. Blanket mandates do not take into account individual circumstances and reasons people may elect to remain vaccine free. This should not prevent them from being able to earn a living and support their families by doing jobs they love! I want to have the right to do the job I believe I'm gifted at, to earn an income, to pay my taxes and use my wages to support my family and the wider economy. These are the rights my Grandpa and his battalion fought for, along with many other Australian veterans. This is a way we honour and respect them.

Educator 108

My name is J and I have been working in the primary school sector for 21 years since completing a Bachelor of Education. In this time, I have been working in Brisbane areas. I stepped out of the classroom and into Special Education about 9 years ago when my HOSSES and Principal at the time recognised how I was able to cater for every student and their needs holistically in my classroom. I had been working in Yr 1 and 2 for the majority of my career and differentiated across reading, writing, handwriting and maths in small groups or individually.

I feel that I have a couple of gifts when it comes to teaching. My first gift has been the ability to get into each student's head and understand their explicit needs and abilities in order to create their own individual learning journey. I also am gifted with patience and the ability to intuitively know what makes students tick. I have helped kids catch up to peers when they were a year or more behind. I found my passion working in SEP and have thrived ever since my transition to this role. I think outside the box and am able to truly understand these kids and their needs. I particularly have loved working with the most challenging students helping them to understand their needs and identify and develop strategies to cope and thrive themselves. I am particularly skilled at working with teachers to help them see outside the box and shift their mindsets and classroom management to cater for all students in their care.

I am concerned about the response from Education Queensland. I have not received information or answers from the Department to my questions despite repeatedly requesting this. I have, however, spoken with my principal who has tried to be understanding around my concerns and questions and provided some assistance and suggestions.

These mandates have caused high anxiety in both myself and my family with the intense pressure of being required to take these vaccinations within a shortened timeframe to be able to keep my job. We were not given sufficient time to properly research and find information regarding its safety and efficacy. As a family, we had decided to look into the long-term data and information before making a decision, particularly seeing as though Education and schools have been a "low-risk" environment since January 2020. My anxiety around this began when I was unable to wear a mask and had been given exemption. My upline repeatedly requested meetings to discuss this and that I "wear a yellow star to show everyone that I cannot wear a mask". This prior experience had caused me to feel overwhelmed and panicked each time I was asked to attend another "meeting" or when I was approached by an admin person. I have had high blood pressure for some time, and have not felt supported by my administration team. When I found out about the mandate via that DG email recently it caused an extreme health incident. The Dr took my reading as 230 over 125. My family have been extremely concerned about my health as a result and the pressure to comply with taking this vaccination in order to keep my job. My children worry we will lose our home as we are seeing more frequently over this last year.

I am concerned about how the loss of so many skilled and experienced teachers will impact students and school communities. Schools already struggle to find relief staff to cover classes when a teacher is away. It will likely result in larger class sizes and less time for students to receive some individual time to focus on learning and specific needs. The loss of familiar key staff in student's lives will have a massive impact. I have worked hard to get to know students with high needs across years levels to support in a variety of in school contexts as well as to specifically support students on my case load in 2022. I have insights into some SEP students and understand how they need to be best supported moving forward. For example, who needs assistance in self-regulation or how to implement a specific strategy as a coping mechanism for being overwhelmed. I have spent time working on identifying triggers or early warning signs for an imminent meltdown with some students. It takes time for people to develop these skills and to have the patience to work through these things with heightened students in the correct or most productive way.

Educator 109

My name is G, male, I am 43 years old and I have been a Technologies Manual Arts Teacher for 5 years in Cairns. In my late 30's I took a leap of faith to become a teacher, as I was searching for something more fulfilling as a career. Despite earning less money than my former job as a Project Manager, I have never regretted that decision once. How many people could tell you they would do their job for free? Not many, but I would, and I will explain why. I get to spend my working days with students in a workshop (my happy place) building projects, teaching them my passion. But more importantly building relationships and helping them achieve their goals.

Each year I have continued to improve my practices and hone my abilities as a teacher. Within the 5 years of teaching at my school we went from not being represented at the (BLA) DATTA Awards to taking out a record 18 individual awards in 2021. This is due to the passion I bring for celebrating student success. I was asked at the awards "what makes you so competitive?" I have never considered myself to be competitive, what drive me is creating opportunities for all students to be recognised for their efforts and celebrating their success.

Last year I won the schools most prestigious 'Alan Roth' Award for outstanding service to the community. This is due to the strong community relationships I have established over the years to benefit learning outcomes and employment opportunities for my students.

When I first heard of the Government mandates being extended to the Education sector I will never forget the feeling of being sick to the stomach. My body was responding to this news and I knew I would not be able to ignore it and toe the line. I had an honest conversation with my line manager and rather than offer any words of support, he told me he needed to know my decision so he can begin looking for a replacement teacher. I was gutted so I sought guidance for my mental wellbeing from the school's Wellbeing Officer and she was unable to make a time to see me.

This government mandate has placed considerable stress on myself and my family. My wife is also a teacher and is one of the most respected and admired teachers at her school. She also feels strongly about maintaining bodily autonomy, so we are both looking at having our income and our passion taken away from us due to this mandate. Since the beginning of the mandate I have been struggling with sleepless nights and bouts of depression and anxiety. I have also developed physical ailments due to the constant stress and worry but cannot see my regular GP of 20 years as he will not treat "unvaccinated" patients. I have spent my whole working life searching for my passion and no sooner had I found it, it is being taken away. I have too much integrity to back down from my stance and want to teach my three beautiful children to stand up for what you believe in. Do not let coercion or bullying change your mind. They attend the same school I teach at, so they have seen first hand how much I love my job and what impact I have upon students, so they know this is a massive decision.

My biggest concern is that all I have worked towards changing the culture of the department and making my school the top of the region will fall away. Including all the community partnerships and cooperative relationships I have established to benefit the students. I have been told by many of my senior students the only reason they are returning to complete their education is because they will have me as their teacher. I feel I am letting them down when they arrive at school for their first day of 2022 and Mr X is not there.

I am a physically strong and healthy individual who wants to work in my chosen profession as a teacher. I do not believe the words mandate and compulsory are words that should exist when it comes to an individual's medical decisions and will only lead to segregation and division in society. I believe I know my body and no one has the right to tell me how to manage my health and this should not affect my career as a teacher. LET ME DO WHAT I DO BEST, LET ME TEACH!

Educator 110

I am writing in both protest and to disclose the negative effects that your government's arbitrary and socially divisive policies under the current 'Health Order' pursuant to COVID 19 pandemic is having on my personal and family life.

I am a teacher who has worked tirelessly in the pursuit of developing others potentials for the last 26 yrs. I have expertise and experience in teaching students from what is now prep level to teaching adults in English and Accounting ESL at University entrance level, through the University systems.

The stress that your callous policy and the unfair and unreasonable time frames around your mandate has caused my family has been immense. My wife is hyper stressed and fixated over the dangers that the supposed vaccinations may have for both herself and me, and the effects that a reaction could have on our children's lives and this has premeditated in all aspects of our lives. Your narrow and arbitrary time frames along with a complete lack of care and diligence pursuant lack of organisation to ensure availability of appropriate drugs levels have intensified the stress around this unnecessary decision. I have medical conditions outside your explicitly targeted and very narrow range of medical exclusions. On consultation from my doctor, I was provided that I am a high risk to reaction to the vaccinations, however would not be provided medical support pursuant to your political governance on this matter. On attempting to receive the Astrazeneca vaccination as prescribed by my doctor as none were available at the Doctors, nor could they inform me of when they would receive the drug to administer, I was instructed by my GP to attend the public vaccination center where all I was provided was the choice of Pfizer. It appears my medical history was irrelevant, and that I do not even hold the right to a choice of drug, even where medical grounds exist- This does sound very old style USSR or modern day China!- line up and we will give you what we want to give you! I am now in real fear of the second jab, where most reactions occur. This has caused me insomnia, elevated blood pressure, constant feeling of dread and feelings of loss of control over my future, and a real fear for my children.

In addition to the above anxiety caused by your worthless mandate, I am very aware of my need to be employed in order to provide security for my family as we hold firsthand experience of what it means and feels like to be homeless due to the housing crisis in our town. Earlier this year pursuant to our crisis around being homeless, I suffered a minor stroke! Hence your excessive and highly coercive methods of no jab = no job; no job = no house / food for family, rings hard and unfriendly in my ears! Your government has placed me and my family in a corner! The stress in sundry is both intentional on your part and immense.

Additionally, I persistently receive passive aggressive emails from my employer at both middle and upper levels of management regarding my obligations to complete 'the survey'. The fact that you care not for my personal health and safety- which is a legal obligation that you have, and that the only purpose of this survey is to make management in staffing easier, is also very clear not just me, but many- vaccinated and unvaccinated alike! There is no concern for its real targeted audience- the unvaccinated. At all stages your government has intentionally dehumanised and marginalised, and intentionally coerced to gain compliance.

Whilst, "I do not trust to hope", I ask that you read the above with open eyes and ears, and provide logic, sense and compassion in your governance around this nonsensical mandatory intervention. The easiest path is not always the right one, short term gain is only that! I ask that you and the government reconsider the meaningless mandatory vaccinations of teachers, and that you save thousands of faithful workers from the unnecessary and callous hurt you will inflict- these are not numbers but real people!

Educator 111

My name is E and I am 39 years old. I have been a teacher on the Gold Coast for 18 years. I have a Bachelor Of Education degree in Primary Education and have recently completed a Graduate Certificate in Religious Education, forming the first part of my Masters in Leadership and Religious Education.

I was drawn to be a teacher from a young age. I adore the students entrusted to me every year and delight in them making progress and achieving their goals. The children in my care feel safe, loved and respected, which is sadly more than some of them can vouch for in their homes. We celebrate every little success and become comfortable in failure, knowing that when we make a mistake, we are a step closer to "getting it".

The children in my classes look forward to coming to school everyday to be a part of the classroom environment I have carefully constructed. Beyond the curriculum, they develop social skills and friendships, resilience, confidence and a "give it a go" attitude.

I am a person in my school workplace who instigates school spirit, organises staff and community events, and implements valuable sustainability education, recycling and composting programs. All in my own time... because I am passionate about making a difference and creating the community environment I want to be a part of!

In regards to the recent mandates imposed upon teachers and education settings in Qld, I have felt unsupported by my employers. They feel it is out of their hands in regards to decision making. They have said they don't agree with the mandates but can't see how to help. I have applied for long service leave and my principal has supported my application. But even he is not sure whether it will be approved, when normally it is at his discretion.

These mandates are also affecting my family. I am forced in a corner to choose between my job or a job. Losing the security that pays my mortgage and puts food on the table for my family is a very difficult decision to make. I do not wish to take the injections and now am faced with losing my job, my career, my passion! People say we aren't being forced and it is still a choice. But a choice of the injection and food on the table for my family, or sticking to my beliefs and instincts and rejecting injections, losing my career... what kind of a choice is that?? It's not a choice, it's coercion! If it wasn't coercion, I would be allowed to freely take long service leave that I have worked hard to accrue. I would be allowed to take unpaid leave for a period of time to weigh up my options.

These mandates are affecting my mental health and that of my family. Every day I wake up with anxiety, feeling sick in my stomach. I practise mindfulness, meditation and breathing exercises to attempt to regain control. My husband and I fret about our finances and try to think of alternate ways to provide for our family.

Our family is very health conscious. We make our own deodorant, self-care and cleaning products. We grow some of our own food, cook nutritious meals avoiding processed foods and additives. We promote good health by incorporating a healthy diet with exercise, fresh air and sunshine.

I have two daughters aged 8 and 10. My younger daughter has never had panadol or other medications in her life and my older daughter only after breaking her finger last year and needing 2 surgeries to repair it. We are a healthy family and very conscious of every single thing that goes into our bodies. And now we are faced with undertaking a medical procedure against our will due to extreme coercion. This is not fair.

I am sad for the students I won't get to teach now. Sad I won't get to enrich their lives and connect with them and empower them to be the best version of themselves! I am wondering if anyone will run our school sustainability and recycling programs? Or if they will fall to the wayside without anyone passionate enough to run them... I am wondering whether there will be enough teachers volunteering for out of school hours events like disco supervision, mothers and Father's Day breakfasts and Christmas concerts - all things I gladly volunteered for, every single time. And not just me, the other teachers like me too. My school is faced with losing 5-10 AMAZING teachers. The ones with passion and values and dignity and critical thinking skills. These mandates are stealing the cream of the crop. Sadly the disinterested, mediocre teachers aren't facing losing their jobs.

What I would like to see happen is teachers to be allowed to remain in their profession without being coerced into medical procedures. There are other ways to maintain health and safety without having to have a Covid vaccination. This current variant Omicron is not prevented from being transmitted by vaccinated people, and they are still getting sick. I know this first hand from people I know, both vaccinated and unvaccinated who have contracted Covid recently. All had similar symptoms and durations of illness.

The unvaccinated are really not presenting much more risk than the vaccinated people. Schools have been considered low risk environments from the start of this pandemic. Remember when most industries were forced to lockdown early to mid 2020? Everyone except schools and health and supermarkets. Now, with the mildest variant yet, now we are considered high risk? Children will be allowed to get vaccinated soon, if their family wishes. That should be enough. Let the passionate unvaccinated teachers work and continue to inspire our children, our leaders of tomorrow!

Educator 112

My name is X I am a X-year-old female. I have taught for a total of 19 years including primary school, specialist music teaching and kindergarten teacher. My current role has been a kindergarten teacher for the past 10 years. I have been full time for most of my career but currently work part time since having my children. I have a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and Diploma of Children's Services (Early childhood education and care). I have a special interest in supporting children with special needs. I teach at a community kindergarten that is funded to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children and their families. I love learning from the community about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture and language and incorporating it into the curriculum. I have a talent in performing arts and music so my program contains lots of musical experiences which is loved by the children.

My employer does not agree with the mandates. They do not want to lose me. They feel helpless about what they can do. They have made the best decision they can in a bad situation. I am on leave without pay and they are hoping to have me back when the mandates are lifted.

The mandates are absolutely devastating to our family. Not only does it affect me but my husband too, as he is a special needs teacher aide. This means no income for our family in 2022 as we have both made a decision not to have the covid vaccine. I have made an informed choice along with my GP but there is nothing my GP can do as far as exemptions go. I can see how the government has interfered with my doctor patient relationship. I feel stressed, depressed, scared and worried about what next year will bring. I have started looking for work alternatives. I fear I won't be able to find work, especially if unemployment increases due to mandates and I am limited to searching for jobs without mandates. I have already paused my mortgage payments and cancelled my private health insurance for some financial relief. I am a dedicated teacher and love my job. I have an overwhelming feeling that I just want to return to my regular employment. I feel other forms of work won't give me the sense of purpose and job satisfaction that I find in my current teaching role. This Christmas has felt very different I have tried my best to enjoy my family and children but there is an underlying feeling of anxiousness and inability to enjoy my daily life.

As I mentioned above losing my right to go back to work next year has impacted my mental health dramatically. I have visited my GP and expressed my concerns and emotions to them. I worry about the flow on effect it may have on my children.

I have seven kindergarten children in my class returning next year. Two of these seven are special needs children. They are expecting me to be their teacher in 2022. I have built a close relationship with these children and their families and I am concerned about the impact it will have on them when they start back with a different teacher. For example, one of my special needs boys has built a lot of trust with me and I am the person that can calm him down and support him. It will have a big impact on this child when I am not there. He will not trust other adults and will impact his emotional wellbeing. I also have a deep understanding of where these children are at developmentally, a different teacher will interfere with their continuity of learning. New children enrolled into the kindy and their families are expecting me to be their teacher, this will impact their transition to kindergarten.

As a long-term member of staff, I am familiar with the community and I am continually learning about culture and language. It the core of what we do at our kindergarten. It has taken time for me to build trust within the community and gain cultural knowledge from elders. It is not something you can learn from books or study; this will get lost when you lose me as a teacher.

The community I teach in has low numbers of children enrolled in kindergarten. There is ongoing work happening to research why this is the case and to increase enrolments. Next year with my absence only one class will be opening instead of two. This means that only 22 children can attend the kindergarten instead of 44. At this stage I am not being replaced. This is going to have an impact on the number of children having the opportunity to enrol into kindergarten. Especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children. When I can hopefully return, we will then divide the class into two groups causing more disruption to the children.

I am asking for my right to work. I am fit and healthy and there is no reason why I can't return to teaching next year. I want my freedoms back.

As a parent I am concerned about sending my children to school and day care next year. I don't want my children to be a part of a system that discriminates - vaccinated versus unvaccinated, this is no different from black versus white etc. I have a big problem with only a certain type of person being allowed to teach my children. I don't want my children to belong to a system that I am locked out of because of my personal medical choices. Teachers teach their students about personal body protection and bullying yet the school system and early childhood system is guilty of bullying and coercing its staff into a medical procedure they may not want, violating their body autonomy.

Educator 113

My name is A. I am a 22-year-old sad and disheartened instrumental music teacher in Cape York. My career in education started as soon as I completed high school, undertaking a three-year long bachelor of music degree, followed by fast-tracked 18-month masters of secondary education degree in classroom music and instrumental music. I completed this degree six months ago and have been teaching ever since in a remote P-12 school across two campuses. When I began this journey, I knew there was a real lack of quality teachers due to the high turnover rate in these schools. I had first hand experience with this, having grown up in rural and remote communities I understood this lack more than many of my peers. By the time I had completed high school I knew that all I wanted to do was be an instrumental music teacher. I wanted to be somebody who was able to help mould and shape the minds of the next generation in a positive way. I wanted to be the teacher I wished I had had in school. Time after time I was provided teachers that were inadequate or who did not care about me. I was told to go sit in the corner and do my own thing. I was made to feel like I could not ask for help when I needed it. I was put down and told that I could not do things when all I needed was some guidance and support. The impact that these comments and actions had on me was immense. I overcame so many of these by taking on a bachelor degree and later a masters degree. Yet, when I was faced with practicums on my master's degree I was faced with the same comments, I was not up to scratch with a number of my supervisors but I was also made to feel like I was never going to succeed in this career pathway. I overcame these early supervisors and my final supervisor was amazing, he reminded me of why I love my job and why I wanted to come into this career.

I started as a full-time instrumental music teacher in Cape York, Far North Queensland, in July this year. In my short time there I have honestly struggled and hit road block after road block to get the program up and running. When I finally gained traction, I was so excited. I was seeing firsthand the growth and the enjoyment that my students were getting out of learning a musical instrument for the first time. I realized that I did in fact love my job again. Yes, there were hard days and there were days that I wanted to throw the towel in but there were so many amazing days when my students would pick me up and make me smile or laugh. The dedication I saw in these students to get in and get the job done kept me going.

When these mandates were announced I remember sitting at my computer having just finished testing one of my students, and my blood literally ran cold and I could not stop scratching. For me this is the start of a panic attack. Since then I have had a number of panic attacks about what I am going to do in 2022 for work. At 22 years of age I honestly did not think this was something I would have to worry about. I wish that all I had to worry about was not being late to school or remembering to pack something decent for lunch, but alas this is not all I have to think about.

In the lead up to holidays no mention was made in regards to this mandate coming out by my employer. They were simply more concerned with making sure that if we were required to move to remote learning we would be ready. A few weeks after this mandate came out, I did reach out to one of my principals asking if there were any options for me in regards to not getting vaccinated. His email was very short and sharp and basically stated that my email had been forwarded to HR as that was where all COVID vaccination queries needed to go. I felt extremely shunned by this reply. This was a man that I had come to respect and appreciate and to receive an email like that hurt.

With this new mandate coming in I do not see myself returning to my job until this mandate is thrown away. I am not someone who likes to feel coerced or likes to be pressured. I have enough problems with anxiety and depression and this mandate has certainly upped my anxiety level. I now have at least three panic attacks a week and spend many hours in the day stressing over what I will be doing in 2022 for an income. This has an extremely negative impact on my life and does not allow me to fully enjoy my well-earned school holidays or the time with my family. I have no plans to get vaccinated by anything currently available as I do not feel these are a safe option for me. I will get vaccinated if and when something safer and more reliable becomes available.

Educator 114

I am a 26 year old sovereign woman, and an active participant and contributor in our community, by way of my profession and personal qualities of enthusiasm, kindness and creativity.

I have acquired a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education, at the University of Queensland in 2017, thus at present, equipping me with four years of teaching experience. I have been employed in a Brisbane, University based Kindergarten for my four years of teaching consecutively, with my immediate community demonstrating a keen value in early childhood education. I am attached to a long hours day care centre, and even though I am solely employed in the kindergarten room, I have spent many additional hours with the children in the Nursery, Toddler, and Pre-Kindy rooms.

This is a gift of mine that I have begun to realise over the years, with co-workers highlighting the significant impacts of my simple morning greetings, being extended to the youngest of babies. Regardless of my qualification, I view all of the children in the entirety of the service, as children within my care, as they in time will grow and enter my Kindergarten classroom. This has moved mountains for the children as they transition into my room, as many of them have developed attachments with me, from Nursery age.

This specifically pertains to the anticipated 2022 cohort, who have developed bonds with me essentially from birth, and who now have positive connotations with their very first teacher, and experiences towards schooling in general. However, due to this mandatory vaccination mandate, the children who were supposed to enter my care in 2022, will likely have an unknown, unfamiliar educator, with the potential of a new face every day entering their environment. This is where my expertise and understanding of child development comes into play. Attachments, consistency, predictability and routine are crucial to the holistic development of a child, especially during the crucial formative years of birth to five years of age, which is the age where it is well known that crucial brain development and behavioral patterns are formed.

My employers have been extremely one sided with this mandate narrative, simply encouraging all staff to get vaccinated without proper consultation around the known side effects and risks of the mandatory vaccinations. I have immediate family members who have experienced these adverse reactions due to being coerced under duress to take the vaccine, as a result of a similar mandate. Due to my personal experiences on the matter, I have made the decision to forgo the vaccination, and as a result, my employer is conveying that my choice not to do so constitutes a misdemeanour and is considered misconduct therefore gives them grounds to terminate my employment contract.

As a result of this, I stare down the barrel of homelessness, as I am a young, financially independent woman, renting in "I" town. My landlords have expressed a desire to return to my current rental address (place of residence) in March 2022, I will be unable to provide new rental properties with long term employment records and payslips, to secure appropriate rental properties for myself going forward. Due to all of this, I have felt extremely coerced to receive the vaccination, as I am at risk of losing not only my beloved career, but my housing. I have attempted to assess the current job market to find an alternative career solution to my living arrangements, and realised that many employers are now hiring exclusively vaccinated staff, in order to limit the risks of staff losses, due to future vaccination mandates.

As a result of this, I have experienced extreme duress as I am not only losing the children that I have grown to love like my own, but potentially will need to now sell all of my beloved possessions, part with dependent pets, and attempt to secure any form of appropriate housing going forward. I have found myself struggling to sleep and have to fight daily, with negative thoughts of being overwhelmed with the reality of financial hardships going into 2022, and often consider simply giving up on my rights and morals to comply with mandates, labelled under the guise of a 'choice'. My immediate family has equally experienced this duress, and have since taken the vaccination under the same duress and coercion, and struggles of financial hardship. They themselves are under even more duress, as they wish to support me and my decisions, however are unable to simply financially provide for themselves during these uncertain times, and I am unable to rely on them for support.

Upon reflecting on my own physiological duress, I have begun to develop serious concerns of the long term psychological impacts of the next generation who are experiencing the impacts of these mandates first hand. It

is well known that children feel the energies of their carers, and if educators are inconsistent in presence, or emotionally unstable due to coercion and duress, this translates into the children in their care. I have had both children and parents cry to me, upon learning of my potential absence, due to this vaccination mandate. As many are aware, not only competent and passionate teachers are already lacking, but overall qualified educators in the early years sector of education are desperately needed. I have personally witnessed how short staffed the education sector as a whole is, prior to the mandates, and the negative physiological impacts of inconsistent attachments during children's formative years can have. Now with these mandates, I fear things for the children's mental wellbeing will worsen. These mandates are under the guise of ensuring the children's physical wellbeing, but I ask, who is considering their psychological wellbeing?

I ask that you respect the teachers and educators, the same way we teach the children to respect themselves and their bodies, that no, means no. We teach agency and autonomy, however in practice, the children are witnessing these fundamental human rights being stripped from their beloved teachers, right before their eyes. I ask that you respect your educators, as crucial carers for the next generation, who encourage critical thinking and problem solving in the next generation of Australian citizens, and value their right to refuse this vaccination mandate, without the threat of having their jobs removed or held hostage for compliance. I would like to see this same choice given to the children, as they are digesting a world where words such as 'choice' 'rights' 'agency' and 'autonomy' are being challenged and words such as 'mandatory' 'compulsory' and 'regulations' are the new norm.

I leave you with this final message, from the words of a kindergarten teacher. We teach the children that they have one body, and that they need to look after it. We ask for the same respect as competent individuals, to make these informed choices, regarding our own singular bodies for ourselves, without external threats of coercion towards our livelihoods.

Educator 115

I am writing to you with my concerns regarding mandating the Covid-19 vaccination for employees in the education sector.

I am a primary school teacher and a passionate child advocate. I am 34 years old and have been teaching in the Brisbane Metro South district for 12 years now. I hold a Bachelor of Education (Primary) which I obtained from QUT and during my time as a classroom teacher have taken on roles including key maths teacher, year level co-ordinator, mentor teacher and have supervised university students undertaking their practicum in my class. I have run professional development sessions for my colleagues outside school hours and modelled lessons in my classroom for fellow teachers to observe.

Before the end of the 2021 school year the Queensland Government mandated the Covid-19 vaccination for all teachers and employees in the education sector. The response from my employer was that this was non-negotiable and my concerns about this and the negative affect on my mental health were not valid.

This mandate has negatively affected my mental health. It has induced anxiety and depression. I have had a hard time sleeping due to these mandates. To have to weigh up and decide between a concern for my health if I accept being bullied and coerced into having a vaccination I do not believe is for my wellbeing or risk losing my job and not being able to financially support my three young children has caused uncalculated stress.

Not only am I suffering, but also my family. I have had to pull my son out of his private school as without my income we will no longer be able to pay school fees. We have chosen to home educate in 2022 to protect him from an educational system that is happy to coerce and bully teachers into a having a trial vaccination. These mandates also put undue pressure on my husband to take on over-time at work to support his family with his wife forced out of a job.

I have many concerns as a result of these mandates. I am concerned for the students. With a system that was already in need of teachers now losing thousands of amazing and dedicated educators and support staff it will ultimately be our students that suffer. They will, without a doubt, be stripped of support where needed due to a lack of teaching staff. They will find themselves in over-crowded classrooms and being dispersed among other classes due to not being able to find relief staff. My fellow colleagues will suffer. With extra work load, over-crowded classes and a lack of support for their students.

Educator 116

K. Female. I work full time in the IT Department at X School. I am 56 years old and have been working in the field for 6 years, before that I was a Teacher's Aide for 10 years. My gift as an educator has been to educate both staff and students on how IT works and how it is not as scary as it looks. The reason I do the job is because I want to help & support both staff and students in their journey at school, I certainly do not do it for the money!

The response from my employer has been underwhelming to say the least. As long as you make all the right noises that you will be there next year, they don't seem to care.

The fact that the mandate came down two weeks before school finished, when everyone was at their lowest point, was cruel. I knew that this was coming & it felt like I was waiting for the axe to fall, hoping to get through until the end of the year. I am not taking the jab and so I am looking at losing my job. This means that I will lose a job that I love and that I feel I was making a difference in.

The impact on my mental health has been huge, just waiting for this to happen. It hasn't affected my family as all my children have left home BUT, it has placed enormous strain on staff that work together as no one is sure who will be there next year. It has also made staff take sides & ostracise those that are against taking the jab. It has been horrible to watch!

My concern for the students is that there will be less staff to help them as a lot of the experienced staff are walking away. Public schools are in a bad way already with very low morale and this is just going to make it worse.

What I want to see happen is that people are allowed to do their jobs without being forced to have a medical procedure that they do not want. There is enough pressure at work without the added medical enforcement of vaccinations.

Educator 117

Hi. My name is S. I am a 58 year old female currently on unplanned leave from my employment as an early childhood educator in south east Qld. I hold a Bachelor in Speech Language Pathology and a Cert III in Children's Services. For the past 14 years I have been responsible for coordinating our school's community playgroup which welcomes over 100 families/ week across our four groups (covid limited to 80 attendees - adults and their little ones - each day). I'm also employed as relief staff in our Early Education Centre. I was previously employed by Education Queensland as a Speech Language Pathologist (16 years) working in primary schools, special education, early childhood and early intervention in various locations across central, northern and south east Queensland. Whilst raising my family and when part time work allowed, I spent many hours each week as a volunteer in my children's kindys and schools, as a volunteer coordinator in community playgroups and as a day care provider or babysitter for friends' children. I have been actively involved in children's ministry for 45 years. My lifelong passion remains to provide the highest quality care for and support of young children and their families as they learn and grow together, particularly through fostering the connection and community so vital to individual and societal well being.

In response to the public health mandate, my employer has:

- hastily formulated a new staff policy with grossly inadequate consultation,
- provided formulaic and impersonal responses to my specific questions and personal concerns,
- issued a misleading email to families declaring how little impact staff "departures" would have on the school community and how easily staff such as myself would be replaced,
- demonstrated scant regard for the dedication and expertise of most staff members impacted - those facing the loss of their position, income and career; those facing serious risk of adverse health outcomes and unable to secure exemptions, those morally opposed to the mandate but forced to comply, as well as those who have happily complied but will face significant challenges coping with resultant staff losses and unavoidable adverse effects on the school function and culture.
- arranged a 10 minute meeting with discussion strictly limited to my injection/exemption status and their offer of three options comply, take leave, or LEAVE
- informed me they will comply with any govt request including encouraging, enforcing or hosting a hub for child Vx.

The mandate has been as thoroughly divisive in every aspect of life as any deliberate program of enforced discrimination and control is undoubtedly designed to be. I am my immediate family's only non participant in this taxpayer funded experimental pharmaceutical trial. I have witnessed my husband and adult children's fear, anger, confusion, frustration and sadness as they have reluctantly complied and have then wrestled my grave concerns for their well being in the face of mounting incidences of adverse reactions, especially in my children's age group. Gatherings with extended family have been fractured. I am unable to visit my mother in law (of 35 years) who is in a palliative care hospice. I have spent months questioning my decision and attempting to access credible information beyond the censored and biased onslaught of public misinformation. As a conservative, law abiding citizen who is mindful of my social responsibilities across all aspects of my work and private life, I have adhered to every other govt regulation despite strong doubts as to their efficacy and a reasoned awareness of their likely detrimental impacts for example, mask wearing reducing the social/emotional/ communication development of the young children attending my work place, restricted numbers forcing us to turn away families already isolated from family/community and heavily dependant on our groups for support, connection and care.

After 38 years of diligent paid and voluntary work with an unblemished record, I can seemingly be discriminated against, discarded and treated as a nuisance or even a criminal due to a private medical and moral decision that poses no clear risk to anyone.

I am convinced that the cost/ benefit equation of all mandated measures will demonstrate irrecoverable costs (measured in lost lives, health years, livelihoods, productivity, community and of course FREEDOMS) for little IF ANY actual benefit.

What do I want?

I keep hoping to hear that a life raft of rationality has surfaced on the sea of fear mongering rhetoric. I keep hoping that those who claim to serve the people will take responsibility for (or be held accountable for) actions which, at best, are a gross dereliction of duty or, potentially, are an active and intentional dis service to the nation. I pray the mass hypnotic slumber will be broken and the resultant outcry could lead to a better future, far removed from emulating all the worst forms of governance that our country had previously abhorred and sacrificed to defeat.

How can I remain silent as unimaginable damage is targeted at those I have spent my life caring for and protecting our children, our responsibility, our future.

Educator 118

My name is J and I am a cleaner at a beautiful semi-rural primary school. I recently turned 70 years old and I have not retired because I absolutely love my job. I love the staff, the students and parents. I love the whole community that I work in and have been a part of for over 20 years.

My principal has been very supportive of my choice to stay vaccine free, however he has to follow directions from the Education Department. My family are also supportive of my decision as we believe in natural health therapies and have lived by this philosophy for many years. Several of my workmates are supportive however many have asked me why I don't simply get the vaccine and stay working. My response is that I do not want to risk my health, however I do not want to lose my job either. I have suffered many sleepless nights with anxiety about my future.

In my role as a cleaner, I usually work alone. There are no students or teachers in the classrooms when I clean them. I have had to wear a mask whilst doing strenuous physical activity and have found it difficult to breathe. My risk at work is very low as I am not mixing with other people. My job is important to me and I take great pride in my work and the appearance of my school. Whilst I say that I work alone, I also stay after I have finished my shift, to talk to the teachers and students because relationships and student wellbeing are very close to my heart. I always go the extra mile when cleaning, often being praised by the teachers that I do an excellent job. I take pride in this and know that the extra effort I take is valued. Unfortunately the mandates have not made me feel valued by the department that I have worked for, for decades. I feel disappointed that my school will be cleaned by a replacement cleaner and the care that I have taken over the 20 plus years will all be for nothing.

I do not want to take the covid vaccine because I believe that the natural health measures that I am already taking, with vitamin supplements and ongoing care under a naturopath are keeping me healthy. I have a natural immune system and do not believe that I work in a high risk area any more than I did this time last year. Nothing has changed, however the department has classified schools as high risk with no consultation. I would really love to keep my job if the mandates were lifted or if a risk assessment could prove that I am a low risk. I am happy to take a daily covid test to prove that I am not a risk to others.

I may be a cleaner, but I am a valued part of my school community and I cannot understand how the government mandates have made it so that I will be unable to work in 2022. My school has told me that they are supporting my decision, so all I need is for the department to allow me to work.

Educator 119

My name is D and I have been teaching for over 20 years in Primary Schools including supply teaching and permanent positions in the private and public sector from northwest to southeast Queensland. I have had experience teaching in a variety of roles such as Learning Support Teacher, Pre-school Teacher, Support Teacher and classroom teacher and within Special Education units.

At my most recent school, I have been heavily involved in our school's Student Engagement program (behaviour management) for many years. I have also had the great pleasure to have many prac students in my classroom, particularly final year students and have had Mentor Teacher training.

Although, physically, I can be replaced with the stroke of a pen, these years of experience within the school community cannot be bought or replaced. Together with life experiences and a love of learning and working with children, this is my gift as an educator.

During the final week of the school year, we meet with our students for the following year. Throughout the next few days, little people come running to greet us with big smiles, brimming with confidence, saying "You're going to be my teacher next year!" But these mandates, will wipe their smiles and confidence, when on January 24th, I am not there to greet them. The alarm and fear that many of our little people will feel on their first day of school is horrendous. All the work we have done to prepare them and ease their anxieties of first day jitters is being torn apart by this vaccination program.

I have not received any risk assessment as requested by my employer or any alternatives to vaccination. These mandates have turned my entire family's world upside down. My career, and sole income earner for my family, is being stripped away from me. The stress that this has placed on my entire family is immeasurable.

This can be resolved with sensible, researched solutions. The wearing of masks has been recommended and practiced as a solution since covid was introduced to us. We have been teaching in Queensland classrooms, all this time, with no Covid deaths in 11 years and under. Regular testing with reliable and proven tests is another option. Social distancing should continue.

I ask that you use research honestly and with integrity so that we may continue in our chosen careers and continue to grow and support our future generations.

Educator 120

I am a 55-year-old, senior experienced teacher currently working in an advisory capacity for the DDSW region in X. I have worked throughout our state in various locations in a teaching capacity and more recently focused on the teaching of English as a second language to migrant and refugee students. I have a Bachelor of Education and more recently a Masters in Education (TESOL) as well as many certificates acquired as part of my quest to keep up with the latest evidence-based research to support teachers and students in our schools.

The Department of Education has under the direction of the Chief Health Officer requested my vaccination status. This is my private medical information which I do not believe I should be required to provide in order to do my job. However, I have completed the survey as requested but must say it did not give me the option to explain my unique situation and the precedents set by the department in 2020 and 2021 that would allow me to continue to perform my duties. My upline was hopeful I could continue to provide my advisory services but the department's statement does not allow for flexibility nor indeed any possibility of discussion so that I would not have to proceed to the show cause stage and be suspended without pay.

I have been a dedicated employee of the department working above and beyond for the students in this state and have followed all procedures and guidelines. I have never put a foot wrong nor ever been placed on a diminished work performance or code of conduct breach. It was my intention to work as long as possible to support the teachers and students of this great state but this mandate will end my career abruptly and also have a huge impact on my ability to provide for my self and the charities I am supporting in my community (Protea Place, Mission Australia, Australian Conservation Foundation) and worldwide (World vision, Catholic Mission, UHNCR, Oxfam, RACS and Action Aid). This will also affect my superannuation and therefore the ability to support myself in the future.

The career and financial costs are just part of the impact this mandate to vaccinate has had on me. My partner of 6 years has removed himself from my life, I have lost long time friendships and my daughters are extremely worried about my decision as it impacts my ability to be financially independent. It has caused division in the family as I have family members who have distanced themselves and as a single woman this has severely impacted my mental health. I feel I am the victim of segregation in my community and my life and now my job!

This constant bombardment of emails from the department and negative language used to describe my choice not to vaccinate and then not to be able to talk/email anyone in authority in the department in order to clarify and negotiate my position has me reeling with disappointment, disbelief and distress. I am concerned for our community and the students in our region as I know the imminent teacher shortages will have an adverse impact on their education and their mental health. The loss of experienced teachers in schools and advisory officers will impact the entire education department and seriously impact the state vision of 'Every student succeeding'.

Could you please consider the impact this decision to mandate a vaccine will have and how it will affect the department's ability to provide an adequate education to our students? Consider also the impact to the individuals financial and mental wellbeing. The vaccine that is available does not prevent the spread of COVID 19 and therefore the unvaccinated are not at any point the greater spreaders of this virus than the vaccinated population and should not be segregated or punished with loss of employment. **Please reconsider this mandate and allow education professionals to do their job.**

Educator 121

My name is K, I am a female Primary School teacher working in the X Sector on the Sunshine Coast. I have worked at my school for seventeen years, and thirty years as an educator. I am 52 years old. I have travelled the world teaching and bring a gift of knowledge of the world outside of Australia, integrating best practice from all of the curriculum programs I have worked under to my classes. The greatest compliment I receive each year are the Christmas cards from my students and parents, saying how much they have loved working with me for the year.

I have to say I have been shocked, traumatized by the response of my school when I upheld my decision to choose not to be vaccinated. As others were farewelled for their years of service, with big send-offs from staff and students, I was unceremoniously booted out the backdoor. I wasn't acknowledged for my years of service, and had to pack my room in a panic for fear of being locked out and not allowed back. I was expected to meet my next year's class, even though this wasn't going to happen. Those children still expect to see me at the start of January. I was treated as though I had chosen to do something criminal, something so wrong that no-one would speak about the injustice, or even speak about their belief in choice, in case they were tarred with the same brush. And I can tell you that there were many who agreed strongly with choice, and others who had no choice but to comply, as financially, they couldn't choose otherwise. This was the most heartbreaking of all, to see your workmates forced to take an experimental drug against their will. My principal has denied me taking leave, and I will be dismissed. I feel betrayed, that after so many years of service, I am not even worth being placed on leave.

The mandate has had massive impact on my family, both financially and mentally. We have become divided over the matter, at a time of when I most need support. We have been isolated on purpose by your decision, to sway us into coercion. I have been prevented from seeing my family in others states without following rules and jumping through hoops that the vaccinated do not have to comply to, even though both can pass on Covid. I have no idea when I will be able to see them again, heartbreaking really. The distrust that has been sewn unnecessarily in the community is disturbing. Whilst my friends are aware of my decision and accept it, I have become socially isolated, as others are afraid to be anywhere near an unvaccinated person. Meet ups have to be carefully orchestrated so as to not offend anyone, whilst I feel like shouting that I have not done anything wrong.

I now have a deep understanding of the effects of discrimination, how undermining it is. How black, gay, transgender, Muslim, migrants, anyone who is different to the norm deals with this constantly and still remain a positive, contributing member of society is beyond my understanding. It undermines all that felt secure, not knowing who may respond aggressively towards you.

I normally am very generous at Christmas, in particular to charities who help the less fortunate. It was with great embarrassment and shame that I had to cut those charities short, stating that I was going to lose my job, and couldn't afford to support them. Not only has the mandate affected my family, but those that we usually support. Our Christmas was very sparse, as money needed to be saved for mortgages, food, power and fuel. To know that I may be reliant on handouts next year breaks my heart. How can someone's livelihood be threatened to comply?

My mental health has deteriorated. I find it hard to sleep, waking up with panic attacks about not being able to see my family, and how I am going to survive. Constantly having to defend my decision due to the very negative picture the media is painting of merely choosing a medical alternative takes its toll. Being socially isolated, when everyone needs comfort at this time is criminal. I worry about every dollar I spend, and how long I have until things are desperate. I have seen my GP regarding my mental health. I cannot comprehend how I was a frontline essential worker, expected to turn up to a job for two years when there was the same threat of catching covid, yet now I am the threat. I feel used.

Educator 122

My name is A. I am a 51 year old female working as a Teacher's Aide at a school in regional Queensland. I started there as a volunteer in my youngest child's class to assist with those who struggled with reading and was fortunate to gain a position on a part time basis after filling in as a casual replacement when other staff were on longer breaks. I have a Certificate III in Children's Services and I am looking at further education to gain a higher qualification to potentially expand my role.

At the beginning of 2022 I shall be commencing my 7th year as a Teacher's Aide. This is not just a job to me, I have worked in many fields but this is a field in which I believe I have excelled. I have managed over the years of working with primary school students to build a fantastic rapport with many of the tricky kids. On many occasions I have managed to divert a difficult situation into one where all parties can move on from potential anger to a calm outcome. Coming from a large family and watching my mum work her magic is where I have gained this skill and it is a skill that I have witnessed the kids that I teach use as well.

During the final weeks of the 2021 school year, I found it very hard to be positive when the vaccination mandate was announced, and my mental health has suffered since. I did not have a conversation with my principal regarding the mandate as I find him quite unapproachable. I understand that he is only enforcing the rule, but he has made his point of view quite clear in emails sent out to the staff.

I have done everything I can to ensure that my own immune system is up to scratch to combat the virus should I encounter it. I am fit, healthy and taking the required supplements to boost my defenses as suggested by my medical practitioner.

In my immediate family, being my partner and 2 adult children, we have had many discussions regarding the injection but unfortunately, my only option was to have it. I have been given not a choice, I have been given an ultimatum - No jab, no job. My partner and I have always done things together, a one in all in approach. He has not yet been mandated but chose to support me by also having it. I am saddened that I have been coerced into this and the knock-on effect it has had with my family members. I feel less safe than if I had not had it at all. I am also saddened that my daughter, who is 19 years old, had the vaccination (not yet mandated in her industry) also in support of me. I wonder about her future, the unknown effects it will have on her especially with not longitudinal or intergenerational data to consult.

I have concerns also for the students that will feel the impact of these mandates particularly if a large proportion of staff are stood down due to holding the line and not being coerced. I worry about the mental health of teachers and teacher's aides that felt that there was no other option but to surrender their bodily autonomy. We all need to pay bills, we all need to put food on the table, but this is not the only reason we have conceded to this. Many have done it so they can continue to educate as best they can even if they are feeling unsupported by those around them. This is how I feel. Unsupported. How can I give my best every day to the little people that need it when I feel so let down?

I can't change what already is, but I can hope that changes are made for the betterment of future outcomes. I want to see broad, open and transparent discussions regarding these vaccinations, and I want to see fair treatment of all staff in education, something that is currently not there. It seems to be US vs THEM not only in life outside of school but also inside the school grounds and this needs to change. You can make that happen.

Educator 123

My name is A, I have been a high school visual art teacher for 24 years. I have spent 22 years in one school on the Sunshine Coast, because I love the school and my job, and now my children go there. I have just been identified as being eligible for the Experienced Senior Teacher 2 Classification in 2022, which means that the education department values my years of experience in the classroom and dedication to my profession. My gift as an educator is that I recognise my student's artistic potential, which builds their confidence to develop critical thinking skills and creative success. It saddens me that this will be taken away from me because of the vaccination mandates.

My employer, Education Queensland, has stated to me in an email that they may "suspend (me) without pay and commence disciplinary processes to examine why (I) should not have (my) employment terminated." My principal stated that the mandates have not come from him but from the department and his hands are tied in relation to how he can support me. Fortunately, my amazing deputy was disgusted and outraged by these mandates, and granted me a year's leave without pay. I was lucky, as for now, I have some breathing space. But no income next year.

Through the whole of term 4 I was stressed, as I watched mandates roll out in much of the country. My family and close friends were aware of my anxiety and noticed a change in me. The announcement of the mandate greatly affected my mental health during the last two weeks of term when I was trying to complete marking and reporting on top of dealing with this incredibly stressful situation. I am normally self-contained and resilient, but I was at breaking point, I wasn't sleeping properly, I could barely eat. The emails and instructions were overwhelming, particularly the one from the education department on 9/12/2021, which stated "If staff make no attempt to comply, and there is no exemption or reasonable excuse, the staff member may be then asked to show cause on liability for discipline and proposed penalty of termination of employment." The mandates are illogical because the vaccines don't stop people from getting covid or transmitting it, so how are vaccinated people different from unvaccinated people? Why am I not allowed to set foot in my workplace next year because I have analysed the risk/benefit for myself and deemed the vaccine to be more dangerous to my health than getting covid? Since when does an education department in a democratic society have a right to demand a teacher have an irreversible medical procedure or lose their job?

My concerns for the students at my school, and all schools is that the loss of teachers next year, will impact the quality of education they will receive. Another concern is that no information is being given by the government or media to the public about the needless dangers of injecting children with these experimental vaccines. The coronavirus case fatality rate for healthy kids under 18 is close to zero, and they have a far greater risk of being injured by the vaccine, according to the TGA and VAERS reporting. I am concerned as a parent that the jabs will be mandated for children. I worry about our children's future rights and freedoms, as we continue down this path of mandating a medical procedure for a virus with a 99.997% survival rate! What will be next?

I would like to see a stop to vaccine mandates and passports, and segregation of society. I would like the government to apply some common sense to their health messages, through education about boosting your immune system as well as implementing instead of suppressing the use of early and preventative treatments. I would like to see everyone who declined the vaccination return to their jobs, including me.

My final message – 7 Queenslanders have died from SARS-COV2 in just under 2 years. I do not believe this justifies mandating a vaccine for healthy people and destroying people's livelihoods. I love my job, and I don't understand why my 24 years of experience in the classroom which was highly valued up until these mandates, is now worth nothing. I am willing, able and ready to work.

Educator 124

I am a teacher in X and a mother to our beautiful children. I have taught primary and secondary school students in both the public and private sector, as well as in distance education. I have worked with beautiful children, over the many years of my career since graduating more than two decades ago. For the past few years I have worked mostly with those who have Autism and other special needs, to enable special one-on-one attention to help them reach their full potential. Recently, one of my students graduated year 12, despite his Autism, anxiety, OCD and personality disorders. I am so proud of him and so pleased he was able to build that connection with me to allow me into his personal circle of trust, so that I could help him understand his studies. My teaching career has been a true delight and I am honored to have been part of each of the lives of my students. Unfortunately, due to mandates, I am no longer allowed to teach. After having some time off from full-time teaching, I was to go back to supply teaching in January so that my husband and I could save enough money to buy our own home.

As a professional, my income earns me approx \$400 per day and supply teachers are highly sought after, so I was likely to gain work every day and earn up to \$2000 dollars per week. Our plans to own our own home are now devastated as it is very difficult to find a job that does not require me to be vaccinated, and cleaning or ironing or gardening jobs will not earn even close to what my professional earnings gave our family. Not only that, but we will struggle to now pay our rent as a result also, and it just went up by \$30 per week and our teenaged daughter was contributing to this but she works in hospitality as an event manager and must now lose her job because she is also not vaccinated, and cannot contribute her portion of rent. My husband and I are consequently very stressed financially and stressed in terms of our mental health and begin able to provide for our children. We can't sleep at night and yet , every few days I receive an email from my employer Education Queensland, asking me to take an updated survey about whether I have now taken the injection so I can remain as a teacher.

I feel threatened and coerced to have this vaccine. On the one hand, I love my job as a teacher but I am being told that I cannot work as a teacher in a school unless I have this procedure that I don't want, and the prime minister says I have a 'choice', but really I don't. If I 'choose' to have the injection, I am told I can keep my job, but if I 'choose' not to have the injection then am told I cannot keep my job. I feel that is actually a threat, not a choice. The choice should not affect my job. Especially since children are the last to be offered the vaccine because there is least amount of concern about them getting the virus because they are so young and strong, so I believe I am not a threat to the students.

Now that Omicron is the dominant virus and it is proven to be a weaker strain, we have more reason to be less concerned about students catching the virus. It is also proven that the both vaccinated and unvaccinated continue to transmit the virus, so unvaccinated teachers are no more a threat to students than their vaccinated teachers. All students will have access to the vaccine that is supposed to keep them safe, so that is an added layer of protection. I am concerned about our students in schools, my own children included, because of the huge disruption to teaching staff and admin staff. Many teachers and aides who have been part of these children's lives and know the families, have been stood down. The schools are now scrambling to hire new teachers for 2022 who don't know the school and the culture within it. Especially for special needs students who take a long time to adjust to new people and who need to earn the trust of these new teachers and aides before they will make connections and allow them into their trust. In distance education, students remain with the same area teacher for their whole schooling. My autistic OCD student who just graduated year 12, took 6 months of rapport building before he would allow me to work with him on his assignments. Some of these kids are in senior years and don't have that amount of time to waste to get used to a new teacher. And on that note, why are distance education staff included in this anyway? They only visit family homes once per term and do the rest of the teaching via online methods. I think it's time that this mandate was revisited, now that Omicron is the new, less severe virus variant.

Teachers, and aides should not be required to be vaccinated to keep their jobs. Distance Education teachers and aides should not be required to be vaccinated to keep their jobs. Schools should not be allowed to choose individually if they want to exclude the unvaccinated. All teachers and students should be required to stay home if they have any symptoms. The vaccinated have made their choice to have the vaccine that they believe will protect them. Those who don't want the vaccine know the risks of becoming ill if they come into contact with the virus and they will remove themselves from work and remain home until well. Both vaccinated and unvaccinated will still transmit so if unvaccinated must be terminated, then vaccinated must also have their teaching employment terminated as they are of equal risk to students.

Educator 125

Miss J is what the students call me. I am 39 years old and have worked at my Southeast QLD school (Logan Area), for 8 years. Initially I started as a Teacher Aide. In the years that followed, I was blessed to experience the hard workings of a Teacher Aide. After 5 years I moved into Administration, where I have spent the last 3 years as the First Aid and Administration Officer. My school has a student population over 1000 and staffing numbers of more than 100, the office is always busy, three Admin Staff work in there permanently. My duties are vital to the daily running of the office.

I am the person students come to see when they are injured or sick,
I am the person called upon if there is a medical emergency,
I am the person calling an Ambulance if needed,
I am the person that sits and calms the nerves of students during moments of uncertainty,
I am the person making the phone calls to parents informing them of their child's wellbeing,
I am the person that loves my job and all it entails.

Every student that attends my school with a medical condition is assigned to me. Communicating with families and understanding each individuals' medical concerns and needs is my duty. The ability to connect with each family, gain their trust and confidence that they have left their child in professional and capable hands is a gift I have been honored with.

It came as no shock to me when the vaccination mandate was first announced. During this period my relieving BM was understanding and supportive, I was encouraged to let my permanent BM know of my decision as soon as possible. The principal took a different approach abruptly told staff if we did not follow through with the vaccine mandate, we would be walked off school property and stood down without pay. There was no support, compassion or understanding.

At this point I am on a tightrope, the threat to losing my job is real. If I do not follow through with this coercive threat and get the vaccine, I will be stood down without pay. This means I will have NO income to feed my children, pay for their high school resources, keep a roof over our heads and pay for our everyday living costs. The impact this vaccine mandate brings is a weight like no other. There is no doubt I would do anything to ensure my family do not go without. Having the choice taken away and being told to undergo a medical procedure against my wishes or lose my job, is the most heart wrenching decision to make. It is on my mind constantly, heavy, and deeply saddening. For me and for so many others.

My concern doesn't just resign with my family, it extends to the students and families that I have built relationships with over the past 8 years. Knowing the uncertainty that they will be faced with having no one there who understands the medical history of their child. That familiar face the students are used seeing when coming for their daily medications. Many ADHD and ASD children rely on familiarity and routine. This is something I provide them with daily. To have this taken away from them is also a huge tragedy for their daily functioning.

There are my fellow colleagues who will be greatly impacted if the vaccine mandate does not get lifted and if I am stood down from my job. The workload each of us carry comes with enormous responsibility to the daily running of the school and the beginning on the school year brings with it many challenges and is also extremely busy. There is no doubt I am prepared and ready to fulfill my duties at the start of Term 1 without putting extra stress on my colleagues, provided this vaccine mandate does not impose any threats to me working as per usual.

Please find it in your heart to see the real impact the vaccine mandate is having on mine and many other families. Reconsider this option and allow the freedom to choose without the threat of losing our incomes and so much more. Allow me to continue to my job as I have always done, I should not be punished for my choice to not undergo this medical procedure that is the vaccination.

I believe we can find a way out of this current situation. All it takes is for you to listen to the people, pull the vaccination mandate and reinstate each person that has been brutally removed from their employment because they did not want to undergo the vaccine. Commonsense has not prevailed here, it is about time it does.

I pray you do what is right.

My name is G. I've been a special needs teacher within 5 special schools in SE QLD between X and Gympie since 2015 after I completed my Cert III in Education Support at QLD TAFE, my GDTL at Southern QLD University and my Grad Cert in Special Needs Education at Griffith University. I became registered with QCT in the same year. Previous to this, I was an Australian Commonwealth Scholar and QLD University Scholarship recipient to complete both my Masters and Doctorate in music interpretation and musicology at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver and the French Universite de Montreal where I also lectured, as part of my postings. I have also studied and speak 4 languages other than English. Following being awarded these postgraduate degrees, I had my first and only child, a son born with cerebral palsy. I decided to become his full-time carer, before this term had even been coined, and spent the next 15 years supporting him to be as physically independent and healthy, as educated, and as employable as possible. SEE his YouTube Channel Max to the Max, and his viral WIN News media. He was my inspiration towards teaching students living with special needs, and to bring my music specialty to this context.

EDUCATION QLD

The last 6 years were an employment struggle. From the start, I couldn't get any recognition for my study, research and lecturing abroad. I wasn't ever offered any permanency even after 2 postings in 2 schools where I was employed continuously for two years. I was even bullied by a mentor teacher, a university educator mentor, a principal who used a deputy principal and a HOSSES, to do her dirty work. Complaints to the Teachers Union where I was a member, and our local government, were met with silence. I drifted from contract to contract, school to school, as I watched other less competent teachers awarded permanency. Thankfully relief work filled the gaps. I had been an unemployed and unpaid carer for many years prior to this, so I was excited about being employed, and even though I had to create a HECS debt in order to do so, at a time in my life when others around me are considering retirement, I was still very happy.

2020-2021

I give you this background, to give context to the next part of the story. By January 2020, I took a term 1 part-time contract at a special school to fill in for a teacher on leave. An extension for another term was offered but by the middle of this term, I decided my 2-hour return trip travel was too tiring, so I rejected it, on the basis that usually during term 2 there's more work for relief teachers. A week later, I heard on ABC radio on my drive to school, that there were line ups at Centrelink. It was the beginning of COVID-19 and the whisperings of a nasty flu, killing millions. Both my husband and son, immediately voluntarily withdrew from casually driving tow trucks for their employer. This was before lockdown had been announced. That morning, I asked my BSM if the role for term 2 had been filled. She said it hadn't, so she extended my contract for another term. I was now the sole breadwinner in my family.

CONTRACT TO PERMANENCY

By January 2021, I was again in my favoured role of being the specialist Arts teacher within a special school, at only 2 days a week with a 2-hour return drive but again I was filling the employment gap with relief teaching in more local special schools. I was ever so slowly paying off my HECS loan, building a small superannuation fund and was able to support my family through numerous lockdowns and border closures when my husband couldn't work, because he is also casual so they had to employ their permanent guys first. I approached my principal mid-2021 about a 0.4 permanency which my principal said she supported but wouldn't be offered until early 2022. Again I watched other teachers made permanent in November 2021. It was a hard blow but I believed it would happen for me soon.

MY SON'S HEALTH

In mid-2021, when as a society, we were already in the swing of vaccinating, my 24-year-old son who lives with cerebral palsy started having symptoms of not being able to take deep breaths in. He was worried so we took him to see our GP and the investigations began: blood tests, heart tests, lung tests, and diagnostics from his allied health team of two physiotherapists, an occupational therapist, an exercise physiologist, his personal trainer and psychologist where he was getting grief counselling for the death of his mate very early in 2021. I began suspecting he was reacting to 'vaccine shedding' by those vaccinating around him in the community but this topic continues to be controversial today

VACCINE MANDATE

Hearing of the vaccine mandates in other states, made me wonder when QLD would follow, and sure enough by mid to end November (I can't remember exactly, the dreaded email came. At about the same time, the HOC in the school was rethinking the introduction of LOTE into the school, and instead of adding an additional specialist teacher, she decided to cut the Arts by 50% and give the other 50% to LOTE, and while I am a qualified LOTE teacher, the fact that a 5th learning area was being added to my 0.4 role, was disheartening and disturbing, not to mention the greater setback for students now being deprived of such an important learning area. All of that aside, my husband and I

still didn't have any concrete medical evidence about our son's changes to his breathing, so 'vaccine shedding' reactions was still on the table for us. This being said, I couldn't take the risk of having the vaccine, only to have him react to my own shedding. I couldn't put him through this. In addition, I had an incredible amount of knowledge about vaccinating generally since I had to make very difficult decisions about childhood vaccines for my son living with cerebral palsy. This vaccine had not data. We decided to wait and see. I had no choice but to walk away from my renewed 0.4 contract for 2022, and all employment prospects within education. Another principle who contacted me, the day after school ended, and requested me to return to her school in 2022, said she would make me permanent, and then I could take leave for term 1 and wait for the natural vaccine which apparently was on its way. Unfortunately, she found out through EQ HR that because I had renounced my contract on the last day of school, she could no longer make me permanent - only 1 business day later. Another blow to my employment prospects. I'm now back on carer payment which is a burden on our social system. I still have a HECS loan to repay before I die, and I now have no prospects of adding to my very small super. My civil servant job, which was supposed to be secure in my latter years, suddenly evaporated into thin air. I have now joined the large number of older women in Australia, with few prospects of employment, and very little super because of many years of caring for children, and aging parents. Thankfully I am healthy.

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

For two years, I stood alongside my colleagues in our small special school, when we didn't know what we were dealing with, when we were extremely worried for our own health, the health of our families and the health of the 'at risk' special children we teach. However, we didn't turn our backs on them. We put on our masks, we sanitised, we taught our students how to sanitise, and how to be safe. We persevered with remote teaching, despite not being given additional resources such as video-chat platforms or computers for students/internet at home, and despite dealing with parents who were often ill-equipped in normal times, to deal with having their children at home. We filled the gap by taking on social worker and counsellor roles to boot. We persevered and worked outside of our designated work hours to keep children safe and learning, and helped them deal with the fears they were experiencing. Our roles, as special education teachers in special schools, are not exclusive to teaching the curriculum. We take care of our students' abilities to understand what is happening in the world, despite their intellectual disabilities of less than 70. As they struggled to understand all the sanitary necessities, how they physically need to distance with their peers, wearing masks and getting vaccinated. These all had to be taught in a way that they could understand. But that is what we do, as special education teachers. We not only continually adjust our teaching to their curriculum learning needs, whether in class or remotely, we take care of their physical, sensory, emotional and mental health. We consider their whole personhood, since this affects their ability and capacity to learn. As I said, we are teachers, therapists, social workers, nurses aids and counsellors all rolled into one. We, as unvaccinated teachers, did this for 2 years, without any COVID-19 related problems. In December 2021, the department of education, supported by the QLD teachers union, decided that our non-vaccinated status was now problematic and we could no longer be employed by the QLD government. All of a sudden, we had to disclose our private medical information to our employer. All of a sudden, our wealth of knowledge and experience in teaching students with special needs, was worthless and valueless. All of a sudden the teachers who had vaccinated discriminated against us. All of a sudden, we were excluded, pushed aside, even vilified. How quickly we became uncivilised. How quickly we began modelling discriminatory behaviour for our students yes - the students who already have trouble understanding what is going on around them. We haven't considered what 'consent', let alone 'informed consent', looks like in a minor who lives with intellectual disability.

CONCLUSION

Vaccinating or not vaccinating is NOT a black and white issue. For many of us, we live in the grey zone where we need to individually consider every aspect of our childrens' and elderlies' specific needs, health or otherwise. We, the people, make those decisions. Professionals only advise and consult. Mandates aside, any social policy should consider the needs of its vulnerable citizens since they are the ones that live with the ramifications of already compromised brains and bodies. Removing the ability to be exempt from any process, and removing the ability of being treated properly by doctors with whatever ailment arises, for fear of retribution is barbaric and without precedent. In special schools and in special families, we are already isolated. We are already statistics. Almost 2 years after I asked my son's doctor for data on vaccination and adverse reactions in the cerebral palsied population, he still can't tell me today. Why? In addition, we are discarding our injured neighbours into isolation and without medical intervention. Why? We pay statisticians as part of our taxes, to gather this information for different contexts, in different ways. They should be objective gatherers of important data, not puppets of a dictatorial government. We want actual medical, not political statistics, and we want diverging opinions so that we can make individual decisions on what's needed for each of our children, for their best interests. We can make those decisions ourselves. We are capable citizens. We don't need coercion or force. Informed consent is the cornerstone of our democratic lives. Bring it back now!

Educator 127

My name is S. and I am a Female teacher working in D. I am 28 years of age with 5-years teaching experience. I am qualified with a Bachelor of Biomedical Science and a Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education; my gift is I help students keep questioning.

The Department of Education has sent emails throughout the COVID-19 period to keep us informed. I have worked at four schools in two years and each school has handled it similarly; get as much information out, in as timely a manner as possible, and ensure the school environment is 'COVID-safe'. I have seen various levels of compliance to the directives with all staff doing 'the best they can.' At the end of Term 4 a survey was sent out via email seeking confirmation of staff vaccination status. There has been little other communication than what has filtered down from the Education Minister. The Principal and Deputy/Administration staff have made themselves available to answer questions but have not been shy in admitting they are all only responding to directives and 'do not have all the answers.'

The Mandates have impacted my family and I in a variety of ways. My Father, Brother, Sister and two young Nephews live in Victoria; I have not seen them since before the Pandemic started. My partner (B) too has family interstate; his Father, Aunties and Grandparents are in B town. As we are very close to our families, the inability to freely travel/visit impacts greatly on my mental health. Since the Mandate preventing unvaccinated people 'going out' came in on the 17th Dec, we have cancelled plans over the holiday period and friends have failed to understand. In general, I have experienced a great sense of existential sadness and loss.

Regarding the impact on my mental health, I have a Generalised Anxiety Disorder. Living with anxiety makes everyday activities difficult, let alone having to cope with the overarching pressure of the Pandemic. The Mandate to get vaccinated has put a great deal of mental pressure on my own life and my family. I have researched the COVID-19 situation and risks of vaccination in depth. My anxiety peaks when I am forced to make decisions that I do not agree with. I have had panic attacks, depression and since the beginning of the Pandemic a 'benign tremor'. My doctor cannot determine the cause of this but has put it to stress. In 2020 B was out of work for 12-months due to the Pandemic and despite the stress, I was very grateful to have my job as a teacher to support us.

I build strong relationships with my students and have worked hard to become a valuable member of my school community. My passion is to teach, I enjoy going to work each day and inspiring young people to be the best version of themselves. I have concern I will be replaced early next year due to my desire not to get vaccinated. The follow-on effect for my classes of students may mean they have a less-skilled teacher and they may resent me not being there. I have concern that there will be many families against the Mandate and know this will result in poor attendance of our students. My concern is that there will be a greater divide than there already is between school and home, impacting on attendance and the engagement of parents in the school community.

Moving forward, I would like to see the end of mandatory restrictions and forced vaccination to retain employment in schools. I would like to see the use of less invasive methods of COVID-19 testing like Rapid Antigen Tests being used in the community/schools, in order to prevent those infected with COVID-19 being able to enter. I want to be able to teach in a community that is accepting of all people, their beliefs, and tolerant of people's differences. I want to see a pro-choice attitude to the Pandemic and more communication between impacted parties before decisions are made. Especially in workplaces that have so many different kinds of knowledgeable workers, such as schools.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals can both transmit COVID-19, therefore it makes no sense to exclude either one of those groups. Both could be infected, both could bring the virus into the school. Teaching is not just a job to me, it is my passion and it is my livelihood. If I have to stop teaching at my current school, I will be heartbroken but I will never stop teaching.

Educator 128

My name is E. I am 37 years old and have been a teacher for the last 16 years and am currently working relief in M Qld. My entire childhood/ young adult years all I ever wanted to do was become a teacher. I studied my bachelor of learning management and since 2006 have been employed since as a teacher to some degree. I am now at a loss of what I will do.

As the mandate has stated that as of the 23/01/2022 I will no longer have a position in relief due to my personal choices not to take the vaccination. As a single mother of 4 children my job is both my livelihood and the sole income to support my children who are 11, 9, 8 and 5. As a casual relief teacher you may think that a "casual position" is not a stable income but I can assure you that as I am very good at what I do and have a passion for it I work every day which is a great source of income... until now. I now have no capacity to keep my family afloat, as I have no desire to get vaccinated, which is still supposed to be my choice.

I am extremely stressed and worried about how I am going to educate, feed, clothe and look after my kids and myself. Since I have found out that I no longer have a job coming into the new year I have suffered from, anxiety, severe panic attacks, vertigo, weight loss, heart palpitations, and severe emotional anguish as I realise that if something doesn't change I will be in real financial trouble.

As a very sought after relief teacher I worry that there will be minimal replacement for teachers that are sick. All I am asking for is my choice to be vaccination free and have my job back. I don't care if I have to have an antigen test and wear a mask, I will do it every single day if it means having my job back and providing for my family. I personally know that I am a very healthy, strong, woman with an extremely strong immune system. I work for the sick because I NEVER get sick.

Please don't ask me to take a vaccination in order to keep a job that I worked very hard to get, paid a lot of money get myself through the degree, sacrificed work and money for the years it took me to complete, and something that I pride myself on being very good at. Like I said all I ever wanted was to be a teacher and now because of my right to make choices for myself that are neither illegal nor detrimental to anyone else, I cannot continue to do what I know is my calling in life.

Please help us do the right thing and change this mandate.

Educator 129

My name is K, I am 40 years old, a mother of 2 and have been working in education for 3 years. I have a Certificate 111 in Education Support and whilst working casually as a Teacher Aide, I moved into Early Childhood education. I am currently employed as an In- Home Day Care Educator to 4 children aged between 18 months and 4 years with another on the way. These children live approximately 60kms from the nearest day care so, to provide them with educational activities and opportunities to explore and expand their knowledge has been a pleasure for me. It is the highlight of my week to see their faces when they learn something new or see something for the first time.

As of the 17th December 2021, I can no longer be employed by the Day Care provider because I have chosen not to be vaccinated against Covid 19. I have lost my job, my income and the opportunity to work with these beautiful children who look forward to my arrival each week so they can do something different to their usual farm routine.

I have a very supportive employer who cannot understand why these mandates have been put in place especially as I am working on a family farm where the parents ultimately decide who enters their home.

I feel that my mental health has suffered, I have been in tears, lost sleep and have been angry about the vaccine mandates. I worry constantly about the financial impacts this will have on my family as well as worrying about the children and parents that my decision has affected. I am concerned that the distance to the nearest town could mean that these children, particularly the older ones will miss out on early childhood education which may lead to them not being ready for school.

I believe everybody has a choice about what they put into their bodies and are responsible for their own decisions. I would like to see vaccination mandates abolished so that I and others can return to my work and continue to educate children in regional areas. Thank you for reading my letter.

Educator 130

My name is XXXX and I'm a teacher Aide at XXXX in Cairns. I have been here for the past year and i love it. I have previously worked in Primary state schools and and did the last 2 years at a state high school. I have worked hard at my job to get where I am today. I really love my job at XXXX, its my favourite place to work. I love the staff and the kids are amazing!

My employee doesn't know yet but Im thinking they aren't going to like the fact that i dont want to get the vaccine.

These mandates are ridiculous, how can you tell apple that they have to have a vaccine to keep their job thats just not fair.

after i found out at the start of december that they would be mandated for education i cried for a week. Not just sooking but i was so upset and i was depressed, i couldn't carry out proper conversations with people as i just kept crying. It was so hard.

Hubby and i are so stressed about these new rules. I feel like we are going back in time, how can this be right??

Because I will not have the injection i will probably lose my job, I LOVE my job its the happiest ive been in years at work i finally found a place where i fit in and now its being taken away from me.

My mental health is bad!

I see a psychologist every fortnight and have tried the education QLD Telehealth service but it wasn't good so i stopped. I speak to councillors weekly and seek help buy speaking to others who also dont want to get the injection.

We will be loosing so much money me not working and we still have to pay our mortgage and buy food, which always seems to be going up in price, we still have bills to pay and kids to look after. And we also have their health to think about and their mental health as well. AS we are struggling as parents with the mandates we are trying to be positive for the kids but how can you explain what is going on when as kids they cant see it as fair and weight do we???

Please stop the mandates and let people choose if they want to get vaccinated or not.

Stop the division of people and stop telling everyone what to do. Its quite clear that even the vaccinated are getting Covid so whats the point of asking everyone to get vaccinated and wear masks when they are still getting it??

This last year and the year before felt like we were living in a really bad dream and it still feels like it. We need people to stand up and fight the people that are making rules that are totally unfair and unjust and against our constitutional rights.

Please stop the loss of peoples jobs and stop the divide of communities.

Thank you XXXX

Educator 131

My name is A and I am a female primary teacher on the Sunshine Coast. I am 34 years old and have been teaching since I was 22. I received my Bachelor of Early Childhood, although I realised very quickly that the upper primary years was where my passion lay. 2021 was my 11th year teaching and I really hope it won't be my last!

After receiving the news firstly via the media, then shortly after an email from the Department of Education stating that I needed to be fully vaccinated before the return to work in 2022, my mental health has been severely impacted. My brain is in chaos, I am crying all the time, I am fighting with my family, I am so anxious and terrified for what the future holds. I am emotionally exhausted. I felt denial – surely this couldn't be correct. Children are the least vulnerable to COVID and surely we wouldn't be fired for not choosing to take a trial drug? I felt confused – I didn't understand why, I had lots of questions and no answers as the emails were unclear and no one else, including my principal, had any further information for me. I felt fear and isolation – I had no idea who in my school was pro vaccine and who wasn't. I knew it was a very contentious topic and was unsure what to do and who to talk to. I felt angry – how could someone force me to take a trial drug and fire me for not complying? As the date of the first mandated shot loomed closer, I cried nearly every day. I was so confused and unsure. I was either coerced to have the vaccine against my will to save my job yet risk adverse reactions or I was forced to lose the job I've worked so hard for and love and become unemployed. No one should be bullied into a lose-lose situation! I am a single woman with two mortgages. I can't afford to lose my job! The decision not to return has been an extremely difficult one to make, however, I have been backed into a corner and now I have to try the best I can to deal with the fallout it will cause in my life.

I am extremely concerned for the effect this mandate is going to have on schools and families. Beloved, experienced teachers are being forced to take leave or retire early. Schools are already hard to staff without teachers being refused entry to work. Supply and contract teachers often don't want the responsibility of full-time work and are often not as competent at the craft of teaching. Teacher aides are to teachers as sidekicks are to superheroes. Schools wouldn't function well without them. Teacher aides already don't get replaced when they are absent for a day or two. I am concerned that when teacher aides walk out the door due to the mandate, the government will not replace them. This would be a shame for not only teachers but mostly for the students who will miss out on one-on-one support and conversations to grow socially and academically. I am concerned for the schools and families if the vaccine is forced upon children. The number of children being pulled out and home-schooled will be unprecedented. As fantastic as parents are, they aren't teachers the majority of our children will not receive the well-rounded education they need and deserve.

All I want and would ask for is to keep my job! If I am not vaccinated, this affects no one. The point of a vaccine is to protect the person who takes it, therefore, I pose no threat to a vaccinated person as they are protected. Besides this, research has shown that children are the least affected demographic in the effects of COVID. I would be more than happy to complete a PCR test at the beginning of each week, like interstate travellers are currently having to do, to continue working. Ultimately, all that I ask is to be able to continue doing what I love and that is teaching the future generation so that they may become successful contributors to our society in the future.

Educator 132

Hi my name is S, I am a male special education teacher and have been for 16 years on the Sunshine Coast. I have a bachelor of social science, post graduate in education and graduate certificate in special education. I have been working in the primary school setting most of my career as a special needs teacher. My gift I can offer to the kids and other teachers I work with is my compassion, patience and understanding. As an educator I bring in my desire for well being into how children relate to the world and I use these principles to ensure kids are feeling safe and well to then be able to learn.

The correspondence I have received has been very much sincere from my own principal however it was then just a directive from the department of education where the humanism was quickly not existent. I instantly felt like a number and it did seem to matter what I sent them.

The mandates have impacted me greatly I am a single parent and still live with my own parents and my plans to have my own place again feel like a long way away. My sense of job and financial freedom feels taken away. I have definitely been coerced to take the vaccine or lose my job which is where I feel it doesn't matter what you done and how long you have been an educator to the eyes of the department your replaceable.

The impact mental this has had on myself and my family has not been great, not knowing what is going to happen has stressful and not to mention the idea of being unemployed. My family have seen me have to keep some sense of normality but my kids are older and I know that they sense I am struggling I am also very honest about what is happening too.

My concerns for my students is that I know longer get to work with them again, my relationship and connection with students with disabilities requires a lot of my presence and for me to earn there trust not just as there teacher but friend and I have worked with some of these students for years and continue to as the relationship is established. My concern for the community is that the parents are leaving because of the mandates and that it's also creating tension in the community itself people are being wronged for the medical decisions.

I am asking for the government to base there decisions on the individual circumstances and choice not on a greater good principle because government say that what they are, but we all know it usually to push an agenda. What I would like to see happen is that the education department realises that un vaxxed are not unsafe around children and we pose no risk what so ever. I want school leadership realise we have been working in schools with freedom of choice for last 2 years without any issues. I want to see the mandates end for ever not just for my self but my children and all the children out there.

My final message is to have hope and faith, hope that we as human beings we will see through the agenda and rise above and stay strong in what we believe and feel is the truth and we lead with our hearts. I have faith that what I am doing with collective is creating a future for ourselves and the children.

Educator 133

My Name is N I'm a female Teacher Aide (TA04) currently working for Queensland Education. I'm permanent part-time (24 hours per week) at a state primary school on the Gold Coast. I'm 47 and have been working at the school for just over 10 years. During this time I have undertaken many roles. I have worked across a variety of year levels including 3 years in prep. I have spent the majority of my years working within the Inclusion/Special Ed Department across all year levels. Supporting students one on one, within small groups or within the classroom. I currently am an Admin Assistant to the HOSE/HOI as well as running Speech and Language intervention programs for those students needing support in that area. I have a current First Aid Certificate and a Certificate 3 in Education Support. I have also completed hundreds of hours of staff training and professional development. I bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and life skills to the table. Previous to my years in education I worked for 10 years plus in the early childhood sector where I gained an Associate Diploma of Education. I have the ability to remain calm in very intense situations with very heightened students thus supporting them back to a space where they are ready to learn. I'm a hard worker who puts 110% in to my job everyday.

To be honest I'm unsure of the response from my employer. Due to the mandate I was in a very fragile emotional state. I did not approach my employer and they did not approach me. A colleague told me they were understanding but insistent that the directive needed to be followed. As a Teacher Aide we tend to fly under the radar somewhat and the Administration at my school don't seem to value or respect TA's. I got the impression they were more concerned with trying to find out which Teachers they may need to replace.

The mandates have greatly affected me and my family. I have not taken the vaccination and face losing my job that I have worked hard at for over 10 years. We face a very uncertain future.

This situation has deeply affected my mental health and the mental health of my family. I have been anxious, depressed, angry and frustrated. I have been crying a lot, losing sleep and worried sick of what the future holds for me and my family. My husband has a terminal brain tumour and the stress of these mandates and my possible job loss are adding to his stress, which then in turn affects his health. It also affects my ability to be the parent I want to be to my own children.

I have many concerns for the many students and communities. These mandates are forcing thousands of education staff either out of a job or to have a vaccination that they don't want or have doubts about as there is limited safety data on them. Some of these staff have years of knowledge, experience, life skills and expertise in the education industry. I fear that with the amount of Teachers/staff being forced out of their jobs this will create a shortage that the Education department will be desperate to fill. Perhaps then employing staff that simply aren't qualified or experienced enough. It may also lead to larger class sizes which presents a whole range of other issues. This will then directly affect the quality of education and care the students receive. Anyone who has worked in the education industry knows it's not a job that you do for very long unless you love it and have a passion for supporting and molding young minds to grow and learn. These kids are our future.

I'm asking that we be given the freedom to choose. We have spent the last 2 years working with this virus and it has been admitted that the vaccine doesn't stop you from getting or spreading the virus.

I believe we have the right to choose what goes into our body.

My Body My Choice

Educator 134

Hi my name is A. I am a 46 yr old Early Childhood Teacher from North Queensland. I have been working at my current workplace for 13 yrs. I have worked my way up from a volunteer, assistant, lead educator, Assistant Director to an Early Childhood Teacher.

I began volunteering after my work experience in year 9- 1989. From that moment I knew I wanted to work with young children. I have been employed in Early Childhood Education for 28 yrs. I have been blessed to be a part of so many children's learning journeys and get to know many families.

My gift as an educator is to impart not only Early Childhood Education but the values of showing love, kindness, respect and empathy for one another. I take the time to get to know the children individually and enjoy watching them learn and develop.

My employer has sent two emails about the government mandates. I have had a meeting with my up line confirming that I know that as of the 17th December I would not be able to work or return to my place of employment. It was discussed that refusal to comply to the mandates would make me unemployed. The Covid 19 Vaccination Mandates have put a lot of pressure on my family with great uncertainty for 2022. We have a mortgage and 3 children.

Saying goodbye to my workplace after 13 yrs to colleagues who are more like family when it wasn't my decision to leave was heartbreaking. The sudden decision of government mandates at the end of the year did not allow me to explain to children or families that I have known for years why I will not be returning next year.

I would like all Government vaccine mandates removed immediately so that people can return to work in the careers they are passionate about. Please support the removal of Government Vaccine Mandates. Thank you

Educator 135

My name is K and I am a Teacher in a special school on the Gold coast for the past seven years.

I have been a teacher for seventeen years and studied an Art degree, Diploma of Education and Children's Services. I love teaching special needs students because they are honest, funny and are happy people. I love to teach them Literacy, Maths and Science and love to incorporate art any chance I get into their curriculum.

I have joined the Red union because I felt that this union could help me which the QUT did not. With guidance from the Red union I was able to ask my principal for a risk assessment and it was very nice of her to give me feedback but it wasn't sufficient enough for myself. As for Queensland Education I have been getting text messages to remind me to fill out the vaccine survey. I have been getting emails to remind me to fill out the survey or I will face termination on the 7th January. I feel this coercion is not warranted and I believe having a choice to keep myself healthy by being responsible for how I approach my health for my own body is what is needed in this instance. I have a history of pancreatitis, congenital ulcers, shingles, hepatitis and gall stones so I wish to place an injection into my body that is still at the experimental stage which may interfere with my varied inflammatory diseases that I have already, no.

The way the mandating has impacted my family is that my 12 year old and 15 year old would like to go to the movies tomorrow and I need to ask my sister to come down from Brisbane so she can buy tickets as she is vaccinated. I still worry that my children will not be able to go to the movies as they are unvaccinated. I don't mind not going to the movies but it would be easier to take them myself rather than asking my sister to come and do it. As far as the future being uncertain for paying off the mortgage, paying the bills that's a whole new ball game. I only hope that the Centrelink will be accessible for the time I am not going to be paid any wage.

My health has suffered due to the mandates by presenting as chronic anxiety and having to get prescription Prozac to help cope with day to day living. I am talking to a therapist once every two weeks and she has been helpful in giving me useful tools to help me get through this tumultuous time. The insecurity of not having a job that I thought I would have for at least another fifteen years has the same effects on my body as my divorce did twelve years ago. As the time draws nearer to the vaccine status and possible termination of my job I have had physical symptoms of stress in the form of problems with my digestion. This has caused me to be weak and bed ridden for the past three days. My 15-year-old is quite angry at me for not getting the injection, my 12 year old does not know what I am going through as I did not tell her. My husband does not want me to get the injection as he is worried for my health. He does not have a full-time job but he may have to go to fulltime when I am stood down.

The main thing I want to have happen in the next week or so is to stop this mandating of teachers getting the vaccine and let us work. I would love to continue working at my school as I have so many children and friends there that I would like to see again. I will miss them dearly as I cry sometimes knowing that I will not see the students and teachers that I have worked with for the past seven years. Let the herd immunity of Covid 19 be released on our community as we can get over it and through it. I have been vaccinated for everything in my life and am not against them, I am looking forward to the safe Covax which is an effective vaccine that has been used in Iran. Made by an Australian and not used in Australia yet, hopefully they will bring it in this year.

Please help the students and people of Queensland have a normal life not of segregation and uncertainty.

Educator 136

Hi my name is N and I work as an Senior Educator at a Long Day Care centre located at C. I am 47 years of age and have been working in the childcare industry for 26 years. I have been at my current centre for 9 years. I held a Diploma of Child Care and am also qualified as a Nanny. During my time at the centre I was nominated as an Educator of the year, through the early child care centre awards and made it into the top 100. I love my job as an Early Child Care Educator where I enjoy working with Families and the children. I enjoy teaching children and being a fantastic role model to them. I have accumulated 1000 hours' worth of leave at the centre and believe that this shows my dedication and reliability.

When I heard that the mandate was coming into effect in QLD and that we would be required to have a vaccine to work at the centre. To be honest I was absolutely shattered, and we were not supported at all. I had already expressed my concerns about the vaccines and the mandates if they were to come into place. I was harassed and pressured every day about my decision and was sent constant emails and text messages. To the extent where I had to take sick leave to stop the harassment and even on sick leave, I was still sent constant emails and text messages.

At this stage I have chosen not to take the current vaccine and to be honest it has affected my family in many ways. Myself chosen not to have the vaccine has caused me great stress and anxiety. To know I have always worked and now I may no longer have a job and an income. But also, I don't have the opportunity to work in a career that I enjoy. It also has had a short-term effect where I was banned from Christmas at my Brothers on Christmas Day and to seeing my nephews and nieces broke my heart. On the same token my brother suffered bowel cancer 1 year ago and this would have been the first Christmas that I could celebrate with him. It was a big choice not to have this current vaccine, but in saying that I feel that this vaccine isn't a safe vaccine and to be honest it isn't stopping the spread at this stage.

I am concerned about the vaccines and the mandates and what it will do to children if they must have several boosters over time. I am also concerned about the community and the effects that the mandates have on them. A lot of people are isolated and they can't go out. As mentioned above segregation and what it is doing to families is having a massive impact on people's mental health and also mine.

I would like to see people have their life back and to see the effects that this current vaccine is having on people's health. I would like to see more choices available for people to choose which vaccine would they like and is there a preventative measure that we can use at home. I would like to see the mandates lifted and I would like people to have their jobs back. To be honest I am very concerned for the future of peoples health and mental health if this continues to go on.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope that we can look forward to a more positive year in 2022.

Educator 137

My name is S. I am a 39-year-old female primary teacher based on the Gold Coast. I found my calling later in life to become a teacher and in June 2021 completed my Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Education). Prior to this I completed my Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care. I have been studying for the past five and a half years (total cost exceeded \$35 000) to achieve my goal of working in my dream job teaching Prep to Year 2. During the last week of my internship I was offered a fulltime contract teaching Year 1 for the remainder of 2021.

Unfortunately, my decision not to take the Covid vaccination has resulted in me not being able to continue my employment for 2022. My employer is supporting the Queensland government mandates for all staff to be double-vaccinated by 23 January 2022.

These mandates have had a massive impact on myself and my family. My husband has been terminated from his employment in the medical field due to the vaccine mandate, leaving us to support our two young children with no income. This has caused an enormous amount of stress and anxiety in our household. In addition to the loss of income and employment, the mandates have forced us to step down from community volunteer roles (Queensland Surf Lifesaving nipper age manager, official and junior club secretary). I am an extremely passionate teacher who cares deeply for my students' development and wellbeing. I have put in a tremendous amount of extra effort in developing an environment, lesson plans and resources to get the best out of my students and have been looking forward to a long career setting children up to be lifelong learners. This has been cruelly and unfairly ripped away from me based on an unscientific mandate.

I hold grave concerns for the education system in Queensland which has already been under pressure and is now losing hundreds, if not thousands, of dedicated teachers. I would like to see these mandates revoked immediately as it is now well documented that the Covid vaccines do not in any way prevent transmission of the virus and therefore unvaccinated teachers pose no greater risk to anyone compared to vaccinated teachers.

Educator 138

My name is K, I am a 50-year-old female, senior teacher of near 18 years. I hold a .2 position at X State School and relief teach the other days of the week. Throughout my career, I have been a classroom teacher, an enhancement specialist teacher in Literacy, funded and implemented a school organic gardening program, created an arts program for students during lunchtimes, I have fulfilled the role Teacher-Librarian (running and promoting the school's Bookfair) and most recently, I wrote and implemented an enhancement program for writing with year 2 and 4 students. I have a Fine Arts degree and have also attained a Health Coach Certification, featured in a national gardening magazine for my organic gardening, I hold several yoga teaching certifications and am an accredited Mindfulness Meditation teacher.

Above all I am a life-long learner who embodies a holistic approach to learning, health, and well-being – while working as a teacher. I have had the privilege of implementing Mindfulness Meditation into classrooms of schools that I have worked at as well as providing yoga and mindfulness practices to teaching staff after school to improve work/life balance.

Above all the listed credentials and experience I possess, my gift as a teacher is the passion and ability to build rapport with students and motivate them to develop inquiring minds. Minds that go beyond their initial abilities or grades they may be demonstrating. Minds that see value in who they are and their special and unique talents. Minds that find a self-worth, which promotes an intrinsic motivation for each student to reach and engage with learning and make decisions that enhance their own experience both as a person and a student. This was and remains my number one motivation for being a 'teacher'.

To foster the ability to be a discerning learner is not only my motto as a teacher, but also a personal one I have embodied for many years. A disposition that led me to not to participate in the vaccination trial (ending 2022 and 2023) as I do not have enough information or evidence to feel comfortable and safe to receive it. The response from my principal has been an impersonal generic one, filtered to her from EQ head office, which asked me to refer my questions to a staff vaccination status email address. There has been no personal conversation with me regarding a risk assessment – at all. This saddens and disappoints me, as my principal has been very engaging and helpful with my return to work. She has always been my first and only point of contact.

The mandates in place have had a devastating impact on me, and my family. Even though I respect each person's right to choose, I have been labelled and discriminated against at work. I quickly realised my work environment was one where I could no longer speak freely or express my personal choices. I have felt segregated at work and opportunities were limited as I was no longer able to apply for or be considered for contracts. Now, it appears that I am unable to return to work, to engage in ANY form of relief work and am effectively both unemployed and unable to get any form of benefits to help with my living expenses – unless I take a medical procedure I do not wish to have.

In 2018 I was on income protection for 18 months for a medical condition which has since been resolved. During this time, I separated from my husband and endured a near 3 year, very long and acrimonious divorce, which took its toll on my mental and physical health. Just as I was in a healthy place to return to my permanent work, re-establishing stability and security in my life, it has been taken from me. This has led to significant issues with my mental and physical health. The stress is multifaceted. Stress over not being able to financially support myself and family, of being unable to participate in society, stress amongst friends and acquaintances who pressure me to conform to a medical trial, stress of even feeling like I am upsetting my principal and co-workers to the point that I worry, if I ever get to work again, will I be welcomed or not? Every part of my waking day has significant stress. Quite honestly, I am just frightened all the time which has a flow on effect upon my family.

I worked as a relief teacher throughout the entire pandemic, interacting with students, teaching, and supporting them. I have comforted them around their own fears, with the unknown and scary new world they found themselves in. I connected with them as if they were my own children and made sure their hearts were being loved and cared for and their minds were still bubbling with inquiries and wonderment. I worry about my future students and how will this holistic approach to learning and teaching happen? It's not enough just to 'deliver' curriculum – it's just not enough!!

I seek the right to work and earn a living. I am a highly skilled worker with many years of wide and vast experience who is ready, willing, and able to work, and has been stripped of my right to engage in my role due to do so. I can shop, catch public transport with the public – yet I am unable to work, to teach. I understand this is about risk management (even though I have not received a risk assessment from my school), but it is incongruous that unvaccinated parents are allowed to enter school grounds and unvaccinated teachers are not. To me, it feels like a punitive response from the government rather than a real heal initiative.

I want to see these mandates dismissed and the right to choose re-instated. I want to see, not only myself, but all unvaccinated teachers able to return to their jobs and be allowed to get on with what they love doing – teaching! I want my right to exercise discerning choice reinstated – so that we can demonstrate (to our students) that questioning, discernment, critical thinking and personal choice are highly valued, and above all – that discrimination has no place in our society.

Educator 139

My name is L and I am school officer working on the Gold Coast. I am 58 years young and have been working in education for 25 years, 20 of these years in the same school. This year I received my 20 year badge with Catholic Education which I was really proud of! I love working with children it is my passion to watch them learn and grow.

Since the mandate has come in for Education, I have been so highly stressed and upset. I have been through breast cancer and chemo but never has my job been threatened. I am a single mum with 2 teenage children living at home with me and I don't know what I am going to do financially as my employer has stated I will not be allowed on the premises if not fully vaccinated by 23 January 2022. Where is our freedom of choice? Shouldn't it be my decision what I put in my body? I am terrified to lose my job as I am of mature age and not as many options available for me now. I never thought it would come to this! I have been forced to take LSL for Term one 2022 which I never wanted as I was saving this for a special time but again no choice.

My 19 yr old daughter has just finished school and was accepted into TAFE to complete a childcare course in 2022 and she has now had to withdraw her application because she has also chosen not to be vaccinated. She is devastated as am I for her. All her hard work and study at school is now useless to her. She also now suffers with extreme depression and anxiety due to all of this and now must take medication. Breaks my heart and there is nothing I can do to help her.

I have young grandchildren that are unable to attend parties, watch movies at the cinema, go out to dinner at restaurants etc because their parents are unvaccinated. How is this ok? What sort of life are they going to have feeling like a second class citizens?

Please withdrawn these mandates, so many families have been torn apart, businesses lost and so much segregation in society. Shouldn't we be starting to learn to live with this virus?

Educator 140

My name is J, I am a mother of 3 from South East Queensland. I have a certificate 3 and 4 in Education Support, and I am an inclusion aide working with children with disability.

I don't just assist the teacher. I work with children who have anxiety, intellectual disability, autism and cerebral palsy. I also administer medications and inject insulin to two students with diabetes. I coach and support the students to play in the playground, eat at lunchtime and interact with others. I encourage the students to walk to their classrooms when their anxiety stops them from being able to do so. I am their constant safe place and they trust me to help them get through their day.

I am on a wait list to see a specialist about my medical conditions and therefore cannot be vaccinated until after my appointment, so now I cannot enter my workplace and help the children who rely on my every day to get through their school day.

I am concerned for the children I have worked with daily for the past 4 years. Will they regress? Will their anxiety become worse? Will school become a terrible place for them again?

Since the mandate date was released, I have suffered anxiety and panic attacks and cried in the car on the way to work. I also experienced workplace discrimination, when I was told by another staff member that I didn't deserve to keep my job if wasn't vaccinated. My mental health has suffered, I haven't slept in weeks worrying about how we will pay the bills and keep my family in our home. Where will we get the money from if I can't work? How do we explain to our children that mummy can't keep her job because she is too sick to have an injection?

My biggest concern for my community is who is going to look after the children if there are other teachers and teacher aides like me, who want to work but can't because of a medical condition and are on a wait list to see a specialist.

Who will support the children and help them get through their day?

Who will be their safe person and a person they can trust when things go wrong?

How big are the class sizes going to be? Will that cause stress for the staff left behind while they wait for our return?

I love my job and I love the students I work with. I want to see all teachers and school staff back at work so we can all do our jobs so the children don't suffer.

Educator 141

N. 55 years old.

I have been off on medical leave for over a year with migraine and dizziness issues which has impacted my ability to do everyday things. It has been a long, frustrating, confusing, arduous journey to get to a point that I feel I can return to teaching on a return to work basis. I have been a special education teacher for 23 years. I thought I would be doing this job until I retire.

Over those years I have taught children from prep to transition, with physical, intellectual, behavioural and emotional challenges. I have bonded with students, staff and parents over small victories, medical emergencies, reaching goals and death. Special Ed is an intense and rewarding sector. It isn't a job that suits everyone and not everyone can do it well. These students and parents have so many challenges in their lives and limited support. Having consistency and reliability in teaching staff is essential. Putting teachers into positions who don't have the proper training or insufficient training is going to impact the students on many levels.

These mandates have added so much stress and uncertainty for everyone involved. I have chosen to not be vaccinated because I did not want to risk current condition being exacerbated by any of the adverse reactions that are being contracted by the vaccinated. My physical health is strong, I trust my immune system. I am now being told, because I don't want to be injected with an experimental vaccine, that I can't go back to do what I love and do best. 23 years of history and experience being tossed out the window. Parents don't know who is going to be there for their child and them. Will they know the intricacies of their child's disability and needs?

I am struggling with the uncertainty of my future, the stress of being bullied and coerced into doing something that my whole being is telling me is not right for me. The sense of being discriminated against. The fact that my career is over. Why isn't the education system or the government for that matter taking this on a case by case basis. Some people just can't have the injection and they are being punished. I have faithfully turned up for work all these years, now where is my support?

I want the choice! I want to be able to do my job! I want this to all stop so I can support and care for my students.

Educator 142

My name is S, I am a female 31-year-old primary school teacher in the state school sector. I have taught for 18 months as a full-time contract teacher in two different schools located around Brisbane. My qualifications include two degrees, a BA of Arts and a Master of Teaching which was only completed in 2020. My gift as an educator is providing my students a kind, supportive and understanding person in their lives who motivates them to be their best versions of themselves.

I am yet to have received any communication from my principal and line managers regarding the vaccination mandates. However, the Department of Education have been sending numerous emails and text messages to my private number and email address throughout the summer holidays asking me to complete a survey to inform them of my vaccination status. I find these constant emails and text messages very stressful and nerve racking and every time I receive one my heart begins to race, my body shakes and my hands tremor. These are all common physical symptoms of anxiety. My anxiety is based on the fear their wording such as "From Monday 10 January 2022 non-complying staff will be asked to show-cause why they should not be suspended without pay" ignites within me. I worry what the next steps will be for me and feel pressured to get the vaccine against my own beliefs just to keep my job.

By now it should be becoming clear that the mandate to be fully vaccinated by 23 January 2021 has impacted myself immensely both mentally and financially. I now face losing my contract for my teaching role next year and thus not having a source of income to pay for my mortgage and living expenses if I do not comply and get vaccinated. Furthermore, it has caused a divide within my family who are not supportive of my decision.

My mental health has been severely impacted since the announcement of the mandate for teachers. Not only have I suffered from anxiety as previously mentioned but also insomnia, loss of appetite, mood swings and lack of motivation for activities I once loved. I feel I have become more reserved with my colleagues, not wishing to engage with them for fear of being ostracised for not wanting to be vaccinated. This is a huge change to my once bubbly, extroverted nature.

As a dedicated teacher, I am concerned what schools are going to look like next year with the limited staff that will be allowed on site. I worry for my students I taught this year who will be entering high school in 2022, will there be enough teachers for all their specialist subjects? I question whether my future students, who I already met at the end of Term 4, will be without a permanent teacher as I will not be allowed onsite. Will they be faced rather with a string of relief teachers given there is already a teacher shortage in QLD. I know many of my future students are on the spectrum, have learning difficulties or have anxiety and this change and disruption to their learning will have negative impacts on their mental health and overall wellbeing, not to mention be very disruptive to their learning and settling into a new school year.

I strongly believe there are other avenues that can be taken rather than enforcing a mandate on vaccinations. School staff could use the rapid antigen testing at the school gate daily to prove they do not have COVID. It has been made very clear that both a vaccinated person as well as an unvaccinated person can transmit COVID, so rapid antigen testing for all staff members upon entry is a more safe and effective way to limit the spread of COVID in schools rather than mandating all staff to be vaccinated.

Finally, I am willing and able to teach and have a strong desire to go back to school in January 2022 and set up my classroom to be a learning environment where my students feel welcomed and safe and can thrive not only academically, but also socially and mentally. I want to be able to continue being a positive role model in my students' lives and be the reason they enjoy coming to school.

Educator 143

My name is A. I am a qualified female teacher with a Bachelor of Education who has worked full-time in the private sector for 30 years. Approximately 20 years was in Primary school and the last 10 years has been in High School. I have been teaching at a small country school for the past 15 years. I am a very flexible teacher who can work across almost any area, filling needs as they arise. I am currently a homeroom teacher to the Yr 11 & 12 cohort, teaching English and Mathematics and several LifeSkills Programs. I also have a Certificate IV in Career Planning. I have a passion to assist the senior students with their career pathways, assisting them with SETPlans, Employability Skills, Work Experience, undertaking Certificate courses through external RTO's and university SUN (Start Uni Now) courses. I also teach Work Studies to Year 10 students. I work with our Senior Student leaders to develop their gifts in leadership, both within the school and local community. My gift is that I see each student as an individual and am wanting to assist them in developing a unique, individual SETPlan that caters to their gifts and interests.

My employer said that he is personally against mandating any vaccinations as a requirement to teach but feels that his hands are tied and needs to enforce them.

The mandates have and will continue to impact my family greatly into the future. I have weekly, monthly, yearly bills to pay which will do not miraculously stop when I lose my job. My daughter, her husband and two children plus one on the way (my grandchildren), live with us and they rely heavily upon us for financial support. I face losing my job and there is going to be a major change to our standard of living.

This mandate has taken a huge toll on my mental health. I have been very angry but I am trying to keep that emotion hidden from my family. It's not fair if I take it out on them. I do feel like I am getting depressed. This Christmas has not been a time of peace and goodwill for me.

I have grave concerns for my school community. I work in a small rural school and have always been understaffed. We often find it difficult to obtain teachers. The teachers in our school do not get any non-contact time and most of us undertake break duties 5 out of 10 break times throughout the week. With limited staff and less staff next year, this is going to impose so much more pressure for the staff next year. The staff are already under pressure, and I am afraid that some of the teachers may leave the profession due to this.

I have grave concerns for my students. As we are a very small school, I am the only high school teacher who teaches Math and English and I am afraid of what that would mean for the students. Perhaps that means that these students will not be able to complete these subjects and therefore not receive their QCE. This will have a massive impact on their ability to follow their career paths, whether that be to university, to undertake a trade or progress into the workforce.

I am asking that these vaccination mandates be removed for teachers.

Educator 144

My name is J and I am 46 years old, a single mum raising two boys and a Special Education Teacher. I have a Bachelor of Education with a Specialisation in Early Childhood. I have worked for Education Queensland since 2009 on a part-time and full basis over the years. Although my job was often challenging, I got up every day because of the students whose lives I impacted. For many of my students I was their safe contact, their consistent person who always showed up for them. In many cases I supported parents as much as the students. I did this with an open heart and a desire to give all students an opportunity to have ownership over their futures as they moved into high school and beyond. I gave them the gift of hope and possibilities.

My Principal has responded to my news of not being vaccinated as helplessness, reminding me that she is an employee just like me and her hands are tied.

The mandates have impacted my ability to provide for my children as I will very shortly have no income to meet many of their needs. This is not the future I envisioned for my children. I do not feel hopeful for their future or mine, I feel powerless and defeated. My children are fearful and anxious as the future looks uncertain and unclear.

My concerns about the fallout from these Mandates is how our community/students will be impacted. The additional changes and fear of losing familiar Teachers combined with the stress of COVID concerns will greatly impact children's mental health. I have seen an increase in this over the last couple of years. Where is the hope for our future generations? What world will our kids, grandchildren and great grandchildren live in?

I am seeking the right to bodily autonomy, everyone should have a choice regarding what they put into their body. Let me make the decision without being punished through a loss of income because I see things differently. I am willing and able to teach, that is my destiny.

Educator 145

My name is C, I am a female contractor to a small rural Primary School in X, Central Queensland. For the past year of 2021 I have been offering my services running my Active Kids Workshops to this Primary School that doesn't have access to a Health & Physical Education Teacher due to staff shortages and location. My Active Kids Workshops run weekly every Wednesday for 45min each for grades K & P, G1 & G2, G3 & G4 and G5 & G6. My workshops are a blend of Yoga, Mindfulness, Pilates and PE style fitness activities and games. Every session has a Positive Affirmation and theme associated and is designed to complement the Australian School Curriculum stage that the students are working through. Not only do the students develop physical health and fitness skills, we also work on breathing exercises, emotional self-regulation, team work, communication, and visualisations.

At this stage the X State School has asked me to continue my Active Kids Workshops next year being 2022. I believe closer to the new year I will hear from someone in the role as to my vaccination status and continuation of the contract.

Due to the serious adverse reactions that are happening due to the vaccine and due to the lack of true protection of the virus I will at no point be receiving any vaccination protection and will continue living my healthy active lifestyle focusing on nursing my immune system until an alternative option is available. As the Education Department is having these mandates imposed on them, it is now appearing that I am being coerced to take the vaccine to be able to run my Active Kids Workshops at Primary Schools in this new year.

This has caused immense uncertainty and stress and heartache to myself and my family as I have spent the last 3 years completing Nationwide qualifications, hours upon hours of building my own business trying to meet a need in an area that I am getting qualified in and trying to offer a service to rural communities that are missing out due to lack of staff. Developing a program that is tailored to the mental and physical health of the future generations. To have all this pulled out from under me due to a mandate of a Provisionally approved vaccine which is having serious adverse reactions and is not offering any real protection to Covid-19 is just absurd.

The students prior to me running my workshops would have no physical education or health time delivered to them in the school setting. They were sedentary and not meeting the minimum requirements for their ages of physical activity daily let alone building their skills and abilities on balance, coordination, fitness, proprioception, agility, ball skills, focus, teamwork, mental strength and regulation etc. etc.

I am truly concerned and immensely worried about the ripple effect that these mandates will have on the education system. At the school where my children attend, we have lost 3 teachers and 1 teacher aid due to the mandates. I'm unsure what teachers will be staying at X State School as I don't believe vaccination status is a public matter, it should be between client and doctor so I am yet to find out what teachers will still be at X State School next year. I am also terrified what will happen after the 10th January where this Provisionally approved vaccine will be made available to Primary aged School children 5-11 years. My understanding is that there will be limited students to attend if the mandates are extended to include this age group and this may result in there not being a X State School any more due to lack of student numbers to run a school.

I would like to see the Australian State and Federal Governments look at the true results of this vaccine, look at the true cases of Covid -19, look at what other countries are doing alternative to us and listen to the Australian people. Listen to the Doctors, the nurses, the people with the years of experience and qualifications telling them how none of this vaccine or the mandates makes any medical sense and stop the coercion and divide they are creating Australia wide. Enough is enough.

I pray to God that us the people of Australia don't continue to fall on deaf ears and arrogance of our MP's and Politicians anymore.

Educator 146

C, Female school chaplain on the Darling Downs 48 years old 5 years of service Diploma community service coordination, graduate certificate case management and client assessment, graduate certificate in indigenous trauma and recovery practise. My gift is loving people were they are at and hearing what they have to say without judgement or condemnation. I am a mother and grandmother. I have four adult children all have been coerced to have the vaccination to keep their jobs. I also have two children under the age of 18 aged 16 and 8 with two grandchildren a 6year old and 11 month old. I am a single parent one with no income come 14 January.

My employer has said we will be terminated in January 14th if we are not vaccinated no option of leave.

The impact of mandates has created division within my family and financial hardship.

The mental health impact on myself and my family has been significant and ongoing we are all under mental health care plans since this travesty.

My concerns are the segregation and division of community. Discrimination is rife.

Mandates need to be ceased immediately and no further Covid mandates for any man woman or child

This must stop NOW.

Educator 147

I am a qualified primary teacher with over 30 years experience, I have taught full time and part time in Regional areas, as well as Redcliffe. I am currently doing supply teaching and tutoring in the Hervey Bay region.

The impact of these vaccination mandates means I will not be able to continue these roles in schools and therefore, my income is severely affected. Nor will I be permitted to go to school grounds to perform my Youth Mentoring duties, which is voluntary but very necessary for these children in need of extra support.

The impact for these students is devastating and the extra support it gives the class teachers will also be severely missed.

I implore you to remove all vaccination mandates from schools, teachers and students.

J

Educator 148

My name is D. I am a female Primary School Teacher that is employed full time in the private sector teaching in X, Queensland. I have been teaching for 21 years with a Higher Diploma in Education - Pre/Junior primary (equivalent to a 4 year Bachelor of Education). I am a patient, loving teacher who always strives to do the right thing and is devoted to helping each child in my class to develop their full potential socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively and spiritually.

My employer has been put into a terrible position! They do not agree with the mandates and are trying to keep a positive relationship with staff while trying to support them, but at the same time need to protect the school from legal action against them. The government has placed them in a very unfair position and are forcing their hand. They have not had a holiday this year and have been sending emails and calling teachers right up until Christmas eve. They are all stressed and are having mental health issues of their own due to these mandates.

This whole process has been terrible for me and my family. It has ruined Christmas and put terrible pressure on us, and our children cannot enjoy the holiday they have been looking forward to all year. My husband has had a very stressful year and needs to "switch off from work" but he is now unable to do this as we have had to rearrange our lives and try to come up with another way to cover our expenses. Our children love their school (where I worked), but we will now not be able to afford the school fees and I may have to home school them). One of my children has ADHD and has thrived this year with the support he has been given at school. When we had lock down, he really struggled to learn at home. He is going into year 8 and needs the schools support, so I do not know what we are going to do!

This situation has consumed our family. The stress and pressure it has caused has led to many fights, arguments and has impacted the whole families mental health. I am getting constant migraines and my doctor has done blood tests, an MRI and numerous tests to get the bottom of the problem but it looks like it is all caused by stress brought on by this situation.

I am very concerned about the impact this will have on the community. In our small school alone 12 teachers will not be returning in 2022. Also, numerous parents I have spoken to say that their children will be home schooled if parents cannot come onto the school property or if children are forced to have the vaccine. My students will be devastated when they hear about the teachers leaving. We have a very close community school, and this will impact all the parents and students as well. I am also concerned about the teachers that will be replacing us. Will the standard of education be the same? Where will they get teachers from? Will my children still get the same level of education? This is a Christian school that follows Christian values and so they employ teachers that have the same values. There are already a very limited number of Christian teachers available, so who will they find to teach?

I would like to see these mandates reversed! I want to see no more discrimination, free choice without coercion, appreciation for everything teachers do and what we have been put through.

Please consider the impact this situation is going to have! There are not enough teachers, and you are getting rid of the dedicated, free thinking, caring staff that have spent years of their lives devoted to enriching these children's lives and impacting each one of them and their futures.

Educator 149

My name is C I am 46 years of age, mother of four, grandmother of three. I'm currently a full time female Primary school teacher at a public school within the Wide Bay Burnett Region. Once I received my Bachelor of Learning Management at Central Queensland University on the 11th of November 2013, I started teaching and haven't looked back. I am the first person in my immediate family to go to university and break the belief system of 'women are only good for breeding sons and being a wife'. I grew up in far north Queensland.

My childhood was male dominated and female subordinate. Fortunately, I inherited my dad's and grandmother's stubbornness, drive and work ethics, this allowed me to break the cycle so my daughter would have greater opportunities than I thought I ever could have, and, I wanted my sons to never repeat this cycle with their wives and daughters. I also inherited my mother's and grandmother's kindness and compassion towards those less fortunate and they have taught me patience on a variety of levels.

I was not a role model of a student in fact I spent more time finding creative ways to not attend than I did attending. Neither of my parents were education supportive in the ways of homework, reading etc, although they expected good results on each report card. When I didn't achieve above a C for example, mum would say 'girls aren't really made for maths, that's a boy thing' or 'some kids just aren't made for school'. Dad would compare me to his girlfriend's daughter who had two supporting parents (one a teacher) and say 'she's got an A, why didn't you? I grew up hearing how talented my cousin was at school and when she was naughty her parents would punish her by keeping her home from school, I wished!

I left high school at 16 to have my first son at 17. Then aged 24 pregnant with my second son I put myself through years 11 and 12 and a diploma of Justice. I had my third son at 30 while studying Kinesiology, three years later I had my daughter and when she turned two I threw myself into university to be a primary school teacher. I can honestly say my whirlwind of learning and life experience's makes me adaptable, strong and emotionally safe for my students.

I have the ability to read children's emotions and know when they are giving up on learning or struggling with a problem, that's when I'm in my element. I'm able to sway them back on track, mostly without them even knowing. I have taught two of Queensland's 'pointy end' students and have been the first teacher to be able to get them to attend school full time and learn some of the Australian Curriculum. These students are violent at times, attendance is extremely poor, social skills are a myth, self-loathing and anxiety is at a high and academics is not a priority ... being and feeling safe at school is.

Reading all children's emotions and body language, understanding where they are at within themselves, and not putting any expectations on them academically, rather, giving them the rights to their autonomy and empowering each child to want better for themselves is my teaching talent. This empowerment comes in different forms and is unique like each of my students, and by allowing them to have their own autonomy and make choices, students start breaking down their individual barriers and growing emotionally and academically.

I have been lucky to have a supportive principal, right up to me taking leave when the mandates were emailed on the 30th November. I now feel unwelcome at the school I love, and pressured to be vaccinated against my wishes, so my principal doesn't get pressured from his boss. I have been made feel that there is segregation amongst staff, where once we were all a caring and supportive team. Our school community is falling apart and this is a huge devastation to us all. I submitted a letter of 'Request for the Law for Mandated Vaccinations in Employment' to my principal on the day of the mandate email. I have still to date not received any correspondence. On the 1st of December I received a text message from him to see if I had completed all assessments and if I was going to complete report cards. Which I had. I only received a welfare check from my principal on Friday the 3rd of December, after I emailed him my medical certificate. This was the same for other teachers. My principal has not checked in on any of his teaching staff's wellbeing over this matter to date. There was not any form of support offered at the staff meeting that was held on the 30th November around this mandate issue or thereafter.

The impact of the mandates and the coercion, threats and scare tactics of 'no jab no job' being put onto me has caused me to have anxiety and insomnia for the first time in my life. I feel completely heart broken and financially terrified over the potential loss of my career. I feel abandoned by all stake holders and left to hang. It has been made blatantly clear I am expendable and replaceable. I am nothing. My family are suffering their own battle with this mandate and this is causing greater stress and despair on each of us. I am worrying about how the others are holding up and what to do next, for us all to survive and not become destitute.

When I was 8 years old I was sexually abused, a sexual experiment. It never came to light for twenty years. Some family members knew, but it was explained to me by my grandmother that 'I should take it as a compliment because it only happens to pretty little girls'. Needless to say, for years, I internally recoiled when anyone complimented me. I had to work hard to release all the fear, hatred and anger and the biggest hurdle was to forgive my perpetrator, my family member, my kin, to truly be at peace. This mandate for me is like being raped all over again. I am being forced into injecting something I don't want in my body. The mandate is worse because not only am I expected to have an experimental vaccine penetrate me physically, I'm also being financially, emotionally and mentally raped.

I have always considered myself as a mentally and emotionally strong woman, now I feel like a broken fragile, disregarded girl, with little purpose and no obvious future. The mental health system will be overburdened from something that is not a law, but rather a corrupt coercive and cruel mandate. My school community has been very supportive of my stand. They have expressed themselves to the principal and media how much they want myself and the other teachers back in 2022. My students and their parents have said they intend removing their children from school and home schooling them if vaccination becomes mandatory. Some have already enrolled in Distant Education. This is a brave stand for these families, I support them in full, however, school is where my students should be.

Bringing up happy, healthy, socially and emotionally equipped and critical thinking kids takes a community, a school community. My concerns for all students and their families is unnecessary mental, physical and emotional trauma from this mandate. Most families are already under a lot of pressure and in a high stressed, some abusive, environment. I am sickened to think of the kids that now feel they do not have school as their safe place, their breathing space, their only place to confide with a teacher they trust, of all their hurts, pains and fears. I'm ashamed to be part of a system that fails children's lives. I have never aimed to be the best teacher, I aim to teach the best that I can, in a way that's best for each individual's best way of learning.

I believe that this pandemic has thrust our government into accepting vaccines made in an unacceptably short time. There is conflicting data, regarding long term effects. Australia has some very intelligent scientists and highly regarded laboratories. I believe our government should be aiding them to find the best and safest vaccines. There's is long history of Australian forward thinkers and their inventions going overseas, because of no help from any government of the time. Surely the last two years have shown, the Australian people need to trust their leaders, their medical authorities and facilities. They need the security of all basic goods being manufactured here. Australians should not be reliant on overseas manufacturing. This will put Australia in worldwide high esteem and more importantly gain the trust and support of the Australian people. The education, health, law, economic and government systems are crashing...for what?

Please listen and take note, open your hearts and see what devastation is really going on, do your own research and ask questions. A good learner listens and questions, a great leader hears, researches and responds with truths.

Educator 150

My name is J (male, aged 45) and I am currently a Secondary / High School teacher with 18 years of service to Education Queensland, all of them in a permanent, full-time capacity. I have taught Science, Mathematics, Senior Mathematics (Specialist and Methods) and Senior Chemistry, all of which are my qualifications, and have enjoyed every bit of it. I am currently teaching in the Wide Bay area where I have also written curriculum for new subjects.

When the mandates about the COVID-19 vaccination came out I contacted the relevant areas within EQ (an email address in the survey information – very impersonal) about some concerns that I have for my personal situation. Their response to my enquiry was that there was nothing that could be done to answer my query and that I simply had to get vaccinated if I wanted to keep my job. I have heard this from others in my school who actually have medical advice not to get the vaccine (they have medical conditions that will dramatically increase their risks of negative reactions from the vaccines) but are being denied an exemption because the criteria are extremely limiting. If someone has been given expert medical advice by someone who knows their circumstances very well, they are basically being told by the government (and EQ) to ignore the medical advice and take the vaccine anyway – ‘because it is safe’.

When my wife, who already has her own medical issues, found out about the mandate, the way I was being treated by EQ, and my principal’s very unprofessional behaviour toward me personally, she began having anxiety/breathing issues on a regular basis. All this during the very busy period of reporting, marking and finishing the year – not to mention leading up to Christmas. I noticed in the last week of school whilst heading to work that I also had anxiety (rapid heart rate and needing to deliberately focus on breathing deeply) which I have never had before in going to this job that I love.

As I have yet to complete my survey, I have had repeated text messages to my personal mobile phone (over 5 in the past 2 weeks of holidays) and repeated emails to my work email (yes, I am still checking them as I have still been in discussion with EQ regarding my personal questions and their lack of an adequate, or caring, response). Almost all of them remind me that if I do not get my vaccinations then I will be given a ‘show cause’ as to why I should not be stood down WITHOUT pay and possibly dismissed from my employment. All of this is only adding to the stress of the situation.

Under this mandate we could lose our only income as a family. This would then mean we could not afford to pay our mortgage and we would then lose our home.

I am very concerned about the impact that the mandate will have on the schools – mainly how those employees who might get stood down will deplete the wealth of knowledge and experience in the school environment. I also worry for the students who see these staff members taking a stand for their convictions falling into the trap of ridiculing and belittling them because they do not agree with their choices. I thought schools were about teaching students to think and reason things out for themselves, to become valuable members of our society through their ability to have independent thought.

I am calling upon our elected representatives to remove the segregation that is taking place due to the mandates. The segregation in workplaces and schools, but also in the wider community.

If we took the same mandates and replaced the words ‘vaccinated’ and ‘unvaccinated’ with any other set of opposites then we would see just how wrong this is. What if we replaced them with ‘men’ and ‘women’? That would be sexist to discriminate like we are doing. What if we replaced them with ‘white’ and ‘non-white’? That would be racist to discriminate like we are doing.

If it is wrong to do things like segregate on the basis of gender or ethnicity then why is it deemed legal to segregate and discriminate on the basis of a choice about a vaccine?

Educator 151

I write this letter to you with much expectation and hope to give you some insight in to what my life is and what it will become because of the Queensland government mandates.

I am a 64 year old single woman who has worked for the Queensland Education department for 26 years. I work 25 hours/ week at a large and growing Special school. During the entire 26 years I have worked in special needs. I have a Certificate III in Special needs. I started doing speech language programs with individual students, then moved onto literacy programs and eventually worked mostly with students with high behavioural needs. I have worked at my Special school for 15 years. The last six years I have worked in the Library and organise the resourcing for the school. I absolutely love my job because of the diversity of staff I am privileged to work with and the many challenges my position presents.

I have been extremely disappointed and saddened with the response of the Education Department, the unions who are supposed to represent their members and the school's Principal. My Principal cornered me in my office and informed me " I will not be the meat in the sandwich" and he then said " I'm not the one who has to check the staffs vaccination status". Because apparently it's all about him. I have changed my union membership to a union that actually supports their members. I have 9 emails from the department wanting to know my vaccination status, plus text messages and messages from the principal.

I am lucky, my children are grown and have their own lives, incomes and choices to make. So, that means I really only have to think about my choice. There is only one choice. I will not have a vaccination. I will never be coerced, bullied or intimidated into it. I will not work for an organisation that forced me to have a medical procedure I do not need or want. I would be disappointed and ashamed of myself if I did. Although, if I can't find other work I may have to move in with my daughter.

With the mandates I have found it hard to see what my future will look like. I was hoping to work another ten years but I will walk away from the job I love and the financial security it provides and I will make a new start. The main issue for me is what the future will be like with no income. I haven't spoken to my children about what will happen in January much. I don't want them to be worried about me. I was always proud that I was a single woman and provided for myself and lived my best life.

I worry about what next year will look like for the remaining staff and the students. I fill a unique position and support all the staff, all the students and therapists that visit the school. I work closely with the administration to provide the resources they need to get the best results for our students. No one is indispensable, but there will be a period of chaos at the beginning of the year, simply because no one really knows the full extent of my job.

Teachers and educators should be the thinkers and the stalwarts of our freedoms. They are supposed to teach the students to think, to question. In 2021 schools were teaching the students about consent. How is that lesson playing out in the real world?

Please reverse the decision about the mandates for schools. It does not benefit anyone. Not the students, not the staff and certainly not the community. Let's us go back the careers we love. Let us show the students what consent really looks like and how it operates in the real world.

Educator 152

I am an asset to society and have valuable skills to offer in many areas particularly as an educator and artist. As a 44 year old female, full time Teacher Aide and part-time uni student studying a Bachelor of Fine Art I contribute to my community on a number of creative and educational levels. My name is LRH, I have worked in the Mackay region as a casual Teacher Aide for the past sixteen years. Over the past seven years I have developed my skills to ensure the students from the small school where I work are provided with as many opportunities as students from larger metropolitan areas. I specialise as the school librarian, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen class teacher, art teacher, office administration assistant and classroom aide. Encouraging students with knowledge and learning from my focus area of arts education is highly encouraged by both my peers and the wider school community. The joy, interest and capacity to extend thinking beyond initial concepts has greatly encouraged our students in other learning areas because I ensure there is a broad range of cross curriculum learning in the activities that I deliver. Having the capacity to think and learn in a creative manner is my gift as an educator and something that our whole school benefits from.

The implementation of the vaccination mandates has had a negative impact on both my personal and professional life. My principal is no longer communicating with me, I surmise that this is in part due to the school holidays and also so as not to implicate herself by giving misleading information. The lack of clear knowledge and capacity to definitively answer any of my concerns about job security, the repercussions upon our school community from the implementation of the mandates and also not being able to offer valid reassurances that the vaccination will ensure my personal health is not adversely affected has caused the breakdown in our professional and personal relationship. Being a small two teacher school means working relationships often lead to the development of close friendships and the loss of these friendships and support systems has caused me many sleepless nights, anxiety and heartache.

I have been told by a number of parents and other staff that I will be missed as a member of the school community, my Principal sent me a text message reiterating that I am a valued member of staff and she will miss having me in her team, yet when I asked her if I was being fired she did not answer me, instead directing me to complete the survey that Queensland Education have repeatedly emailed and texted to me. I have emailed the Human Resource department specifically asking what the repercussions will be for unvaccinated staff and if I will retain my job and accumulated entitlements, and the response was a direction to complete the survey and another copy of the letter directing staff to become vaccinated. I feel confused and unsupported.

I worry for the future educational opportunities for the students of our school, the vaccination mandates are dividing communities. As a result of the mandates I am suffering in all areas of my life, from the loss of job security, losing my connection to community, losing my identity as a valued educator and losing my self-worth. I am an independent and intelligent human capable of making decisions about my health and the way in which I choose to care for my body and the health of my family. I was an essential worker at the beginning of the pandemic and was expected to work exposing myself to the possibility of contracting Covid infection and I am still an essential worker. The vaccinations are not proving to be a successful deterrent to contracting Covid. I am asking for the freedom of choice, to continue to work in a job that I love and that I am good at.

I fear the vaccination mandates will result in the loss of years and years of educational experience which will not be shared with students. Learning will become isolated via internet applications, restricted access to lived experiences and a disconnect between people and their communities. Please consider my request for freedom of choice so that I can continue to provide valuable learning experiences and provide financially and emotionally for my family.

Educator 153

Hello, My name is A and I have been a Teacher Aide for 13 years in the Bundaberg region. I have been a special needs TA but the last 7 years I have been specifically trained in one on one reading/decoding and writing programs. These programs have been very successful for our school in getting our students to meet their reading & writing goals and I'm very proud to have been an integral part of this success. I am also our P & C president and volunteer tuckshop conveyer.

I have been very lucky to have a Principal who has been understanding in relation to my position in regards to these vaccination mandates. He is incredibly disappointed and absolutely frustrated to be put in this position. He feels as though the rug has been pulled from under him as he has no choice either.

These vaccination mandates have devastated me. I don't believe that the vaccination is the best and only way to combat Covid-19 so to mandate it and force me to continually inject something into my body to keep my job is absolutely appalling to me. To walk away from a job, students and co-workers is soul destroying. I have shed so many tears over these mandates. This is supposed to be a happy time celebrating Christmas with family and I have barely been able to keep my mental health together. I have tried to make this a special time for my family but it's taking its toll. Getting emails and text messages every other day about our vaccination status is ridiculous. This is our annual leave, how can this even be appropriate when they stated we had till the 7th of January to respond. Education Queensland is using nothing more than bullying tactics.

Our school will be greatly impacted. We are a small school of 40 students. We have been a well-oiled machine these last few years and now we are losing many years of combined teaching experience through these mandates. Our small school community has also been ripped apart by stopping unvaccinated volunteers from working in the tuckshop & organising school events. How will these volunteers be replaced? Volunteers are a dying breed. Will our tuckshop just fold and the students miss out?

Having to replace teachers also makes me, as a parent, nervous. My daughter had a wonderful teacher who is now fighting for her job. Who will my daughter's new teacher be?

Please understand that the vaccination mandates are causing more destruction to our families, students and schools than the risk of Covid-19 ever will. Data shows the risk to children is minimal, in fact this was a phrase used regularly when we were open for the children of essential workers in 2020. Using RAT testing makes far more sense than forcing vaccinations onto our hard working staff. Let us be responsible for our own health care.

Educator 154

My name is S and I have been a Teacher Aide for 9 years. I work full time in X in a State School. I have been a specialty teacher aide for many years, working in special needs, where the student numbers are increasing every year. Last year I studied my Cert 111 in Education Support and was looking forward to continuing my career in education, nurturing and supporting our most vulnerable students. I have found that I have a particular gift working with the more “difficult” students; the ones that are disengaged and disheartened with the school system. I have had amazing results working one on one with these students to improve their confidence and attendance at school.

I expressed my concern, asking for a risk assessment, to my employer (the school at which I am based), who passed on an email address to contact. Upon doing this, I received an automated response that a case management had been set up for me. Another email from the Department of Education has indicated that those who do not comply will be terminated from their careers.

My husband, who has been a long-term employee in the mining industry has recently received permanent position. Unfortunately, his work has also recently mandated that to continue working, all employees must be vaccinated for Covid. Consequently, he has had to forgo his hard-earned permanent position, and take a casual job further from home. This was hard enough, but then for the Education sector to receive the same mandate, means that we will now be down to one income which will make it extremely difficult to cover the mortgage and other living expenses. Recent extensions to mandates mean that students over 12 are required to wear masks at school. This means my son will not be returning to school, as I am aware how unsafe wearing a mask for long periods of time can be. The government mandates are taking a huge toll on all areas of family life.

The loss of careers and finding alternative schooling for our son is causing huge emotional and mental stress on me and my family. I have been having difficulty sleeping, I find it difficult to leave the house and get emotional very quickly.

My greatest concern in the schooling community is for students with high needs, who require familiar one-on-one support. I feel they will regress in their emotional, social and educational capacities as it has always been difficult to find specialised teacher aides to work with these students and this will be even more difficult in 2022.

I am asking that the government considers doing Rapid Antigen Testing for school staff, instead of continuing the mandates for vaccinations for all school staff.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story.

Educator 155

My name is A. I am a 36year old Male, I am a Student Aide/Learning Enrichment Aide employed full time at a Private Christian College in Logan. I have been in my role at the school for 1 year after I studied my Certificate 4 in education support in 2020 and landed my dream job in my current position. I believe I have a gift in this role as I connect well with the students and love seeing the students I work with to achieve their very best and that is what I strive for.

My response from my employer about the current vaccine mandates has been pretty standard they have told me if I don't have the double dose of the vaccine before school starts back in 2022 there will be disciplinary action taken. The mandates have impacted me and my family as the thought of losing one income has caused a lot of un-needed stress and worry about the future. I have not taken the vaccine because I know of a lot of friends and family that have had serious side effects to the vaccines and because I have not I face losing a career I love. The pressure to get this vaccine has had a huge impact on me and my wife's mental health causing a lot of stress and anxiety of the whole uncertainty of the whole enforced vaccine mandate.

I have huge concerns for my students that I work so closely with at my school as I work with students with additional needs and building the rapport with the students take time to develop and these students may be forced with trying to get that relationship with someone new. And also the relationship I have developed with the parents of these students that I work very close with to support their kids with their education journey.

I would love to be given the chance to go back into the classroom and do my job that I absolutely love doing. I would be happy to wear a mask, get my temperature taken daily and take a Rapid Antigen test if required if I show any symptoms or sickness.

In closing I would like to take the chance to thank you for taking the time to read my letter about how much I love my job and the concerns I have about myself, my family and the chance of losing my job and a career I LOVE. All over something I don't feel comfortable putting in my body.

Educator 156

My name is P, and I am a male who held the position of HOD in an independent school in Queensland. I have been a teacher for over 40 years. I have a Masters Degree in Physics as well as a Teaching Diploma and a significant number of other industry specific qualifications and certifications.

I have presented very regularly at State Conferences as well as being a Keynote Speaker at National and International Conferences both in Australia and Overseas. I have been involved in the development of a number of the new ATAR Syllabi for Queensland. I am also an author of a number of books including some academic Senior Secondary textbooks.

I love teaching and find I can effectively communicate and teach students across Primary and Secondary Schools, though most of my teaching is in Senior High School. Many of my students have excelled locally, nationally and even internationally and also remain in touch and at times return to share their wisdom with my current students.

I believe that one of my greatest strengths as a teacher, after being able to establish excellent rapport with my students and present a real passion for learning and seeking knowledge, is my subject expertise, which is enhanced by my very refined research skills.

I also believe that I have an outstanding ability to take challenging academic material and make it accessible and relatable to my students so that they can grow in their understanding and skill acquisition. This ability is seen both in my classroom teaching and in my work as a best-selling author.

After my non-compliance with my school's Covid-19 policies, my school first placed me on Leave Without Pay for some weeks and then terminated my employment. It has now been several weeks since I had any income at all.

The vaccination mandates have already resulted in two of my adult children losing their jobs and being unable to continue with their University courses. My wife, while already forced to retire due to ill-health and chronic pain, is now very much on the edge due to the significant added stress of this situation. Her mental health has been very negatively impacted, especially as losing my job has already forced us to sell our dream home which we only purchased some 3 years ago.

The tyrannical measures that have already been enforced on my school community and students have had a serious negative effect in a number of ways. Students wearing masks seems to me to be a form of child abuse and an alleged health measure that has no scientific justification, but which has already impacted the health of a many students in a negative manner, as well as impacting the quality and effectiveness of classroom teaching.

I believe it is way past time for our political leaders and our employers to recognize the moral and ethical error of all the tyrannical measures they have imposed on us from masks, to lockdowns and vaccination mandates and put an end to this tyranny which has no health benefits whatsoever and which is seriously damaging the economy and personal lives of millions.

Educator 157

Hello, my name is S. I am a 47 year old female, mother to 2 children and live in X, a big country town a few hours away from Brisbane.

I have been a Teacher Aide in X for the past 5 years coming up to 6 years this April. I first started Teacher Aide work after I had had children and they both started school. I was what would be classed as an unskilled worker but have since completed a Certificate III in Education Support through CQU and have taken part in numerous professional development courses to enhance my support abilities since.

To me being a Teacher Aide is not a job. It's my way of living. I give the children I work with more than educational support. I give them the emotional and mental health support they need to WANT to come to school. A lot of the students I work with come from homes that are not the 'ideal' home life you would expect or want any child to be growing up in. Some of these children come from less than nurturing homes, and my style of support and personality is what they need to sustain the desire to come to school and want to learn. My patience, energy and a sense of humour (which I believe is a necessity at a school) is a definite asset in any educational setting. I am always willing to participate in professional development and I do a lot of reading in regards to ways to aid our students and the teachers I work with.

I am a healthy person. I am not against vaccines at all. They certainly have their place in society if one CHOOSES to have them. I have never had the Flu shot and have not ever been sick enough from it to make me contemplate receiving one. I have worked in a high school and now a primary school and as you could well imagine the times I've been sneezed, coughed and possibly had someone's nasal fluids on me are countless and I have not ever seen the need to be vaccinated against the flu as I am sure my body has built up its own immunity to most of the bacteria relating to the flu. I have also chosen at the present time not to have any vaccines for Covid-19 as I would rather build up my own immunity as well.

Therefore, your current mandate surrounding the Covid vaccine and educational settings denies me the right to work in my chosen field where my abilities are required. Taking away my right has impacted my mental health incredibly, as it is in my eyes not a fair choice to have to make. I have been to seek medical advice in regards to my mental health and whilst very supportive of course the medical practitioner cannot advise me either way to have the vaccine or not, so this leaves me in the same position. I don't even need to mention the financial strain this will be on our family.

I am asking you to reassess your position as far as the mandates and please cease to continue them. It's not only the staff this will affect. The repercussions of this mandate on our children will be more devastating than you could imagine. I am sure that some staff at schools are the reason that many children actually come. We feed them if they have forgotten their food or don't have enough, we make sure they have water, we make sure they're warm in winter and comfortable in summer. We give them high 5's or fist pumps or we might be the only ones to say good morning!

Can you guarantee that schools can provide this genuine care and support with your mandate in place and so many wonderful people not able to be there to care for our children? How can you guarantee an inclusive classroom space when you don't have an inclusive workplace as the first statement of Queensland Education's website quite clearly declares!?

"A great future for every Queenslanders"

We are giving all children a great start, engaging young people in learning, creating safe and inclusive workplaces and investing in communities for a stronger Queensland" as per your website which I just googled.

I implore you to revoke the mandate and allow medical decisions to be taken back into the individual persons hands and make the decision for themselves as they deem fit.

Educator 158

My name is J. I am a 54 year old teacher on the Sunshine Coast, QLD. I started my life-long career in 1988- 33 years ago. In this time I have been lucky enough to teach, educate, love, care for and appreciate nearly 900 students. I have enjoyed and shared this journey with possibly 1600 parents and carers. I have taken my love of teaching from the coast, to the outback and further to London, U.K. I have provided an inclusive, safe and caring environment for all children, regardless of their background, home life or beliefs. I had always felt that Education QLD was also providing me with an inclusive, safe and caring environment, regardless of my background, home life or beliefs. I believed that they cared about my wellbeing, just as I cared about my students' wellbeing. That's how I felt until Tuesday, 30 November, 2021. This was the day that the Palaszczuk Government mandated COVID-19 vaccinations for workers in education and early childhood settings. I remember hearing the news. My body went cold and I developed an immediate headache. Could they do this? I remember seeing teachers and staff members crying and I cried too. Some staff were so distraught that they went home and didn't come back.

You see, my husband and I had decided that the vaccine was not for us. Unfortunately, as my husband works in an aged care setting, he had to get vaccinated. We understood this measure as vaccinations had always been a condition of his work in the health industry. We joked that we were a multi-vax family and, more seriously, if he was to have an adverse reaction then one of us would still be o.k. I never thought that I would need a Covid vaccination as studies had found that the overall risk of death or severe disease from COVID-19 was very low in kids and, after all, I had worked in a school throughout the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Our Prime Minister had also said **"The health advice has been consistent that for children, schools are a safe space."** The sudden mandate, just before holidays, did not make sense especially in a state that had no cases and especially for my profession where vaccinations were not a condition of my employment.

The mandate has coerced me into being vaccinated against my will, as the QLD Education department has sent several emails stating that if I have not received at least one COVID-19 vaccination dose by 17 December 2021, and be fully vaccinated by 11:59 pm on 23 January 2022., I will not be permitted to enter a school, therefore my 30+ career will no longer exist. It seems that nobody cares about me or the type of teacher I am, it's all come down to whether or not I have taken the injection. It doesn't matter how many little lives I have impacted positively, it's all come down to whether or not I have taken the injection. It doesn't matter how many students have thrived under my care, it has all come down to whether or not I have taken the injection.

The mandate just before holidays took a toll on my mental health. I couldn't sleep and I couldn't eat. I felt sad, disappointed, defeated and let down by a department and government that I have worked for most of my life. **Now, I am questioning what to do with my career as I no longer feel the same. It's like a light has gone off and I just don't feel like switching it on again.** I also fear for the mental health of my teacher friends. One recently broke down crying in our local supermarket because she does not want to get the vaccine. She has 3 young boys (her husband died of cancer) and is worried about their future if she is unable to care for them due to an adverse reaction to the injection. She has to sell her house! Another teacher friend ended up in the emergency department due to a panic attack after her first shot and she has been extremely upset ever since.

I am also worried about what the school landscape will look like in 2022. How many students will leave? How many colleagues will be gone? Will we have enough volunteers to help in classrooms; run the tuckshop.....the list is endless. I worry that fantastic and inspiring teachers may be lost and replaced by 'O.K.' teachers that 'passed the test' because they were injected. How many future teachers will be gone now because they choose not to be coerced or don't want to work in a system that forces people against their will?

I am asking for an end to the mandates for vaccinations for workers in education and early childhood settings. I am asking that we are treated with courtesy and respect for our choices without the fear of losing our jobs.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Where is the government's respect, understanding and tolerance towards teachers? It reminds us that everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. Where are the protections against teachers' unemployment? Is this

mandate just? These mandates have taken away people's rights to work and be paid. These mandates have taken away teachers' ability to provide for their families if they are not permitted to enter their place of work. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of themselves and of their family, including food, clothing, and housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment in circumstances beyond their control. The pandemic has always been beyond people's control. How can the government take away teachers rights to security in such an unprecedented time?

Educator 159

My name is A, currently a fulltime, experienced senior teacher (EST2) at X Special School, in South East Queensland, where I am the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden specialist (12 years exp) and also deliver the Certificate One in Agrifoods vocational qualification (six years exp). My teaching service began in New Zealand, where for 13 years I taught in primary schools (2 years), then became a secondary school teacher of English, with three years as assistant Head of Department (PR1) and Teacher Librarian, Matamata College (1981-85) then four year's experience as a Head of Department (PR3, in minimum possible time) and also Teacher Librarian, X High School (1986-89) and acting duties as a Deputy Principal (1984, 1988). I have a Bachelor of Education degree (Waikato, 1977) and also Master of Arts (first class honours in English, 1980) and Certificate Four in Training and Assessment (2015, 2018). I served on national curriculum committees for student assessment in NZ (1985-86) and as an Adviser for English (1987-88) and also was a member of the national school certificate examination panel for two years (1984,85).

I am the parent of vaccine injured offspring, hence my decision to change career trajectory in QLD to become a special needs teacher (19 years exp). I have skills acquired from parenting offspring with autism which cannot be taught in a university. They are gained from heart-felt experience.

My decision to use all my remaining sick and long service leave, for term one and two weeks into term 2, 2022, is due to the mandated injection requirement. I can NOT place trust in companies such as Pfizer which have a deplorable safety record and am very alarmed that nationally, both state and federal governments are facilitating and mandating unsafe products for as many people as they can dupe into taking them. This intrusive, unprecedented action has caused me great distress and mental anguish. I have been unable to attend work when the state run injection clinics have been on site, mid-week, at my work place. The thought of the damage that such products are doing to innocent and often already vaccine-injured children, is heart breaking. **Such victims must have a voice.** By prematurely taking leave from my teaching position, I am providing such a voice for our students and all other innocent, unwitting victims of this trial treatment for a virus that has an over 99% recovery rate.

When my now 28 year old twins were born at 24 weeks and six days gestation, they were under the care of medical "experts" who decided, once they were three months out of the womb, that is, when gestationally "birth" age, they were ready for their three month vaccinations. Vaccinating extremely premature infants on the assumption their immune systems are "normal" is NOT current practice. My twins continued to receive their vaccinations up to four years of age, when, on medical advice, they were stopped, as both had lapsed into autism. Following birth, when in ICU, neither twin had signs of ADHD. One was called Sticky Beak by the nurses as he had his steady eye gaze on them all day. His focus and attention, post-birth, in ICU, was unwavering. Not so, when four years of age. The past 24 years I have dedicated to regaining normal health for my offspring. I have a wealth of experience in recovery from medical interventions that are deemed "necessary" in emergency situations. I am alarmed at the rate by which this current trial medical intervention is overtaking the total population of not only Australia, but the whole world.

I urge you to help end this increasingly mandated trial procedure which is leaving devastating underlying, short and long term injuries in its wake.

Educator 160

My name is J, and I am a 42 year old female educator on the Sunshine Coast. I have dedicated 20 wonderful years to being a full time primary school teacher in the public sector, utilising my Bachelor of Education (Primary) degree to influence the lives of hundreds of students.

When the vaccination mandate for all education employees came into effect, my line manager was quite defensive when emailed for information about the directive. He passed my request for a risk assessment to the department's legal team, which made me feel I was doing the wrong thing by seeking the information I need to make an informed choice. Further requests were met with short, impersonal responses directing any inquiries to a vaccination email survey address and I was curtly informed that I would not even be allowed on school premises if I wasn't fully vaccinated. Furthermore, receiving repeated email and mobile phone messages from the department to complete the vaccination status survey weeks before it was due and during my vacation time felt pressured. My principal was overheard asking someone whether I was an 'antivaxxer' on the day mandates were announced when he saw me visibly distressed. No member of the administration team approached me at any time to check on my well-being.

As a mother and the main income earner in our family, the prospect of financial hardship for failing to comply with the mandate is real. My husband stays home to manage the demands of having a child with special needs and two younger siblings. If I were to lose my job, our main source of income, my husband would be forced to try to support us on the meagre income he makes from the small handyman business he recently started. We would face the prospect of losing our home, an inability to afford future medical care for our children (such as braces) and having to forego some allied health supports for our eldest.

I have previously suffered with post natal depression so I was able to recognise the psychological effects of the (impending) mandate and seek support. However, I was shocked when my psychologist diagnosed me with severe depression, anxiety and stress related to the mandate. In addition, I have also been diagnosed with PTSD from past medical treatment that has been exacerbated by the mandate. Since the mandates were announced, I struggle to eat, sleep, have lost weight and am suffering hair loss and a flare up of skin issues. I am short-tempered, teary and have had recurring panic attacks. My husband has also had his physical and emotional health impacted by the additional burden of caring for me as well as the worry of impending financial hardship.

I worry about the effect of these mandates on schools and students. I have seen first hand the disruption to students in classrooms caused by unforeseen staff changes and foresee this happening on a much larger scale next year. The existing teacher staff crisis will be magnified. The wealth of knowledge the education system is set to lose is irreplaceable; teacher mentors for practicum students and newly graduated teachers will be lost; staff shortages will be rife; collegial support networks will be disrupted; the onus on teachers who remain to take up the slack will be greater than it is already (in one of the most stressful jobs on the planet); increased distrust of those in authority by teachers who have been coerced into taking the vaccination to support their families...these consequences cannot simply be overlooked. I fear the department will be inundated with mental health claims caused by the stress this situation has created.

There are several viable alternatives to a blanket vaccine mandate and CHO's directive that would enable the education department to retain teachers, slow the spread of the virus and respect everyone's right to make their own informed choices. The overwhelming majority of educators are already vaccinated. The difference between this and a 100% vaccination rate is negligible at best. Many risk minimisation measures are already in place in schools, including thorough cleaning, maintaining good hygiene practices, social distancing and managing outbreaks swiftly. However, RA testing of staff during outbreaks, regardless of vaccination status, could also be considered. Providing scientific advice about risk minimisation would enable all students and employees to make informed decisions about how to best protect their health and the health of those around them rather than implement a 'one size fits all' approach that is not a good fit for some.

I implore you to scrap the education mandate and allow me to return to the job I love in a system that truly needs me, without being coerced into a medical procedure I don't want.

Educator 161

My Name is R, I'm a 38yr old Qualified Chef at an Early Learning Centre in Central Queensland.
I have been working in the hospitality industry for the past 22yrs and in the education sector for the past 5yrs.

I love my job and believe that all children deserve to learn and reach their full potential. We all know good nutrition positively affects a child's ability to learn, function and tackle everyday tasks.
I provide 3 nutritious healthy meals daily to these children and unfortunately some don't receive these at home.
I love teaching the children about foods and the positive impact it has on their little bodies with their healthy choices and the foods that they consume.

My employer the last month has been absolutely disgusting. The way myself and 7 other staff have been treated since the first upcoming mandate announcement back on the 1st December before the CHO was even released.
We have been treated like criminals for not being forced into these "experimental vaccines"
We have been denied risk assessments and any form of trying to come to a middle ground or other options available.
Basically just daily emails and firm words saying we will be terminated with disciplinary action. Don't come on the premises or police will be called. Very poor and actually heartbreaking from a company which I once was a proud employee and loved every aspect of my job. I have tears daily my anxiety is through the roof. My mental state is terrible, some days I look in the mirror and I don't even recognise my broken self.
But still I try to hold myself together for my kids.
On the 20th December 2021 I received the email that broke my heart into a million pieces.
I was being stood down for "Serious Misconduct".

(Serious misconduct is conduct that is **wilful or deliberate and that is inconsistent with the continuation of the employment contract**. It is also conduct that causes serious and imminent risk to the health and safety of a person or to the reputation, viability or profitability of the employer's business.)

How is my choice to be fully informed about my own body and the things I put into it serious misconduct.
I had my meeting the week of Christmas were stood down the week before Christmas!!! With no pay ...
How sad is that from the company I worked my butt off for year after year!!!!
The same day not even 1 hour after my meeting I received the email your employment has been terminated due to "serious misconduct"

When I was a baby I spent the first 3 months of my life in ICU from my baby vaccines my parents could not hold me until I was 3 months old I always remember my father re-telling these events over the years I can always hear the heartache in his voice everytime.
This plays a huge part in my decision to not rush into these forced Vaccines I want to know the long term affects and full medical data on these trials, not just rush out and risk my life.
I'm a Mother of small children I need to make the right informed choice for my family I need to be able to provide a stable home and be around to see my children grow up. I've tried doctor after doctor to get an exemption but just told no sorry no exemptions will be given.
There are so many people with terrible adverse reactions and even many deaths just in my small community can you imagine the numbers Australia wide let alone all over the world.

The education system is now broken I am aware of at least 30 plus teachers just in my small seaside town who have now lost their jobs. The numbers Queensland/Australia wide will be astronomical.
How will our schools survive who will be there to teach our children guide them, nurture them.
Give us our jobs back!!!
It's time to drop these ridiculous mandates .
Let people make their own choices.
Let's try and fix what's left of this broken Australia, the health system is now broken the education system is now broken come on guys when will the governments wake up.

Educator 162

S, female, primary school teacher aid, Sunshine Coast, 53, 4 years casual, Bachelor of Arts degree and Cert 3 Certificate. My gift as an educator comes firstly from being a mum to two beautiful girls, who are both now in early high school, and having the experience of helping them through their primary school years, seeing where they struggled and excelled, and using that personal experience to in turn , help the primary school students at my school, achieve their best learning , knowing what works and what doesn't , how to make learning exciting and interesting, and communicating with the kids on their level and gaining their trust , making learning fun.

As far as I know, my employer does not know at this stage; after 3 years of working casually in the school, I was finally offered permanent hours next year, which I was so excited about and they were also, extremely pleased they could offer them to me. I had my meeting with them a couple of weeks before the mandate was announced and have had no further communication from the school with regards to my hours next year. The atmosphere at school was quite tense, as there were some teachers who were very vocal about being vaccinated and I found myself not wanting to be in the staff room at break times so as to avoid any uncomfortable discussions.

When the mandates were announced, I felt sick to my stomach, as I knew it meant the end of the job I love. My husband has been vaccinated, he works in aged care, and felt he had no choice as he would lose his job and we have a family of 4 to provide for. He is angry that I am not doing the same, and it has caused huge problems within our marriage, to the point where I don't know if our marriage will survive. Our daughters hear us argue every day about me losing my job, if I do not get the vaccination, and I have to explain to them, how important it is, that I don't feel coerced to do something to keep my job, I should have freedom of choice, to stand by my principles and fight for what I believe is right. We will struggle financially and I will have to try and find another job to help contribute towards our bills.

This has had a huge impact on my mental health and my family; I cry myself to sleep most nights and try and put on a brave face for my daughters, as I don't want them to be impacted by the stress and anxiety I feel every day. I can see they are worried about our family crumbling, and they have said to me, like my husband , why don't you just get the vaccination so we can get back to normal ? But in my gut, it just feels so wrong, and I need to honour my gut feeling and stand up for my own personal freedom and choice. I have had suicidal thoughts, and have confided in close friends. I am trying to remain positive but it is getting harder and harder every day.

I am concerned that the students and local community, are losing some amazing teachers, who have so much to give, and genuinely love their jobs and the children they teach. Some have been teaching for 20+ years, some have only just started, but all the teachers I know, who are now at risk of losing their jobs, have such integrity and a real sense of what is right and just , and this shows in their teaching methods . The children will lose these special people and will not have the opportunity to learn from their wisdom, it is just so sad for everyone, there are no winners in this situation, just losers.

I want the freedom to choose whether I get the covid vaccination or not. I do not want to be coerced or bullied into getting it to keep my job that I love. Most parents I speak to, are also against the mandating of teachers, and see little to no risk of their children being taught by unvaccinated teachers. Most of all I want to continue doing the job I love. 7) My final message is, let people choose and make decisions for their own health . These vaccinations should not be mandated and the government needs to take a step back. As Scott Morrison recently said, let people take control of their own lives, free of coercion and over reach from the state governments. Australia is a democracy, so let us be free.

Educator 163

My name is J, I am 48 years old and a mother to 3 teenagers. I have been enjoying contract work as the Garden Specialist in an independent school in South East Queensland. I am a Teacher Aide. I have been doing work of this kind for 5 years at 2 schools in my area. I help children grow food and eat seasonally. I help children understand ecosystem thinking and ways which all things are connected together. My employer has not renewed my contract for 2022 based on my objection to the mandates.

I am facing an uncertain employment future, mainly I am hoping to sit tight, stay home and wait till the madness subsides and change is enacted by my elected leaders. I fervently oppose medical mandates.

My concerns for my community are the creation of a split society of the compliant and the non compliant regarding this mandate.

I wish to be allowed to enter school grounds to continue this valuable education with students.

My stance against mandates also impacts my other work where I am a face to face carer with a yellow card, and my volunteer help with my Rural Fire Service. I am a valuable contributor to my community and I wish my voice to be heard so I may continue to share in these valuable ways.

Educator 164

I am C, an early childhood teacher from Brisbane. I was the assistant director/ educational leader in an early learning centre before the COVID-19 vaccination mandate was made effective on the 17th December 2021. I have been working with children for over 7 years and have experience in different positions in early education settings. I obtained my bachelor of early childhood education in 2014 with first honour and a master's degree with an overall GPA of 7. I am gifted in designing and conducting inquisitive programs which are fun, educational and purposeful for children. Dedicated to nurturing children's critical thinking skills, I pay tremendous attention to the children's learning potential and their sense of agency, ensuring their voices are respected, in order to build independence in them.

Since the announcement has been made about the vaccination mandate in school and childcare settings in early December, my vaccination status and my consideration have been brought up by my supervisor daily. Despite my reiteration of the fact that I am able, willing, and planning to continue to work in my position in 2022, I have received a formal letter from the director of operations, threatening that my employment will be terminated unless proof of COVID-19 vaccination is provided. One of the business owners even spoke to me personally, explaining that it is the government that forces this vaccination on us as he would never have made such a decision. He added 'I believe everyone should have the right to choose but with the government mandate, I cannot have you working or I will lose my license.'

Sensing this tension with the rest of the management team, I suffered from tremendous stress. Meanwhile, I was attempting to make an informed decision - I want to know what sort of risk I am expecting if I get vaccinated. Although I have notified my supervisor regarding my decision to research the impact of the vaccine, I was continuously hassled and reminded of what is deemed incompatible with the mandate. I resigned before the 17th of December in the end for the sake of my mental health. Not a single part of my job duty has contributed to this feeling of dismay and worthlessness but this vaccination mandate. I am depressed for a period of time and it has, unavoidably, become an emotional burden to my partner. At times, I am still emotional and I question if I was just another number.

I am totally concerned about the segregation created by these vaccination mandates in society. What do we want the younger generation to learn from this event? Are we trying to teach them that people will be and are punished for taking their time, doing their own research, attempting to make informed decisions. Are we trying to convey the idea that threats and coercion is the way to tackle a problem? From my teacher training, I have learnt that we should facilitate children to develop their higher order thinking, respect and celebrate their individuality. As an educator, I don't think I have been treated as such when the mandate was made effective.

I would like to see the revoke of the vaccination mandate in school and early education settings. In Japan, education staff is prohibited from discussing vaccination status with colleagues or students. Covid vaccination is an optional medical procedure and all staff of students are free to choose what is best for their own bodies. Risk assessments should be done in each and every education setting to formulate a sensible and effective plan. Any forms of threats or coercion should be avoided at all costs.

Educator 165

My name is D, I am a Female Secondary Teacher, with a permanent part-time position at X State High School, in Central Queensland. I am 44 years of age and have just finished my second year of teaching after a long period off. I have five beautiful children and one foster child.

My gift as an educator is inspiring young people, especially those who find school life difficult, to believe in themselves and to strive to achieve their very best. I believe I am able to impart an attitude that says, "I can do this", instead of "this is too hard I won't even try".

The principal at X State High School is a great man who is interested in the welfare of his staff. I believe I have a positive, respectful relationship with him. Recently I have made an informed decision not to be vaccinated, despite the mandate for all teachers and school staff to be vaccinated. Throughout this time my principal has continued to treat me with respect and care and has been willing to listen to my concerns. My principal, however, was unable to provide me with a risk assessment for my position at the school.

The mandates brought in for teachers have had a great impact on my family and me. We are a family of 8 (2 adults and 6 children). Having this permanent part-time teaching position has been a real blessing for us adding to our overall income. The thought of having this provision taken away from us because I am not vaccinated seems unfair and unreasonable. I am highly uncomfortable about receiving this vaccine and I simply cannot do it. Of course, the possibility of losing my job over this has caused times of anxiety and stress for our family, however, I know that living with an injury from this vaccine, should that happen, will bring much greater stress and anxiety to our family.

The impact this has had on my mental health has been minimised by my faith in God. I have found myself fighting to stay in the present so I can keep calm and remain in a place of peace. It is essential for me to stay strong and keep my thoughts in check because I have 6 little people who rely on me and need me to stay strong. My children are aged 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

If these mandates continue as they are, I am concerned that there will be great loss within the education system, with many highly qualified teachers losing their jobs. This of course will be a terrible time for these teachers and their families, but it is also a very sad day for our education system and state. I am concerned that with a loss of such highly qualified and experienced teachers that our children's education will be compromised. As we are already struggling with teacher shortages across this nation, I hold great concerns for the welfare of teachers remaining in the profession if this mandate is allowed to continue. The pressure and workload on these already time poor and over loaded teachers will only increase.

As a passionate and committed secondary school teacher in Queensland, I am asking that this mandate for teachers to be vaccinated or lose their job, will be dropped. I am asking that all teachers be given the right to make their own health choices with regards to having this vaccine. As a committed, willing, and able Queensland teacher, I am asking for my permanent part-time position to continue through 2022 and beyond.

Thank you for taking these matters into consideration.

Educator 166

I have been teaching young children for 11 years in Brisbane, I am predominately a Prep and Year 1 teacher. I specialised in Early Years whilst at University. I spent 5 years at university specialising and currently enrolled in a certificate of Autism Studies to further my own speciality. In my ROLE for 6 hours a day I fulfil for 4 and 5 year old's the following **roles teacher, mother, nurse, negotiator, cleaner, psychologist, occupational therapist, counsellor** plus much more. I have done this for 11 years to a multitude of students, I would estimate over 500 students throughout my various positions. I have worked as a reading recovery teacher to assist struggling students, I have worked as a specialist science teacher extending gifted students, I have worked in special school in both the early years and the senior years. I have taken on roles in classrooms, I have also taken on roles supporting new graduates, I have worked as a relief teacher. I have extensive experience and knowledge that cannot be replaced by a graduate. **This expertise will be lost when your mandated vaccinations come into effect.**

Currently, my principal has been unapproachable due to the culture in my school. I have not felt comfortable to express how I feel about the new expectation to be vaccinated against my will. I have witnessed people being bullied when discussing how scared they are to have the vaccination, I have witnessed many people to be told to shut up and stop being anti-vax. I would not classify myself as anti – I would classify myself as being pro-choice. I do not mind if you want to have the vaccination. I do however mind that I cannot complete my job – a position that for the last 2 year has been the 'lowest' risk in all professions is suddenly high risk and getting mandated. I do not want administration at my school to know my personal medical history. It is like asking a man if he is circumcised or a woman if she has had a hysterectomy. It is none of my business. This is also none of their business.

I have felt isolated and alone at my workplace. I have come home many days and cried. I am petrified of the outcomes. My own daughter had a vaccine injury after receiving her DTaP vaccine. Her GP suggested she not have any future vaccinations – now however the same GP states there is no record of this conversation. I am petrified of the side effects that have been reported. I am scared for my family's future when I believe in all my heart that if we were to catch covid my whole family would fall within the 99.7% recovery rate.

My daughter is 10 and she is feeling the social impact of not being vaccinated. She is missing going to dreamworld, the movies, lunch outings and basic rights. I feel the social impact. We have been segregated. We have all experienced depression and anxiety. I have experienced dark thoughts with what the future holds. My whole family have been stressed about how I will put food on the table. I can't sleep at night because I worry about how I will pay my mortgage. The mental health of my family alone is heartbreaking. I feel sick about the current situation.

With all this experience forced out of the profession. What does the future hold for or future generation?

On the 19th December the contact tracing was a cinema and a pub, at this stage only vaccinated people were allowed at these venues. Therefore, the vaccinated are spreading covid. Thus, an easy assumption to make is that the vaccinations do not stop the spread of covid. Also, for the past 2 years children have been shown to have a low rate of contracting and spread covid. With this in mind I want to see the mandatory vaccinations be withdrawn from education settings. I want the future students to be able to be taught by experienced passionate teachers.

I want our lives back. Freedom without mandates attached to it. I want to be able to vote for someone that believes in pro-choice and not in segregation or mandates.

Thank you for your time.

Educator 167

Please consider the following, I am S, a Head of Department at a High School in C, I am a full-time employee with Education Queensland and have taught at my school for 38 years across a range of areas including Information Technology, VET, Science and Maths. I am female, 61, and my qualifications include a Bachelor of Science, Graduate Diploma of Education, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, Diploma of Digital Media Technologies, Adobe Trainer and am an Orange Card Holder and School Administrator. It has obviously taken me a lifetime of training to achieve the level of qualifications that I now hold. I have worked at my school for several decades, a school which would be regarded as a challenging school, however I have chosen to remain at this school because I believe that the students in this demographic need to have people teaching them who believe in them and their future. My school is typical of a school in a low-socio economic region and the students here need stability so they can build trusting relationships with their teachers. I have taught the parents of some of my students, and they believe in me and the work that I do with their children.

As a teacher in the public system, my employer is Education Queensland, I am bitterly disappointed with my employer and their lack of consultation with staff regarding the mandate they are implementing, we have been told that we need to be vaccinated or lose our job –there was no discussion about how we felt or the impacts on our health. My school administration has been supportive of me in the face of the mandate, they do not want to lose me as a staff member and part of their leadership team, they have advocated on my behalf; however, their requests have fallen on deaf ears.

The mandates have also impacted me and my family as I now face the prospect of being unable to return to work if I do not meet the requirements of Education Queensland by the beginning of Term 1 2022. I find this unbelievable when I consider that I have worked constantly throughout the pandemic, without any hesitation or request for consideration. I have not asked for time off and did not work from home, even when offered as it was necessary for me to be at school to set up the online education processes for our students. I am now finding that the impact on my mental health since the mandate has been enormous – I have never been prescribed anti-depressants before but find I cannot accept the situation where I will be unable to return to my school.

I feel a burden and a sadness at not being able to support the students who chose my subjects because I would be the teacher. I feel that I will be letting down both the students, my staff and my school. There is no-one else at the school who can teach the Certificate III that was being offered and I do not know the impact that this will have.

I would be willing to use rapid antigen testing to ensure that community members feel safe, if that is necessary, but have been advised against the currently offered vaccines. A report recently on Channel 7 news regarding 79 000 adverse reactions to the vaccines and also the rapid spread of the Omicron variant amongst the double vaccinated leads me to question the effectiveness of the vaccine and therefore the requirement mandated by Education Queensland.

Surely our schools and our students are more important than the political grandstanding that has been occurring. Our students deserve to have experienced teachers who want to be in the classroom with them, regardless of vaccination status.

Educator 168

- K Female, Primary teacher/Guidance Officer, Part time, Cairns region.
- 48 years old, 7 years of tertiary education including Masters degree.
- 12 years of service committed to the next generation of children.

My gift as an educator is extensive knowledge and dedication to the wellbeing of children, particularly those who have suffered or witnessed trauma (estimated 50% of children). All of my life's work and experience has been dedicated to the future of these children.

In 2021 I completed over 600 hours of professional development at my own expense with the aim of improving the wellbeing and resilience of the next generation as well as the teachers who teach them. This training included holistic approaches to health and wellbeing which date back thousands of years (movement, breathing, meditation, diet and lifestyle practices). The key takeaway from this study was that our minds and bodies are able to overcome anything, given the right attitude, diet and lifestyle. I know my immune system is healthy and able to fight disease or virus as necessary. I know that my risk of dying from the Sars-covid-2019 infection is much less than my risk of serious adverse effect from the Pfizer, Moderna or AstraZeneca vaccines.

I have now been told that I will not be able to enter my workplace unless I have been vaccinated with one of these vaccines.

People who work in the caring professions are often intuitive, kind and open minded. When I heard that I was mandated to be 'double-jabbed' I began to feel highly anxious for my own health and concerned for the loss facing students I work with, mostly Indigenous and many in foster care placements or out of home care. I began to feel suicidal. I spoke to my doctor, who told me to phone Lifeline, and placed me onto a high dose of anti-depressants. This goes completely against my natural instincts.

I am a single mother and aside from my daughter, my work is my life.

Research has shown that children are barely affected by Covid-19, unless they have comorbidities. The current Omicron strain is spreading quickly through vaccinated people and appears to be overtaking the Delta variant, with only mild symptoms and very few hospitalisations. (see studies from South Africa, where vaccination rates are around 30%).

It is difficult to replace someone of my experience, knowledge and talent and this concerns me, as the children and families I deal with require expert support. It takes hours, months or even years of effort to build trusting relationships within these communities.

Please allow me to continue in my profession within an Education Queensland school without the mandate to be double vaccinated. The easing of this stress upon my family, myself, my colleagues and the community I work within will be incalculable.

Before it is too late.

Thank you.

Educator 169

My name is G, and I am a 40 year old female teacher who has worked in the Private Education system on the Gold Coast for the past 19 years. From as early on as I can remember, I have wanted to work with children as an educator, mentor, confidante, and support. I have aspired to help all children joyfully reach their full potential within an environment where they feel loved, heard, and supported.

After graduating high school, I studied my Bachelor of Teaching specialising in Early Childhood and began my teaching career in 2003. During the past 19 years I have worked across the Early Years as a classroom teacher, curriculum representative, year level leader and coordinator of APS Prep Networking meetings. As an educator, I pride myself on the positive relationships that I build with my students, their families, and my professional colleagues. Just recently I applied for and was appointed the role of Assistant Head of Junior School: Leading Learning for 2022. This is a position that I have worked hard to attain, and I am confident that I can make a positive impact on my school and the wider school community.

My employer, who only a couple of months ago saw me as an invaluable staff member and promoted me to a position of leadership within our Private Gold Coast School, is now telling me that I can no longer step onto my school grounds as I am 'unvaxed'. I have been told that my role cannot be fulfilled off-site and that I am to be stood down without pay. I have also been told that my newly appointed role of Assistant Head of Junior School is being given to another staff member in my absence. I am beyond disappointed in the lack of support shown by my Headmaster, Head of Junior School, Independent Education Union, and the whole education system. How can someone be of such value one week, and then so rejected and discarded the next?

As a result of this vaccine mandate, I have now lost my employment, my livelihood, my sense of purpose and my income. As a wife and mother of three children, this is huge! This affects our ability to maintain our current way of life; our mortgage repayments, car repayments, school tuition, and ability to feed and clothe our children. I have felt coerced to take this vaccine and have felt completely backed into a corner. Take the vaccine and keep my job and way of life, or choose not to take it, and lose everything that I have worked so hard to achieve. Teaching is all I have ever known and all I have ever wanted to do. It breaks my heart that I have had to choose between doing the job that I feel I was born to do or choose to prioritise my health and safety, and the safety of my family from an experimental vaccine.

I have cried more in the last month than I have in the last 14 years. I have not felt this fragile since the loss of my baby daughter, 14 years ago, and my mental health is suffering. I find myself withdrawing from others as I am made to feel dirty and rejected. I pride myself on being strong for my family and yet in the past month, they have had to bear witness to me breaking down on a regular basis and have had to hold me and cry with me in my dark moments.

I have lost all trust in our family GP who offered no empathy to me or to my family situation. Once again, I felt coerced as my GP dismissed all of my concerns as mere consequences for a choice that I was making. Even when I expressed that a consequence for not taking the vaccine would be to get Covid, and that losing my employment was not a consequence, but rather an ultimatum, he had no response for me. I left the medical practice feeling unheard and rejected once more.

I have enormous concerns for my own children, the students at the school I work at, and the wider community. The division and segregation that is being encouraged and driven by the media and the Government is appalling! As difficult as it is for us as adults to process, it is our children who are truly suffering. Children are now witnessing their parents losing their jobs, losing their friends, and being shunned from social gatherings and events. Children will return to school without their beloved teachers and potentially face being placed in larger class sizes in order to cover a teacher shortage. How on earth will this teacher scarcity be covered when schools struggle to find quality relief staff to cover teachers who are sick on any normal given day? What happens when vaccinated staff contract Covid, which they can and will? Who will replace those teachers in order to continue our children's education? Teaching is an art and a science, and one cannot simply step in and replace the years of knowledge and experience that a teacher brings to any classroom on any given day. Not to mention the relationships that children have already formed with their teachers over the years. Relationships are pivotal in schools and there are children who will regress substantially without their loved and trusted support person alongside them.

I implore you to rethink this mandate. I plead for you to stop and think of the wellbeing of our children, of our future. You have reached your target vaccination rate of 80% and in fact, have exceeded that target. Why lose highly trained, experienced, and valued educators when you have so much to lose and so little to gain by enforcing this vaccination through mandate. The pressure that this will place on our already strained education system is unfathomable. It is not too late to remove this mandate. Act now to save our jobs and to advocate for our children and for our future.

Educator 170

My name is B, I'm a 26 year old female and worked as an after hours cleaner for 3 different schools in Hervey Bay. I lost my last job working at music festivals because of the lockdowns, so for the past 6 months or so I was working for a company cleaning schools after hours.

When the mandates for Queensland educators came in, I was forced with the choice of get vaccinated or lose my job. I am unable to receive the vaccine due to existing heart problems, but a medical certificate was refused to me by my doctor. My employers were devastated as it's hard to find good cleaners. They tried to fight for me to stay but unfortunately were unable to overcome the mandates.

This has greatly impacted my mental health and ability to earn income. My choices of work are limited due to my existing mental health issues, so cleaning was perfect for me as it was after hours and I was alone. Now, not having an income and having limited job availability, I am struggling and falling into a depressive state. I don't want to put my heart at risk any more than it is, however I need an income.

I would love to see these mandates abolished. Too many people are having to choose between their health or their income. It is devastating to see such a free country turn into a place where we can't even choose what goes into our own body. It's my body, my choice and I will always stand by that. I have to be extremely careful with what medications I put into my body as I react so highly to many different things. I shouldn't be punished for that. Never have I been ashamed to live in this country, until now.

Educator 171

My name is K, and I am a female Teacher Aide at a school on the Gold Coast.

Four years ago, at the age of 47, I approached a school to volunteer my time two days a week, and I undertook a Certificate Three in Education Support. Whilst volunteering, I worked with students from Prep to Year 6. After a few months, I was offered a position as a Teacher Aide in a Prep classroom, in a “whole class” capacity. I love all aspects of my job, but my biggest joy has been helping those who need a little bit more assistance – seeing how much their skills and comprehension improve with my help throughout the year is incredibly rewarding.

I work for a wonderful school, and the executives have shown compassion and empathy, but they feel they have no option but to abide by the mandates, and as such will not permit anyone who is unvaccinated onto the premises at the start of the school term in 2022. I know that this has not been an easy time for them.

When the vaccination mandate was announced in November 2021, I was recovering from a period of anxiety and depression that had accumulated throughout the year, contributed to by the mandatory mask wearing. I felt very closed off from the children when wearing a mask, as it removed all evidence of smiling and facial expression. The depression resulted in me requiring time off from work in September/October.

The latest mandate announcement has caused renewed anxiety, lack of sleep and poor diet. My husband and I are very stressed and our relationship is not strong. I have concerns about the adverse side effects of the vaccination and accordingly am not prepared to be vaccinated at this stage, which means I will lose my job. We have a high mortgage, which will be impossible to pay off on my husband's wage, so will need to consider selling our home. I'm also extremely concerned about my own children not being vaccinated and needing to explore distance education or home schooling, if it becomes mandatory for them to attend school.

Many of my colleagues have also chosen not to be vaccinated at this time, and our schools are going to experience a great loss of incredibly experienced and caring educators. The knock-on effect that this will have to the quality of education is devastating. Class sizes will increase, meaning less time for teachers to spend with students; new graduates won't have the mentoring that is so valuable from experienced colleagues; educators may be required to teach subjects in which they don't specialise.. all of which will put an immense amount of pressure on the staff in the classrooms, their own families, the students, administration etc.

Throughout all of this, we need to constantly consider the children. Their education, their welfare, their growth, their mental and physical health. We worked alongside these children throughout the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 – we were with them every day, unvaccinated and mask-less, as we were needed at school for the children whose parents were essential workers. And we need to continue to be there for them.

Whether to be vaccinated or not should be a personal choice, not a coercion, and I implore the government to reconsider their stance on this issue. I really want to be able to go back into the classroom in 2022 and continue doing a job I love.

Educator 172

It is with great pleasure that I am able to express how deeply and significantly my life and that of my family has been affected by these mandates.

I became a teacher in 2013 and have spent the last 8 years teaching in various settings in South East Queensland and Darwin in the Northern Territory. I loved my career and towards the end of 2021 was moving further into the field of Special needs. I hold a Bachelor of Education PreService and also a Post Graduate Certificate in Creative Industries. Many of my years teaching were as a specialist Visual Arts Teacher and I was proud to be the only practicing teacher of the Mona Brookes Method of Drawing in Australia. I was selected by Mona Brookes to go to San Francisco in 2015 to complete her course, of which only 12 teachers are selected worldwide per year. I am devoted to the Arts and loved being able to facilitate this vital activity to many students.

Early in 2020, I blended my teaching with working as the Education Co-Ordinator at Ronald McDonald House Charities. I was working relief at Darwin's most prestigious school, or X Special school on the days I was not at RMHC. When the NT (Nov 2021) mandated that all teachers must be vaccinated, I lost all my work at both schools. It is quite commonly known, that teachers are very difficult to source in the NT and this mandate meant that those schools, that called me every available day, where now not able to. It was not their fault and I felt very sad for them as it was at their peril that they lost these vital parts of their schools. Also during this time, I was advised by RMHC that if I didn't take the vaccine, I would not be welcome there also. I was a remote worker, that had very little contact with the children and families that I co-ordinated for. RMHC also mandated that all the tutors we utilised to provide help to sick and injured children could not continue to tutor without the vaccine. I lost 9 tutors for my case load of 114 students. It was devastating telling these families that their child would be put back on a waitlist for support. To make matters worse, just before I left after resigning, RMHC also mandated that any child on the program over the age of 12 must be vaccinated. I could not and would not advise parents of this rule as it went against my values as a person. These children face challenges and difficulties we can only begin to fathom and the threat of an extra medical intervention was way too much for many parents.

We left the NT in early December 2021 to move to QLD as I had heard that teachers were not mandated in QLD. It wasn't long before we realised that this was to change. I had secured a job with QLD Education as a Special Needs Teacher at a brand new school on the Gold Coast. I was extremely excited to be taking on this position but it wasn't long before I had to notify them that I could not take on the role due to the mandates. At that point I had lost 4 jobs in the space of 2 months. I am a highly qualified, eager and experienced worker that just wants to give back to students and the community. My decision not to be vaccinated does not reflect my ability to teach and be kind. I am currently searching for other positions and will find something outside the realm of teaching, I am sure however it is the children that are missing out.

My family are working within the boundaries of lost income and it has had an impact on our lives, they are unable to visit their cousins in other states and spending money has become non-existent. We were saving money for a holiday in Australia and that will now not happen any time soon. My children understand what is going on and feel that the government is being completely unfair. Look out governments that made these decisions when they get the chance to vote. They have always been proud of their Mum and love it when other students see me outside of school and give me the biggest hugs. They know of the impact I can have on all my students. I think the most difficult part of this situation is the mental anguish that it has caused to myself and my family. Fights between my husband have become common and the sickly feeling each day has become unbearable on some days. When I see a rainbow now, the only thing I wish for is peace of mind. There is nothing material that will make me happy, just the thought that the segregation and division in society will disappear. My mental health has definitely declined during this time and I hope that one day, we receive an apology for the way we have been treated. This is apartheid repeating itself.

Educator 173

Hi, my name is S, female I am a 56yo female Tuckshop Convenor who works in a private secondary school in, SEQ. I have been in this part-time paid position for 5 years, prior to this I volunteered for 9 years both in my children's primary school then high school. I love my job I love the kids and I get enormous satisfaction from knowing that I have been part of a team whos' purpose it is to nourish our students. We are, for some of these students, the carers that provide their daily meals due to there being no breakfast food at home, or substantial, wholesome food groups in their cupboards/fridges for lunch. I make a difference to these students' health and wellbeing!

On the 1st December 2021 I received my first email from my school outlining the mandate for compulsory vaccination, another on the 2nd and a further one on the 3rd which asked me to declare what my vaccination status would be as at the 23rd January, 2022. It has been made very clear that I will not be allowed to enter the school premises or carry out my employment duties if I decline to provide my vaccination documents by the 10th January, 2022.

As a family we have deliberated over the benefit v risk, the efficacy factor and the overall worldwide trial data being released around these vaccines. We are sceptical as to what we are being led to believe by the 'trusted sources' - adverse reactions being the number one hesitancy factor for us. My elder daughter is unvaccinated, has lost her job in hospitality – she has heart arrhythmia and reflux in two of her heart valves to the point that she cannot stand when they are at their worst and has been hospitalised from severe bouts. One of my son's best friends (22), was taken to hospital after his first Pfizer with onset of pericarditis, my son refuses to have it as is an avid sportsperson and won't take the risk. My youngest daughter has just had the 2nd Pfizer, she is a Bio Med student going into medicine, she has been given no choice if she wants to follow her career path. My husband is mandated as of the 1st February, 2022, he is an engineer and will not be allowed into his place of work if he does not succumb. I am not afraid of contracting this virus, I am about 99.97% sure that I will survive it. I am about to lose my job because I trust my own immune systems' ability instead of a trial vaccine which neither stops one from getting the virus or spreading it to either the vaccinated or the unvaccinated. I am no longer considered responsible or deserving, this has been expressed to me by some of my friends.

Over all for each of us our mental health has been impacted dramatically, none of us want to be segregated due to our choices but have been, none of us can afford or deserve to be without employment, it is what makes us contributors to society, it gives us self-worth and satisfaction, it puts food in our mouths and a roof over our heads, by being employed we do not hinder 'the system'. This is all about to come crashing down, we have no idea what the future holds for us. I have anxiety and loss of sleep over this for our family.

My tuckshop alone is about to lose 2 out of 6 paid staff plus all of our volunteers, we operate from 7am – 2.30pm every day serving breakfast, morning tea and lunch, each day we roster 3 or 4 staff members with the bonus of having our volunteers. Without us available to work, our coffee shop will close, all of our catering for internal and external events will cease and our menu for the children will have to be minimised. We take pride in the variety of fresh meals that we prepare on a daily basis, this is what makes us a successful and a popular service to our community – It will be impossible to maintain this service without every one of us available to manage it.

I am one very small cog within the education industry but one of many in this position I have no doubt – my request to whoever's desk this ends up crossing is, please consider this, Covid-19 is here, it isn't going away anytime soon. The vaccination has not stopped contraction or transmission of the virus so how do the powers that be justify eliminating the unvaccinated from their rightful place in society if we are all of equal likelihood of catching it. The only thing I see being achieved is an understaffed workforce under even more pressure when those vaccinated become sick resulting in more cuts to the services provided and a huge burden on government resources once thousands more become unemployed. Mandating workplaces is not the answer, look at the explosion in numbers since our borders have opened - those travelling are the vaccinated! There is a major flaw with the objective of the mandates if the vaccinated are the ones spreading the virus.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Educator 174

My name is A, male, I am 52 years old and I am a full time secondary school teacher. I teach the shortage subject of IT and also some Maths. I have been teaching in the Brisbane area for 17 years, and having previously been on panel, I am now a confirmer for the QCAA. I gained a BSc First Class in Secondary IT in the UK, and then a BEd from QUT to add to my teaching qualifications on my arrival in Australia. I offer a wealth of experience, having spent 15 years in IT Project Management before becoming a teacher.

I was disappointed at the response from my employer when I raised concerns with my principal regarding the vaccination mandate. I was given a generic response to a specific concern regarding me and my own workplace. Having been a Workplace Health and Safety Officer in a school for 10 years, I know the importance of consultation regarding anything that impacts on the safety of the environment that I work in, and I felt this was something that was not taken seriously enough.

The impact of mandates has been significant on my family. As my wife is a nurse, we both face an uncertain future. I feel that I have been given much too short notice to comply with such a complex situation, and that has not taken into account my own health and risk factors. I feel that the only reason that I have to take this vaccination is to keep my job, and that should not be the reason for giving my informed consent to what is still only a provisionally approved product still in trials.

Generally, I am a very level headed and not prone to stress or anxiety. I have a very logical outlook on life, and on any major decision that needs to be made I will look at the pros and cons of each choice. This situation has made me angry more than anything else. Angry that I am being put in a situation that I find immoral and unethical. Angry that the first time that a government has ever “cared” about my health, should put me in a no win situation – never before have I been forced into any medical treatment to keep my job. Angry that the PM claims vaccinations are not mandatory in Australia, while allowing the states to make vaccinations mandatory to be able to learn a living.

I am concerned for the immediate future of education, and the ongoing success of my students. All I want to do is go to work and make a difference in the lives of the leaders of tomorrow. Students need good role models and I have always strived to create a culture where students think for themselves and are not afraid to ask questions. They need to be able to stand up for their rights as individuals and be given a safe place to do that – so do I.

As the situation in Queensland, the rest of Australia and around the world changes daily, I am concerned that we are already in a very different place than we were when the mandate was issued. It appears from all the data that is available, that things have changed in the current wave of infection, with authorities around the world confirming that vaccination will not stop infection or transmission.

For this reason, I believe authorities need to take a more measured approach and rethink their mandate policy – students do not need to be vaccinated, which means the mandate only covers approximately 10% of those attending my place of work, which also makes it quite pointless.

Educator 175

I am a respected early childhood teacher in the Mackay region. I graduated from CQU with distinction and received the CQU gold graduation medal for our region. For the past 14 years, I have worked in casual, part-time and full-time positions, for X school as teacher and co-director, and EQ as a multi-age classroom teacher (P-3), student with disability support teacher, history and social science specialist teacher (P-6), learning support teacher (P-6), and Year 4 teacher. Due to exhaustion and the demand of the teaching profession and needing to prioritise time to my own family, I have attempted to take a year's leave for the past three years. However due to the ever-increasing experienced teacher shortages, I was persuaded to come back and take on a variety of different teaching positions during each year.

As you are aware, education employees have been mandated and coerced to take the trial vaccine or lose their job in January 2022. This will greatly increase the already ever-increasing experienced teacher shortages in Queensland and across Australia. During 2021 (whilst again trying to take leave), I was contracted at X state school as a 2-day learning support teacher and 1 day year four teacher. I also ended up unexpectedly working a term as a fulltime prep teacher when they were unable to replace (due to regional teacher shortages) a staff member on leave. On numerous occasions during my learning support days, I was also required to go on general classes across the school due to the non-availability of relief teachers in our region. Due to the vaccine mandates coming in force 2022, I shall not be taking on a proposed year 4 contract nor be available to take on any emergency relief positions across the region adding to the ever-increasing experienced teacher shortages.

Due to the mandates, I shall sadly no longer work as a teacher, and the children will miss out on having an experienced teacher that is caring, hard-working and honourable. Whilst teaching of curriculum is essential, I also taught my students many more life skills such as self-efficacy and resilience, self-worth, accountability and dependability, team skills, appreciation, creativity, focus, honesty, patience and tolerance, and willingness to explore. The children and their families in turn have taught me many things such as being a life-long learner, expanding my creativity, teaching me how to stay grounded, showing me how to find joy in the smallest of things, expanding my empathy and understanding of others, how to dream big, showing me how I make a difference in their life, getting me outside my comfort zone, and seeing the world through different lenses. The families, students and I shall miss each other.

My husband has also been mandated and he shall be on leave and long service for a large part of 2022. We are not anti-vaccine; we have both travelled the world far and wide and our family has taken every vaccine and medication required. However, what we are against is mandates and coercion to give up our bodily integrity for a trial vaccine with insufficient historic safety data. Bodily integrity is the basis of our human rights. The mandates and coercion currently in place go against this and this has caused our family much stress about our health, future well-being and financial stability.

I hope that you, as honourable elected member of parliament will also show your moral standing to uphold our Australia's democracy and to represent all the citizens who elected you. Please save our democracy and uphold its morals, values, and principles. I ask you to proactively support the dropping of all vaccine mandates and coercion.

Voters do not vote for politicians who are persuaded by money, social status or job title but those who are honourable and treat others as human beings with care and respect. So, I ask you when future students look back at Australia's history, how will you be remembered?

Educator 176

My initials are TB, I am 38 years old and have worked for Education Queensland as an Early childhood trained teacher for 14 years. I have worked as a classroom teacher (prep to year 4), a specialist in ICT and as an inclusion teacher. I have spent my entire career teaching in a low socioeconomic area in Ipswich, which just so happens to be the primary school I attended as a youngster (I feel very privileged to have been able to give back to the community I grew up in). My first few years of teaching were full-time, however I have been part-time since becoming a mother and trying my best to have a work life balance. I have been successful in a transfer for 2022 to a Brisbane school and have my fingers crossed that this will still eventuate and my career will continue.

When consulting with both my former and future principals about the mandate for teachers to be vaccinated I was given the same response. I was told that the department was working closely with Queensland Health and that if I have further enquiries I was to email staffvaccinationstatus@qed.qld.gov.au. I did email an enquiry to this email on the 10th and am yet to have a reply.

I remember reading the email telling Ed QLD staff of the mandates (before the CHO had put the directive in place). I was on my non-contact time finishing off overviews for 2022. My heart sank, I felt sick. I rang my husband in tears. I had been so excited for 2022 and now it felt like my career was coming to premature end. For the rest of the term it was extremely difficult to get up and go to work. I couldn't talk to anyone at work about what was happening as I was in fear of the reactions from others. I was nauseous and on the verge of tears when my beautiful students would hug me and tell me they were so sad I was leaving. Losing my job was always at the fore front of my mind. I cried myself to sleep and wasn't sleeping properly, often waking up several times a night thinking about what was to come. Since having time to process, I have asked my parents to sell their home, pay off my mortgage and move in with my family in the new year, all so that my children don't lose their home. My parents are amazing.

Christmas has always been my favourite time of year and I have tried so hard to bury my feelings and make it magical for my children, but I feel I failed. I feel sad about no longer teaching and anxious about being jobless. I'm not myself and my children have noticed. It breaks my heart every time my children ask to go somewhere or buy something and I have to explain that we can't afford it right now because Mummy may not have a job next year.

It's not just the future of my family that I lose sleep over, but also the impact of the mandate on students and colleagues. There is already a short fall of qualified teachers in Queensland, now there will be more. Are classes in 2022 going to begin without a teacher? Are classroom sizes going to go up? Is there going to be a greater work load for colleagues? Is the government going to employ unqualified 3rd year university students to cover the loses? We have been fighting for better teaching and learning conditions, now this could make it ten times worse! My students who require additional support to be able to have success in mainstream classrooms will go without. Will they be put at the back of the room and not included with their peers? I cry just thinking about it. It's not the country I know and love.

I am not asking to go on paid leave until covid-19 is gone. All I am asking for is to do my job. To continue shaping the minds of today's youth to become positive members of our society. I want the government to consider precautionary measures other than mRNA vaccines. I am willing to wear the necessary PPE and to do rapid antigen testing. I am asking for the vaccine mandate to be dropped so all students can have their teachers back for 2022.

Educator 177

I am a high school teacher. Before I became a teacher I worked as a degree qualified mechanical engineer for almost 20 years, but seven years ago decided to have a career change so that my work could be a way to invest into the lives of young people instead of the portfolios of shareholders. I did a graduate diploma in education and since completing the course I have been working at the same school as a mathematics and physics teacher.

Upon receiving the news about the mandated vaccinations for teachers, my employer has been generally supportive. However, I suspect they have been reeling from this news as much as I have. While they have not tried to talk me out of my decision, it was obvious the disappointment they felt at my departure and the difficulty they are going to face in replacing me. I am the only teacher at our school who teaches my particular senior syllabus subjects. Because of the government's decision that I can't work as a teacher unless I am vaccinated, my classes will be without a classroom teacher and staff in my department will be left without a colleague.

I have personally found this time very difficult. I have lost many hours of sleep due to the uncertainty about what the future will hold for me in 2022. It pains me personally to have to leave a job that I love, leave my students without a teacher, and leave my colleagues and friends. I can't help but think how disruptive it is going to be for my year 12 students to arrive at school in term one 2022 to find they no longer have a teacher for two of their most difficult subjects. Some of these students already struggle with anxiety and stress over these subjects, and I believe losing their teacher is going to exacerbate these issues and reflect poorly on their ATAR. It is particularly frustrating because the underlying logic for these mandates does not make sense to me.

I would like to see the Queensland government immediately rescind their decision regarding mandatory vaccinations – period. No mandatory vaccinations for anyone, anywhere, ever. Simply educate people, truthfully explain the risks and benefits, and let people make their own decision with a clear conscience. That is all I ask.

Educator 178

My name is E. I am female. I am a primary Music teacher. I live in Rockhampton, Queensland. I am 44 years old. I have been teacher for 22 years, mostly teaching music but also doing supply teaching in classrooms. I have a Bachelor of Education (music) from CQU.

My many years of experience means I am very skilled at my job. I can create my own workbooks and have written many of my own books of sheet music for recorder and xylophone. I am able to engage students in learning and give them opportunities to demonstrate their music skills through composing, playing and performing.

I have worked hard all year, right up to the end of the year, which is a very busy time for music teachers. I work at three different schools and taught students songs to perform at all of my schools' end of year concerts. The last two weeks of school were made very stressful by the introduction of mandates requiring teachers to receive a covid vaccine in order to return to work.

My employer found out that I was not vaccinated. She approached me and asked me when I was going to talk about next year – whether I was getting vaccinated or not. She told me that she was glad the mandate had been introduced because she would feel really uncomfortable working with someone who was unvaccinated next year.

I have 2 teenage daughters. Both of them are suffering from depression and anxiety, one of them has just started medication. I am concerned that they may miss out on a great education and cultural experiences if they don't receive the vaccine themselves. I am concerned that my loss of income will affect their lives in many ways. My eldest daughter is very academic. She is about to start year 10. Her lowest marks on her last report card were B+ for Phys ed and English, all the rest were A's. She wants to be able to go to school in 2022 and learn from the best teachers. She wants to do specialist maths and chemistry. I do not want this mandate to impact so greatly on their lives.

I myself have been struggling with depression anxiety since my husband left me. I am taking medication. I love my work. I work really hard, and some lessons can be challenging, but my job is fun. I love my students and I love the difference I make in their lives. I have watched many friends lose their jobs due to mandates and I have spent a long time worrying that it would soon happen to me. The day the mandates were announced for teachers was the day before I was about to emcee the school end of year concert. I was preparing to be entertaining and funny for an audience of parents, while inside I was suffering from great anxiety. I didn't know who I could trust, who I could talk to, who could possibly understand my concerns.

I teach music in 3 small schools. Some of these schools have many students who are from low socioeconomic backgrounds, some in foster care, many from single parent families. They are so used to having people walk out on them. I have been at these schools for 7 years now. They love that I keep coming back and they know I will be there for them. I am so concerned about the impact this mandate will have. Not just the change in teachers, but the possibility of learning from home. Some of these children live in abusive homes and may not be safe at home.

I am asking for this mandate to be reconsidered. For teachers and adults working with children to be able to make their own decisions about their bodies. I ask you to consider other possibilities so that teachers can continue to work with children whilst they stay safe and the children stay safe. I hope that I will again be able to work in the job that I enjoy so much.

Educator 179

My name is A, female, Primary/ Middle School Teacher, R, Queensland, 40 years of age, 15 years of service, Bachelor of Education (Primary P-10). My gifts as an Educator: I am multidisciplinary in my scope and approach, have a lot of experience with children who have Autistic Spectrum Disorder and children who have trauma backgrounds and additional social and emotional needs. I enjoy working with at risk youth. I provide additional support for the safety and well-being of students with issues of mental health issues and who are at risk of disengagement. I am a youth mentor and provide pastoral care to young people. I have a gift for providing first aid and handling high risk and emergency situations. I have a passion for workplace health and safety. I also teach English as a Second Language, French (LOTE) and ART.

My employer has terminated my offer of employment due to the vaccine mandate in QLD. I have anaphylaxis yet cannot get an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine because the contraindications are extremely prescriptive. I am told by the 4 Drs that I have seen in an attempt to obtain a medical exemption for the anaphylaxis, that they cannot guarantee that the vaccine won't kill me. I am a single mother and sole parent of a 7 year old girl. I am not willing to leave my daughter without a mother if the vaccine were to actually kill me.

As a result of losing my job, we have become homeless. I have lost all of my assets and insurance policies, I am unable to pay my basic bills. It took me several years to secure employment for myself now TWICE in the span of two months, in two states (The NT and QLD), I have had employment that I had worked very hard to get ripped out of my hands due to these vaccine mandates. Next, I secured a home for us in the Northern Territory only to have to terminate the lease because I became unemployed, directly due to the vaccine mandate. Without a job, I couldn't afford to pay the rent. I relocated to Queensland for a new job, teaching in a school in Central QLD only to have that job terminated also because I chose not to take the COVID-19 vaccine, again due to life threatening anaphylaxis and my inability to gain an exemption as again it is not one of the prescribed contraindications according to the pharmaceutical companies.

What was one financial loss, which potential could have been recovered from, if I were able to start this new teaching job after the unfair dismissal of my employment as Head of Boarding in the NT, however it became two massive blows of hard-earned opportunities for myself to earn an income for my family. I am the sole provider for my family so this has thrown myself and my family into financial distress. I could barely afford any kind of Christmas for my daughter and I, I was turned away by the Salvation Army for a Christmas gift for my daughter and a Christmas Hamper as on paper it looked as if I was earning an income but I wasn't. I felt mortified and humiliated. My daughter's lay-by for Christmas and birthday present was actually cancelled because my phone got cut off for not being to pay my phone bill (to use data make an internet banking funds transfer) and I wasn't able to call them to advise the toy store that I would not be able to go in and make the payment within the allocated time to coincide with the due date of the lay-by.

I am struggling to even put food on the table for my daughter and I and after all the effort that I have made to get a job, afford to pay my bills and be gainfully employed has despite me being successful in obtaining two jobs for myself, these two jobs have been taken away from me, because I can't take the vaccine, can't obtain an exemption and I choose not to leave my daughter without a mum. Despite my efforts and the extensive lengths that I have gone to (even to relocate TWICE for work, some 6000kms round trip), to gain employment, I am still now unemployed and on the back of the dole queue, struggling financially, unable to afford even the basics for our household.

My car broke down and I could not afford to get it fixed so with a back and shoulder injury after having had Melanoma, I was riding great distances on my push bike with my daughter who has ASD and ADHD across town in the heat in a bike trailer to ensure she got to her psychology and occupational therapy appointments.

Not bad for someone with a solid work history of two decades AND who is 4 year degree qualified as a teacher. I got an S1 in my suitability interview for Education Queensland by the way..... I know that despite all of this you are losing a highly and uniquely skilled teacher, who has genuine care and concern for others, especially the welfare, safety and well-being of my students. I have a genuine love of working with children and young people, especially at risk young people.

I can't afford medical treatment for the repair of my injured shoulder, or obtain therapy for my lower back injury, which causes me great pain and reduces my mobility and physical ability to do a lot of things. My health insurance policy is not financial at the moment to access these services and as it stands, I don't know when I will be able to afford to pay it. At this rate, I may lose my health insurance policy altogether. This burdening the already overburdened and inadequate public health system. I have had private health cover for over a decade. This will increase the loading of my Medicare levy too.

My mental health has been severely affected by all of the above. I have gone from being an energetic and high functioning adult, a very capable, flexible and adaptable person to someone who is stressed, anxious, overburdened individual who is barely coping. The financial stress alone that has caused homelessness and financial hardship, has impacted my mental health the most. I have become depressed because of the constant financial struggle and the stress of not being able to pay our bills or do the

things that we need to do like buy adequate food or fuel up the car to get wherever it is that we need to go. I still have a massive bill with the mechanics. My daughter is now too big and heavy for the bike trailer, which means we are very limited in regards to where we can go because we are without means for reliable transport.

I am worried about back to school costs for my daughter and if my daughter will be able to go to school because I do not want her to be vaccinated with an experimental vaccine. If this happens then I will be home schooling my daughter to prevent her from being injected with an unnecessary "vaccine" and forcefully subjected to a medical procedure which is yet to be proven to be either safe or effective.

By not being vaccinated (against COVID-19, we have lost the ability to go places in society that would be therapeutic and relaxing for us, we have been divided from family as we can't afford to do things with our family members who still have their jobs who are vaccinated (the disparity between gifts we were able/ unable to give at Christmas was a huge example of this).

Losing my jobs as a result of these mandates, has made us into have nots, those struggling hopelessly and having to ask for charity from others. It has forced my daughter to not be able to stay at her school because I cannot afford to pay her private school fees. As a child with ASD, this has been very displacing for her. She has a social and emotional deficit because of her disability, stress has been increased for her due to all of the above. She has fast become a poor kid, a child now growing up in poverty because her mum has lost her job. A mum who could not even give her a proper Christmas or even a birthday party at all this year.

As a result her behaviours associated with ASD & ADHD, which she has, have been much worse due to stress and anxiety of not having what we need and being so limited in now what we can do. She has had a lot of unsettling relocation (twice for work and now into a temporary and lower class rental [community housing dwelling] because it's all that we can afford, just barely, but we are both grateful to after all of the trials and tribulations above to have a roof over our heads.

It's pretty safe to say, both mine and my daughter's confidence and self esteem, are at an all time low. Poverty is stressful, anxiety provoking, frustrating and demoralising, worse still it is infuriating for us because it is senseless as it is a result of us exercising our human right to decline an unnecessary medical treatment (experimental "vaccine") resulting in the loss of my employment (TWICE), which is my human right to work in order to earn an income and provide for my family.

I had SIX sponsor children through Compassion Australia and Links of hope in impoverished nations. I am now not able to sponsor them and will have to withdraw my support. These children abroad who I have supported for almost a decade, could even die as a result of me withdrawing my financial contributions for their support. This is a dire consequence for them, which could literally result in the death of these children and their family members. This is an absolutely horrible situation and consequence to have on my conscience. Despite what we are being told by politicians and advertisers that we "the unvaccinated" are selfish and care little about others in society, this is untrue. These families in these impoverished nations have been hit harder than Australia due to this pandemic. Withdrawing my financial support at this time when I know that it carries such dire (life or death) consequences, feels absolutely terrible.

As mentioned above I have concerns for myself, my daughter and our sponsor children (and their families). Multiply this out for all of those who are not able to perform their role as teachers, doctors, nurses, police, firefighters, disability support workers etc and you will see that society will crumble. Children will not have access to these caring and professionally qualified, experienced teachers. They will receive an education of a lower standard..... this lowers the bar in society as they grow older and form part of Australia's working society, there will be more kids with disabilities that will be undiagnosed and untreated and many students with learning difficulties will not be afforded the educational opportunities that caring and experienced teachers could offer and provide. This would result in more kids having greater learning deficits, those who have social deficits, more complex emotional needs, and more need for assistance with their learning (including key skills for functional participation in society such as literacy, numeracy and social skills).

I am worried about the students who have trauma backgrounds that many find difficult to reach, those who are perhaps "written off" by others or classified as "too hard" (so are therefore put in the "too hard" basket), these are your kids, who without someone like me who cares about them and can reach them, will fall through the cracks. These kids will end up disengaging from education, and will most probably without intervention also join the dole queue. Without teachers like me to see them, who care for them and who will work with them to improve their situations, they are likely to become statistics, perhaps drug users and addicts, perpetrators of violence (including domestic violence), participants in crime (increasing crime rates in our communities), girls who become young mothers, who without intervention will have children that will overburden child safety massive caseloads, the foster care system, mental health facilities and prisons.

I want my job back, I am willing to pay for a rapid antigen test each day to prove that I am safe to work. Although not ideal, I will wear a mask. These mandates are unnecessary, nonsensical and are not only in breach of human rights and in opposition to the laws of this land but are dividing societies and destroying people's (including our) lives. I also don't believe it should be mandated

for parents to have their children vaccinated for COVID-19. This is due to their innate immunity to COVID-19 and the small (almost non-existent risk of them actually contracting COVID-19), and if they do happen to contract COVID-19, they have a great chance at developing excellent immunity against the virus by fighting off the virus and recovering from it completely. The decision to vaccinate children should remain that of their parents to decide what is in the best interests of their children (as is the case with all other childhood vaccines), which both my daughter and I have had and are up to date with by the way.

Vaccination and medical treatment/ intervention, should only be administered as necessary on a voluntary basis, that is when a person (or parent/ guardian) gives free and informed consent. This is in line with the Magna Carta, The Constitution of Australia and The Nuremberg Code (as well as several other national and international laws governing personhood and human rights). This is a moral and ethical issue which has been disregarded by State Premiers and have directly breached human rights and laws in this country by issuance by these vaccine mandates.

Not only should the mandates be removed but these Premiers should be made personally accountable for the damage they have done by enforcing these mandates. The people that have been affected by them, should be compensated, by these premiers. The State Premiers and Members of the Federal Government should all be tried for allowing this harm to be done to the Australian people as a direct result of these mandates AND they should be made personally and professionally accountable for the damage that they have caused by insisting employers enforce these ridiculous and harmfully erroneous mandates. They should be tried criminally and punished to the full extent of the law. They should all make full restitution to the individuals and the families that their mismanagement and erroneous judgement has directly and even indirectly caused and then they should be sacked for breach of duty of care, gross negligence, misconduct and crimes against humanity.

These politicians have failed the people who pay their wages (including myself) through the payment of their taxes. They are not emperors, these State Premiers are public servants. It is about time they realised that their job is to best serve and represent the people, not to oppress or malign the people who pay their wages. The consequences of their erroneous decision making and incapable "government" of our states and territories has resulted in a mass loss of confidence in our government, these politicians and the framework that currently guides the laws and the government of our land. These tyrannical, power tripping Premiers, have created so much destruction and division within our communities (from this Apartheid Society and rules around vaccination mandates), showing nothing but gross incompetence and disregard for citizens within their respective states. These problems have created major cracks within our society in our nation that may now take even generations to fix. Under the guise of "concern for our health and well-being", Anastasia Palaszczuk, has coerced people into taking an experimental medical procedure, by threatening the loss of their livelihoods if they did not comply with the mandate to get themselves vaccinated (with experimental gene therapy by the way). This was how she and her government met vaccination targets, by threats and coercion.

We the people were told that society would return to normal once the vaccination rates reached 80%, this was funny (well it would've been funny if it weren't so horrible) as when I lost my job she had coerced enough people that the vaccination rate was at 83%. She then got on social media and bragged about hitting this target and then stated that she wanted to keep going to get the rate of those vaccinated up to 95%. Not only did she lie, but her "goals" are extremely dangerous. Our lives have been impacted by her negatively for the worst and she is celebrating with these statistics not as if they were people who actually wanted to take the vaccines willingly (remember free and informed consent), but numbers on a board, as if they were a score, helping her to remain competitive with other state premiers or as a figure to prove her victory has been a chief and competence assured to those in Canberra who set these "goals" not for people, but literally with their lives (and livelihoods).

Finally Scott Morrison should be deemed incompetent too. For passing this vaccination push onto the Premiers, ALL of the Liberal Party Members, should be tried and punished accordingly for their roles in all of this, being made accountable for the harms that they have caused people by their actions or perhaps inactivity. Everyone with a hand in this SHOULD most definitely be held accountable for this, for failing the public also who they are being paid to govern and serve with diligence and integrity. There should also be a commission of crime, corruption, misconduct and integrity on all Australian Politicians for the last 5 decades, but most importantly for those serving this current term. Those found guilty of breaking national or international laws or violating rights of Australians and in our case Queenslanders, they should be sacked and punished to the full extent of the law.

Educator 180

My name is L, I am 33 years old. I am a single mother to a son (12) and a daughter (11). I am Head of Special Education Services (HoSES) in a small mining/farming town of X, two hours west of Rockhampton. I work between a cluster of five schools and deliver an Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP). I hold three tertiary qualifications: Bachelor of Arts, Master of Teaching and Graduate Certificate in Autism Studies. I have been employed by Department of Education, X State School since 2016.

I have worked tirelessly since having children in my early twenties to build my career, provide for my young family and to become the best teacher, leader and community member that I can be. I am a staunch advocate for students with disabilities, having to cater for all students, those with complex communication needs, mobility requirements and personal health and safety (feeding, toileting) as there are no special schools within the area. All of my students participate in all school activities alongside their typical peers including carnivals, sports, camps, discos, EVERYTHING! My students are part of the school, the community and I go that extra mile to ensure that their needs are met through all aspects of school life.

My strengths are around leading complex case management, dealing with high levels of emotions, implementing evidence-based practices and being able to overcome the challenges that arise each and every day with a positive attitude. These challenges are often associated with residing in a rural area. These challenges include understaffing, accessibility issues (two story schools, asbestos, no footpaths) and small pool of resources.

Despite my ongoing commitment, I face potential termination from my beloved job due to the vaccination mandates. I am unwilling to subject myself to the provisionally approved experimental vaccines due to numerous of my young healthy friends experiencing severe adverse reactions, requiring hospitalisation and requirement for lifelong treatment as a result of their injuries. As a single mother, I need to ensure my health and wellbeing to continue to care for and provide for my children. Given extremely small risk of me dying from COVID19, if I am to contract the virus, I have made an informed risk-benefit analysis and I am unable to provide informed consent to have the two jabs (or possibility three or four in the future).

It has been well known that the schools in my cluster struggle to find and maintain staff. There has always been a high turnover of staff, teacher shortage and high proportion of early career teachers in Central Queensland. These mandates put significant stress on the entire region, the teachers and leaders who complied with the mandates, the families of students and will unfortunately adversely impact on student outcomes. I hold concerns that the entire system will be at breaking point and teachers and leaders will leave the sector in droves. I am concerned for my students and my own children's education.

I would normally spend money on travel, gifts and entertainment with my children during the holidays however due to certainty, I have had to save my money. Most nights I wake up in the middle of night feeling sick with worry, and at times I have dreamed of those I love having strokes due to the jabs. My son has noticed me gazing off into space numerous times each day, and will come and cuddle me and say "Mum, stop worrying about the vaccines, it will go away." The fact that this has impacted on my children devastates me. My concentration and mental health have deteriorated significantly.

I would like to note that during the separation of my children's father, I turned up to work each and every day and was able to function better than I am now.

The only reasonable response of Government is to overturn these mandates. The vaccines efficacy does not trump the wellbeing of the entire education system.

Please I am begging you, for the sake of our students, our teachers and our education system to reconsider these mandates.

Educator 181

My name is I. I am a 56 year old female teacher and librarian in Brisbane with 33 years of full time and permanent experience both overseas and in Queensland. Initially I gained a Bachelor of Arts Degree at Griffith University and then studied primary school teaching at the Brisbane College of Advanced Education (1987). In 2010 I acquired my Masters of Education in Teacher Librarianship and worked as a teacher librarian for 5 years before being sent back into classrooms locally as a Senior Experienced District Relief Teacher. Teaching has been my vocation. I relished working with primary school aged children and nurturing their individual talents. I have mentored many student teachers, organised lunch time programs, taught research, cyber safety and literacy skills. I was part of a librarian network that published activities for Book Week and often sourced free authors to visit the school that I was working in. I raised funds with book fairs, fetes, social events, entertainment shows and was on several school committees.

Once the mandatory vaccination mandate was emailed to my personal email and phone number on a number of occasions, I began to feel stress and anxiety and I withdrew myself from social interactions with staff as there was pressure to conform to the mandate. Once I had indicated that I felt coerced into taking a medicine that is not suitable to my body, I received generic Education Qld form letters that stated that it was mandatory and that I would not be able to attend school in 2022. 2 dates were stated that would be for a first and a second injection.

The mandatory vaccination mandates are threatening my livelihood and the constant texts and emails from Education Qld even though I responded to the survey are intimidating.

I am scared of the vaccines and did my research on an Australian vaccine by Professor Nikolai Petrovsky. I would like to take his protein based vaccine but it is not available at the time of the deadlines. Taking a drug that could endanger my health is nightmarish.

My partner feels the same and his livelihood as a tradesman is also under threat. We have a mortgage to pay off and with both of us not having employment, it will lead to poverty. I was intending to retire in 2025 but am that scared of the vaccines as some of my friends had adverse reactions including blood clots on the spleen and another with heart palpitations and one colleague at work's mother dying from an Astro Zeneca shot 4 hours after the second dose was given.

My partner and I feel strongly against coercion and we are risking our home and a comfortable retirement. I am seeking medical advice and ongoing treatment for my respiratory ailment and elevated levels of anxiety and depression.

I am concerned that my partner and I are now excluded from social events. Being excluded and not being able to participate with the rest of society contributes to our isolation and feelings of lack of self worth. Some friends, colleagues and our parents are very aggressive and angry towards us because they are pro-vaccine. We are not anti-vaccine at all, in fact when Coronavirus first came in 2020 I attempted to sign up but the process was difficult. I searched for information about Astro Zeneca and found it to be dangerous in younger age groups and banned in Denmark. This was proven to be true. From then on I did more research and asked people from overseas about their experiences and I came to my decision. I am concerned at the censorship and the vitriol in society against democratic processes and I am concerned for the children and what kind of future they will live in.

Educator 182

Hi my name is K. I am an administration/first aid officer who works in the student services office of our rural high school in X. I am the only admin officer that solely works in this office. I have been doing this job that I love and have been told on many occasions was born to do for 4 years now before that I was a teacher aid for about 5 years both in a primary school then the only state high school in our area. Before that I was a stay-at-home mum looking after my 3 gorgeous children.

On the last day of term in 2021 there were many tears from myself and my work colleagues/lifelong friends thinking this was my last day at the job I love and am very good at. My principal has been very supportive and has told me that they don't want to lose me, and they don't know what they will do if I can't return. She has complimented me on many occasions about how well I do my job and how much students love and trust me.

My family will be greatly impacted with these mandates as I refuse to get the vaccination, and I refuse to be coerced into doing so, as it's my body my choice. The main impact will be my income as we use this money for my children to play sports and sports in a rural place isn't easy to do as most of the time, we must travel the 260km round trip just to play sports on a Saturday so you could imagine how much fuel I use in a year. Usually, I have a car full of other people's children as well. Not only financially will this be a big hit on our family but mentally as they have seen their mum cry herself to sleep with worry.

My concern for my students is that it's already a challenge to be a teenager in today's society, they need someone that is understanding, caring and loving (as we all know some of these students never get that at home sadly) as the first port of call at school and without me being in that role in student services they will find it even more challenging. So, all I want to see is this mandate dropped so we can all do the jobs we love and help these teenagers get through some of the most challenging years of their lives.

PLEASE don't let all these very loving important education officers lose their jobs, as these front-line educators are all some of these kids have to look forward to every day. This will impact our children's lives in more ways than you could ever imagine. PLEASE use your hearts when making these decisions.

Educator 183

My name is S. I have been an employee of Education Queensland for 30+ years. I have spent most of those years as a full-time primary school teacher, sometimes in very challenging schools along the Eastern seaboard from North to Townsville and South to the Gold Coast. In the last 4 years however, I have found myself working with disengaged young people and those experiencing complex mental health issues. These were high school students who never quite fitted in to mainstream schooling. My expertise has been the ability to connect with young people and help them to reinvest in their education, to rediscover self-belief and self-worth and to reinstate belief in a system they had lost faith in, in the past.

The mandates imposed on the education sector saw me removed from my position in a hospital school during the September school holidays and given 24 hrs to be vaccinated or not return to my job ready to start Term 4. This was a job which I had won at the end of 2019 from 120 applicants. It was a job I was passionate about and one I was proud of. This was where I would stay until retirement, or so I thought. The response from my employer was a knee jerk reaction linked to the Health Department with no real support given to those staff who opposed these mandates. We literally packed up our personal belongings and walked away. We were then asked repeatedly to supply work and support for the people bought in to take our jobs, all of which had no expertise in the area. I was redeployed to a new school to fill non-Contact time for others, therefore wasting any expert knowledge and whittling away my self-worth as an educator. When the mandates for the Education Department were brought in, we were not addressed by our principal, our queries were unanswered and all they could do was redirect us. Every time we tried to interact with them meaningfully, they continued to direct us to email the staff vaccination enquiries along with all Queensland employees.

I have now been faced with a decision to risk my future health with no long-term studies or data connected to the 'vaccine' or risk losing my home and being unable to feed my family as I have been threatened with termination for 'misconduct' if I refuse the medical treatment. This has created much anxiety and uneasiness in my family alongside my husband and my two teenage daughters. As my expert teaching is in Mental health, my concern for the young people in my own house now is heightened as they too face uncertain futures.

As I was part of a new program in my teaching role, I have already seen the impact on students when you remove expert teaching teams that have been hired for a purpose. To think that expert teachers with decades of experience are being sacrificed so readily, makes me hold grave concerns for our at-risk youth; our children who come to school and feel safe and worthwhile because they have staff who are passionate about their education and well-being. These are the ones who have already been overlooked and deemed too difficult, yet like the committed staff who work with them, they are being ignored.

I am asking that this blanket requirement of the 'vaccination' to be able to do our jobs be overturned. I am asking that we be given bodily autonomy. I am a teacher, a wife, a mum, a creative, a breast cancer survivor. I have fought hard to be here, to continue to work and to make at-risk youth's lives a little better. I have given 31 years to the Department of Education. My experience and expertise should not be taken lightly nor should other Education Queensland staff. I, like so many others have spent years honing our skills, perfecting our craft and constantly changing with the latest educational research. It has never been an easy job. We know our worth. I just hope the Department recognises our worth before it is too late.

Educator 184

My name is A. I am a female teacher in the primary school sector, working full-time in the Gympie Region. I am 26 years old and I have been a teacher for four years (I have worked in a transfer 5 rated rural school for 3 of those 4 years). I have a Bachelor of Primary Education. I am very skilled in the area of Mathematics and I have found new and innovative ways to teach this inclusively, such as using technology to differentiate for a variety of ability levels. As well as this, I am an empathetic listener for students who have horrendous home lives and I am able to provide words of comfort and hope, so that school can be their one safe place in this world.

Since the covid-19 vaccine mandate came into place, I have been treated completely differently by my employer. When I requested leave without pay, my principal refused, stating that there wasn't someone to replace me. My principal has texted, called and emailed me repeatedly asking for my vaccination status. I had advised my principal that I have completed the covid survey sent out by EQ. My principal emailed me resignation forms multiple times and made follow up calls and texts to encourage me to complete them, even after I stated that I would not be resigning from my position. I have been treated like a complete outcast.

The covid-19 vaccination mandate has affected me immensely because my principal has denied me leave without pay. If I was able to receive leave without pay, it would allow more time for me to discuss the safety and effectiveness of vaccines with my doctor. However, I have been denied leave without pay, meaning I have the choice to either resign or be terminated. Either option will have an extremely negative impact on my life. I will lose my permanency (which I earned by completing rural service in a remote school), long service leave, sick leave and maternity leave (which I was planning on taking very shortly as my husband and I are planning on having a baby). If I am terminated, I will have no way to pay for food, clothing, my mortgage or to support the family we wish to have.

This mandate has severely affected my mental health. I have cried nearly every day of the school holiday period, anxious about whether I will have a job to go back to next year or not. I am worried and scared about how we will be able to survive on just one income and if the bank will have to repossess our house. Having studied teaching straight out of school, I have no other job experience and I am too old to be employed by most places and I have no other qualifications, which are needed by other jobs. So securing another job will prove to be difficult and stressful. I am so disappointed because I have spent 4 years at uni, and another 4 years in the classroom to be told that I am no longer worthy, even though I have many years experience and expertise. It is heartbreaking.

To say I am deeply concerned about the students as they start the 2022 school year would be an understatement. I am terrified for them. They have already been through so many lockdowns and online learning, only to return to the 2022 school year without their favourite teachers. I have students in my class who will simply not function effectively without me in the classroom. Why? Because I have spent years building strong relationships with them and they know that they can trust me. These are students from trauma backgrounds. When you take away that one teacher who was their sole support in life, their whole world crumbles. Mental health statistics show that 70% of students rated their mental health as poor or fair (Headspace, 2017). Just imagine the impact of terminating thousands of favourite teachers due to this vaccination mandate. Mental health issues will increase exponentially, along with suicide rates. I am extremely worried about the children and how they will cope with such an emotional, disruptive start to the 2022 school year due to imposed vaccination mandates.

I am simply asking for the vaccination mandates to be dropped for all schools and daycare facilities. I would willingly undergo rapid antigen testing and I would happily wear a mask everyday if it meant that I could keep my job as a teacher. I care about the safety and wellbeing of the children. All teachers do.

Educator 185

My name is T. I am a primary school teacher that lives in Brisbane south area. I am 49 years old and I have 9 years of teaching experience. I have always taken pride in the way I build positive and trusting relationships with my students, while developing engaging lessons that strengthens students' confidence. I have always catered for each of my students taking into consideration their strengths and areas to work on. I truly love my job. I cannot think of anything else I would rather do.

When I received the email stating Department of Education staff were required to be vaccinated before returning to work in 2022, I found the email was "out of the blue" and there was no prior conversations, discussions or meetings beforehand. My Principal was very blunt when addressing this. WE were told (in a meeting situation) that if we were not vaccinated our employment would be terminated.

From that time to now, I have had trouble sleeping. I have been so worried and stressed with how I will provide for my family. I have a daughter who has special needs that relies on me for income as she is not able to work at this stage. My inability to sleep has impacted me. Three years ago I was diagnosed with a panic disorder and I am now suffering more panic attacks since that email.

I have concerns with this directive that there will be a teacher shortage which will affect students. Our school had many problems finding relief teachers and contract teachers so I am concerned how 2022 will look.

I feel that teachers should have the right to choose to have or not have the vaccination without being forced or threatened with their jobs. There are other alternatives, such as wearing masks. I ask that other options be made available so that I can return to a job that I love.

Educator 186

Hi my name is T and I am a primary school teacher. I have just spent the last six years studying to fulfil my dream to be a teacher and make a difference in the education of children. I have just completed my first contract in a year 5 class and have been offered a contract starting term 1 2022. Due to me being in a regional low socio-economic area, finding teachers is a difficult task. Prior to me obtaining my teacher qualification, I have spent the last ten years as a teacher aide and administration officer in primary schools and know of the critical teacher shortage in regional areas of Queensland.

The implementation of the Health directive issuing mandates to all education workers has devastated me and my family. I have worked extremely hard to obtain my degree and teaching qualification whilst juggling a family and full time work as a teacher aide/administration officer at my local primary schools to only have it taken away from me if I do not conform to the “no jab, no job” mandate.

The end of the school year has previously been a time for my family and I to enjoy a well-deserved holiday after a busy year dedicating myself to the education of students, hoping to make a difference to a child’s life. Instead, this holiday has inflicted upon me a great deal of anxiety and mental health concerns around my future as an educator. I have cried every day of my holiday so far causing strain upon my family as I grapple with the prospect of losing my job. In addition to this the anxiety that I may inadvertently cause to my new students who transitioned with me prior to the Xmas break has left me with an undeniable sense of concern. My school is a regional school who relies on the deep relationships built with parents and students.

I would like to see these mandates removed. I would like to see that people can make an informed decision and have a choice as to whether they receive the vaccination or not. These mandates are going to cause pain and anguish to our students and families. If I can walk into a school as a parent, what is the difference of being there as a teacher. Rapid Antigen testing would be a far better solution than forcing people to receive a vaccination that is proving to be not reliable in stopping the transmission of COVID and is responsible for many adverse effects.

Please do not take away my desire and love of a job just because I don’t want the ‘jab’.

Educator 187

I'm a keen school teacher, not a sage on a stage, but a guide on the side.

Hello! I'm A. I'm a 59-year-old male primary school teacher on the Gold Coast. I've been in education for 28 years, teaching in Queensland and New South Wales as well as in America. I've earned a Bachelor of Arts, and being of a multi-cultural background and having travelled to places, nationally and internationally, I take pride in sharing multi-cultural understanding with my students as well as expanding their appreciation of the spirit of global citizenship.

Unfortunately, at the moment of writing, the federal and state governments' vaccination mandates, which Education Queensland validate, are taking away from me, and my students, my invaluable position as a school teacher. Why is this?

After much personal research and reflection, I have come to the decision that the mRNA vaccine is NOT the best solution for me, as there exist other much less intrusive options. It is clear that Education Queensland fails to recognise my freedom to NOT participate in the governments' vaccine program, and has coerced me to consent to it, due to its "NO Jab, NO Job" approach. Losing my job is unacceptable! An unacceptable procedure that is costing my family and myself our livelihood!

My teaching job is NOT ONLY paramount to my family budget, but my role in the school education system also ensures that the youth is provided with quality academic education and sound social skills development at school, which benefits the community.

Please take a moment to see through my eyes how it feels to lose one's livelihood... Stress, anxiety, uncertainty, loss, mistrust, anger, despair... And as I feel these emotions throughout the day, I try to hide them from my family... I am not always successful...

Are you concerned about the huge chaos to parents and children in the community will be caused by the lack of thousands of teachers like myself NOT being able to show up at schools in 2022? A monumental social, political and economic catastrophe is highly likely to unfold and severely impact the community starting at the end of January 2022... Unless the federal and state governments reverse their decisions and abolish the vaccination mandates.

Please let vaccine-free teachers go back to work in 2022!!!

Support vaccine-free teachers and vaccinated teachers to work together, for the benefit of EVERY family in the community!!!

Educator 188

My name is K and I'm a 38-year-old female living in rural far north Queensland who is currently a pre-service teacher, specialising in high school mathematics and science. My previous qualifications are in process engineering. As a single mum of two boys the demands of engineering became difficult as fly in/fly out or relocating are not possible for me. So, I chose to change careers to education which I believed would be more family friendly with school holidays and with the teacher shortage, obtaining a job locally would be much easier. Feedback from professional experience is that I have a good rapport with the students and that my life-experiences will make me a better teacher. I also believe that having experience in multiple engineering fields will allow me to help guide students interested in engineering but also offer those interested in obtaining a trade as to the types of jobs that could be available to them in the mining industry. I have also found that when creating my lesson plans, I am able to relate the curriculum content with how I have personally used it within my engineering career, making the learning more relatable and realistic to students.

As a result of these mandates, I am now no longer able to complete my Masters of Secondary Education as proof of vaccination is required to work or volunteer within the school environment. I have now gone from studying for a career where I was pretty much guaranteed a job to having a HECS debt with no way to pay it off. Before I decided to study teaching I applied for many jobs and was constantly rejected as they believed I was over qualified. This also means it is difficult for me to find a job locally that can work in with my study and raising my kids. I have 5 more subjects to complete and then I would be able to have a full-time salary that would provide for me and my children and help alleviate budgeting stress. When I began my studies I budgeted my savings so that it would last for the three years that I would be studying. Now I am no longer allowed to complete my studies which means that providing an income for my children is in jeopardy, unless I choose to be vaccinated.

This situation is causing me so much anxiety and stress. As a female in my late 30s and in good health, the odds of me surviving Covid-19 are very, very good. The odds of my children surviving Covid-19 are even better so I do not understand why I should be forced to have a vaccination just to provide an income for my children. Especially when there are risks associated with that vaccination. I have friends who have been adversely affected by the vaccination which increases my stress regarding having it myself. What if something was to go wrong like it has my friends? What would that mean for my children? Who would raise them? Similarly, I also have friends and family in Australia and overseas who have had Covid-19 and they have all made complete recoveries without the need to go to hospital. So for me personally, the risks of vaccination far out-weigh the benefits and as a mum I have to trust my instincts and do what is best for my children. Every single decision I make in life is always in the best interests of my children and this decision is no different.

With a teacher shortage already existing I am even more concerned that with many teachers not returning because of the mandates that students will not receive the education that they should be and will result in an increase in anxiety and mental health issues which is already a concern today. As a result, I would like to see these mandates removed so that teachers can return to classrooms and do the jobs they do best and were trained to do. The same jobs they were expected to do during 2020 when there was no vaccination available, but today they cannot. With such high vaccination rates it should be even safer for them to work in the school environment than it was last year. Please help us to remove these mandates and try to return to some sort of normal life.

Educator 189

My name is K. I have been teaching for 30 years, starting at Rockhampton X School with a group of unruly teenagers (where I was mistaken for one of my students by the visiting inspector). Most recently I worked at X State School. A school of wonderful but high maintenance students where the day starts by providing breakfast and continues with tending to emotions as much as intellect.

I love teaching. It is a demanding, often unrewarding, unappreciated, criticised and misunderstood job that has (had) a tenacious hold on me. I spend (spent) holidays finishing off the last term and preparing for the next one. School is my charity, much of my identity, my social life, my social standing and my place. My husband often had to “hold the fort” at home while I worked long hours; in fact for years in X when I was a HOSES he came back to school with me at night and studied while I worked. No matter what we were doing my thoughts always strayed back to schoolwork and the students.

This year, during planning for next year, I got an email. I could not believe that as an unvaccinated person I was to no longer have a job. I panicked: I have a mortgage and a car lease, a farm with animals that rely on me to feed them, I still cannot believe this has happened. I am a fully vaccinated (except for the covid vaccine) healthy individual, I am most likely immune to covid as I had swine flu years ago, I rarely get sick even surrounded by clinging children from all walks of life.

My Principal helped me put in for long service leave and approved it straight away. I don't know that he knew what to do either. We had a meeting but there wasn't anything to say; my Principal is not a health expert, he couldn't give me any assurance regarding support in the event of a reaction. I felt so abandoned by the state and department and school that I have served well for so many years.

No one said goodbye to me. When everyone else who was leaving and retiring got flowers and kind words, I got nothing. No acknowledgement at all. No one knew what to do about me. Most people were polite but unsympathetic because they think that I can just go and get vaccinated for covid and it will all be over.

I am told I will be suspended. I don't know what that means exactly. I don't know how to pay off my car lease or meet my mortgage payments. I worry about my students for whom school is their stability, the people who they rely on to be there and be the same and to care for them.

My husband and I try to look on the bright side; there is plenty for me to do at home, we have a small farm, I can grow food but I still have to feed animals and pay bills. He can only work part time. In the middle of the night we both wake up and just hold hands and try not to worry, but that is impossible. It is surreal. I think of all the hardships of people groups throughout the ages and the injustices done around the world and I can't believe I am living one of them.

Please, please look at all the information, have the debate, have the discussion with all sides with the people who know what they are talking about. Look at all the evidence and please, I respectfully ask that you be ready to explain your decision making to me so that it makes sense. Because right now, it doesn't.

Educator 190

I have now worked for 8 years in various positions most currently as First Aid Officer at our independent school (p - 12) in X. I love my job and it has been a blessing to my family being a term time only position it has allowed me to be home for my 5 children during all school vacations. I love my job not only because of this but also because I love each family and each and every child that attends our school. I love to look after their well-being both mentally and physically and proudly provide the best service I can.

My principal has had to tell me at the end of Term 4, that keeping the job I love however, depended on me having a vaccine. I know it is his heart blood to raise up this school and provide for the community yet like me, he felt cornered into such a position where he has had to present an ultimatum to his staff: get a treatment (they may not want) or lose your job! What a hard job for him... so many families impacted and I tell you it surely impacted myself and my family. For the next three weeks, instead of enjoying my time off, I was a zombie weighing up the pros and cons, between crying and frustration of whether to take the vaccine or not.

I felt backed up into a corner - I ended up taking the mRNA vaccine although I would have much rather waited for a different vaccine, but of course the dates of the mandates did not allow for me to have my choice. No one should have to make a decision such as this, where we suddenly become instruments for an experiment with terrible side effects one of which is death and others that are debilitating one's health forever!

I have to have my 2nd shot soon and am hoping it will not have any adverse effects. Everything surrounding this vaccine is shrouded, I feel uneasy about it all and I understand anyone who will not have the vaccine at all or who is hesitant to have it!

The coercion has to stop! I believe people can and will deal with this virus (that is proven to be survivable) as it comes into our lives. Those who want a vaccine will get one and those who are unsure require time to decide and those who refuse all together require to be respected. Also, choices of vaccine types should be honoured and available and not just promised!

Stop the mandates - it will split our country in two for sure!

Educator 191

I was a full time high school science staff member for a private christian school in a northern suburb of the Gold Coast, Queensland.

After spending 8 years in the private laboratory sector, I had a desire to use my skills to encourage and excite children in the wonders and fun of science. I even upskilled my qualifications to meet the requirements of this role.

My personality type is one of curiosity, how, what and why?, so I felt that this was a gift that lends itself very well to the field of science.

Once I got the role, I felt I had finally belonged in a work environment that I really loved and would often go beyond the scope of my role to bring students interesting science facts and spend time answering additional questions that curious students might have.

Towards the end of this year I was asked by a senior head of department if I had ever considered becoming a teacher for the college, that they thought I would be a great fit for teaching. All teachers agreed and thought it was a great idea.

I was encouraged to seriously pursue this because the college would be offering a bachelor of education next year while still being able to work in my current role. This thought had never crossed my mind before but the more I thought about it, the more excited I was moving forward in this path. So I began the steps to enrol in the course.

Shortly after this the Queensland education sector mandate for the covid19 vaccination was announced and the response from my employer had been disappointing and discouraging. Teachers and staff that do not agree with this mandate have been dealt with in a manner that their concerns have not been heard or even considered. Any alternative arrangements have been refused. The mental distress and heartache that this has caused has not been addressed either.

I do think of the negative impact that this will have on students, a shortage of staff will cause everyone to be stretched thin and the high quality of attention and care students have received prior to this mandate will no longer be available. There have also been vocal concerns from many parents that they no longer feel comfortable having their children in an environment such as this.

My wife, who also worked at the college, is currently on maternity leave and had planned to not return to work until our child was at least 1 year old.

Since we both do not agree with the covid19 mandate, we are both facing the very real possibility of leave without pay (and eventually unemployment) which has caused intense stress on our family at this time of the year.

It should be a joyful time together but instead has been a time of worry for the future and is full of uncertainty.

My wife has had moments of worry and often cries for fear of what 2022 holds for us. I now have an unfair amount of pressure placed on me from the responsibility to find an alternative solution for how to provide for my family of 5, the stress weighs heavy on me. There is now also a constant uneasy tension within my family.

What I would like to see is every person to have a choice to receive the covid19 vaccine. To see the education sector mandate repealed and the right to body autonomy respected.

A decision like this can only come from persons in a position to make these changes.

I implore you to consider what negative impact mandates such as this will have for the future of this country.

Educator 192

My name is T, male. I am 41 years of age and I am a Secondary School Chemistry and Biology teacher. I am currently working at a remote Indigenous school. After many years working in the Civil Construction Industry, I decided to go to university to study education. I am now in my third year of teaching. I believe that my gift as an educator is life experience, and the ability to connect with disengaged and unmotivated teenagers, as I was once one myself.

My wife, who is also a teacher at the same school, and I recently had a meeting with our Head of Campus to talk about the vaccine mandates and the fact that they could jeopardise our positions at the school in 2022. She was very understanding of our concerns with the mandate, and also very disappointed that she could potentially lose us as staff members. She described us as two of her best teachers, and expressed how concerned she was about how she would replace us, given that her job of staffing the very remote school is already an enormous task. She said that she would advocate for us to be retained as employees with the college if possible, while staying within the directive of the CHO, and see what the future holds.

If we are faced with termination from our employment, financial repercussions will follow bringing an immense impact on our young family. My immediate concern is that the department has threatened that we will need to pay the cost of our relocation across the length of QLD, and back again. I have just received advice that for a family of 6 to move with the departmental movers to our home the cost will be over \$90,000!

How can our family be expected to pay \$90,000?! I feel infuriated by this as I have just completed the 2 years teaching in a remote school to be eligible for the department to pay for our move. As a family we have decided to stay here longer (which is beneficial to the department and the reason why they incentivise longer stays in remote areas), but because I did not transfer out at the end of 2021, we are being punished by facing the cost of \$90,000 to move ourselves because I am being dismissed on new contractual terms!

The imminent financial strain is causing our families' mental health to suffer. Children are intuitive and I know that ours realise something scary is happening. My wife and I have tried to push the worry down for the sake of our kids Christmas but they know something is up. As I write this letter, I worry sick about how we will make things work, and read through email after email from the department demanding my vaccination status, my children ask me to play with them. It's Christmas time and I am not there for them, not physically or mentally.

Earning the trust of the students is a gradual and precarious process in Indigenous schools. Often teachers only stay for the minimum required time to be eligible for a transfer, which is two years, and then off they go. The students and community know this. There is a collective view amongst the community that "white teachers from down south" only come to use and abuse the community for their own personal gain, and then leave. I have just completed two years at the school, and in the last few weeks of the year I had many students ask me "Sir are you gonna be our teacher again next year?", to which my answer was "Of course I will be". It makes me incredibly sad to think that my students, who I feel have finally started to trust and value me as part of their lives will feel rejected and deceived by me, when a new and unfamiliar face stands at the front of their Science class next year. I fear this will tear apart intergenerational emotional wounds that I have invested so much energy into healing over the past two years.

I am currently sifting through a plethora of information to make informed decisions regarding my health and I am seeking advice from my GP on this. I have been looking into the Novavax Vaccine as it is based on more traditional and longer studied vaccination methods. Novavax is expected to pass TGA approval in late 2021. If this is the case I would feel much more confident to pursue this avenue, however the current deadlines imposed by the department will not allow me to do this. Perhaps the department could be allowing more options for teachers to work from home for the beginning of 2022, which would allow more processing time for the rushed through mandates. Rapid Antigen tests could also be made available for teachers to help ensure that infected teachers do not go into schools and further infect staff and students. This seems like a more logical solution than solely relying on vaccination, given the evidence that the vaccine is not reducing transmission.

I hope that by reading this letter, you realise that I am not just another crazy conspiracy theory, anti-vax nut. I'm a dedicated father, husband, and teacher who is trying to do the right thing for all.

Educator 193

My name is M I am 49 years old. I live in Gympie Queensland. I have been an Electrical sub-contractor and served as a Avionics Technician in the Royal Australian Airforce. After leaving the Airforce I studied a Bachelor of Learning Management (p to 10), to be a classroom schoolteacher. I have work in a variety of roles from high school to primary, to prep classrooms. For the past 10 years I have been a supply/relief teacher for the local schools in the Gympie district and surroundings. These last ten years I have been on call as a teacher to fill any job description at a moment's notice. From high school maths to swim coach, to teaching special education or prep children. My Job as an educator is to fill the gaps at different schools each day when a teacher is sick or dealing with family or personal problems. I must show initiative and think on my feet without any help or any resources.

As a supply/relief teacher who visits many schools in a week, not one principal from any school has spoken to me about was happening with the governments vaccine mandates during the school term. After school had finished I started to receive constant text messages and emails supposedly from the Department of Education every three or four days asking me to fill out a survey on my vaccination status stating or I will not be aloud on school grounds unless I am vaccinated TWICE. This to me sounded like a scam, as I thought my personal health records are between me and my doctor, not for some survey.

In the last couple of weeks of school I have dealt with a life-threatening situation when a student punched a window cutting a major artery in his arm. Another student had a serious broken arm. And the last week of school I was running a swimming carnival at a large primary school with minimal staff. At that same time my wife and I were unsure if we were going to be allowed into the hospital due to the vaccine mandates. My wife needs monthly infusion due to her illness and the covid hotlines could not tell us the answers to these questions. Then to compound the stress of no medical treatment for my wife, was the threat of not being allowed to work or enter school grounds unless I have been vaccinated from an experimental drug, which Education Queensland my employer has not supplied a risk assessment showing me if it's safe or anything at all explaining the injection!

It has been very trying times the last month, I don't know how much longer my wife can work due to her illness. I am nearly fifty and have worked hard as a teacher for 15 years. I have severe hip arthritis in my hip which limits me getting another job, also we live in a regional Queensland town with low unemployment. I am casual employer for Education Queensland, so I have no sick leave barely any long service, no health care with doctors' surgeries refusing to see people who haven't had the vaccines. And we have a mortgage to pay. From my extensive research from doctors, scientist and specialist in the field of vaccines, medicines etc. I am finding it really hard to find any benefit in the decision other than the fact that the government and media are trying to coerce my family into an injection by making us an outcast in society just from making an informed choice on what goes into our bodies.

From working at many difference schools over the last year and half I am disgusted with the impact I have seen on children, parents and the school community. From some principals not allowing the national anthem being sung. To seeing students wearing masks playing sports and parents sitting outside on the street watching sports day. One school had signs spread around the school grounds saying no parents allowed. And the final straw was a six-year girl crying because she forgot to wash her hands thinking she was going to kill someone.

There must be some politicians out there that will stand up for what's right, someone that will look past this madness and look at what their policies are doing to the community, schools and our country. I would like them to do their own research and find a better way before our democracy and freedoms for our children are lost. Thank you

Educator 194

My name is E C and I have been a loyal public servant as a Teacher Aide for the past 10 years at a large Brisbane southside primary school. Sadly, it has come to a sudden and unexpected end, due the vaccination mandate enforced by the Queensland Government in the education sector. My personal choice to not take the current vaccination for Covid-19, has forced me to take Long Service Leave to try and hold onto my position for as long as I can or until the mandate has been lifted.

I have carried out various roles at this large southside primary school including learning support (involving specialised literacy and numeracy groups), general teacher aide work and for the past 3 years library administrator/assistant. My role in the library is crucial in supporting both students and staff throughout the year. With no teacher librarian since 2018, as a teacher aide I have managed the library to ensure resources are available to all students and staff, managed lunch time activities for children who need a quiet place and a friend, book parades, computer labs, IT support and the list goes on. I believe this school will be forced to reduce the library availability or perhaps even close it, as there are no other staff trained in this position. I am angry and embarrassed that due to my personal choice and the mandate to vaccinate for Covid-19, I have left so many teachers and students in a position of unavailability of a library service. 1000+ Students and teachers are going to suffer due to something I have no control over.

The current Principal at the school where I am employed has been empathetic and encouraged me to take leave, due the mental strain from the current mandate for the Covid-19 vaccination. I am Covid exhausted and the emotional toll from bullying by the Director General and the Education Department causes tears to come easily and always lurking beneath the surface is a fear of a "vaccination conversation". I have been bullied by a co-worker who believes I should be vaccinated (foolishly I disclosed this to her to stop her gossiping about others in a similar position as me) but supported by others who have secretly carried around a "dirty little secret" of not being vaccinated for Covid-19. However, I have concerns as there is a new Acting Principal starting at the beginning of this term and they may not be as empathetic. I know I will be a loss to the staff at this school but at this stage the new Acting Principal will not know that. I am incredibly worried that I am going to lose a job that I love and perform well in, due to a mandate to vaccinate against Covid-19.

My family and our normal way of life has suffered due to the rules and regulations currently in place for those unvaccinated against Covid-19. Not to vaccinate against Covid-19 is not a decision we have made lightly as we have fully immunised ourselves and our children for vaccinations required for childhood illnesses and travelling overseas. We have been willing to make sacrifices and miss out on many opportunities as we take our health and our right to choose how we look after our health very seriously. This willingness to sacrifice our normal way of life has come at a cost to our mental health. I see it in my children, I feel it within the tension in my marriage. There is a grief and a loss we feel right now on so many levels. With family interstate we have lost important time with them. The only way we can change that is by being vaccinated for Covid-19, however, this would still come with many rules and regulations. This could come at a heavy cost. One cost already is my husband has been coerced to take the Covid-19 vaccination. He believes he has a responsibility to his parents interstate, a provider to his wife and children and a responsibility in his position at work.

Like many, I have great concerns for this Covid-19 vaccination mandate. The cost it is taking on the community and society will never be able to be measured. I believe the freedom to choose what we do with our health, which was once something kept between my doctor and I, should still be an option. I would like to return to my job as soon as possible so I can support the staff and students of the primary school I am employed at and hope the mandate will be lifted for the freedom of people's right to choose.

Educator 195

I am a teacher in Central Queensland and have been Director of Outdoor Education at two P-12 private schools over the past 24 years. I am 50 years old, my wife is also a teacher and we have three teenage kids.

In my role as a Director of Outdoor Education I run outdoor, overnight and expedition based adventure experiences closely tied to a sequential personal growth, values, team building, leadership and pastoral care programme.

My work is very rewarding and I love seeing the results of students and staff learnings make tangible contributions to individuals lives and our community. As part of my role as Director, I live on site with my family at the schools 100 acre Outdoor Education Centre, have staff and facilities to maintain and operate, including a sizable budget. I also deliver a VET Cert II in Outdoor Recreation to Year 11's, run the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme from Yr9-12 and are part of the Round Square International network of schools.

In early December my employer announced the mandate for the double jab. This was delivered as a fairly stern legal letter, mentioning the possibility of termination, should you not comply, and gave me and my family a matter of weeks to seek medical and professional help to make a decision.

Given I had anaphylactic type of reactions to vaccines as a child and more seriously in my 20's, I was confident that I would be able to gain an exemption. After seeing a few doctors, it became apparent that the conditions for an 'exemption' were so tremendously narrow that my doctors advised that, despite my medical history, they could not help me with an exemption. It was obvious to me, that their hands were tied by Government directives and they apologised for their inability to help me! Even if I were to get an exemption, my school released a policy stating that exempt staff would have to have a PCR test every morning before work. (this would be unrealistic in my role and due to the nature of my work. They would not consider the 'Antigen' test as an alternative either) I now faced a challenging decision, do I risk having the vaccine to face a high probability of having a serious reaction but keeping my job, or not have the vaccine and likely losing my livelihood and profession?

Given the value I place on my health, and have reservations about the vaccine given there have been no long term studies on the effects of the jab/s, I have chosen not to get the vaccine. I never thought that my career would be in jeopardy over such a situation.

To add to the consequences and situation we face, my wife, for religious and other reasons, has chosen not to be vaxxed. This means that within the space of a few short weeks, we will likely both be terminated from our employment and be removed from our accommodation on site, which is part of my package.

With the total loss of income and accommodation in our family of five we are naturally facing a serious crisis. The mental health effects have been noticeable on our whole family and we are still coming to terms with what the future may hold for us.

In addition, I am extremely concerned for the students I teach and the community I belong to. To find replacement staff of my wife's and my experience will create a gap that cannot be easily filled in a regional area. An instant and catastrophic loss of key staff across the state will have an immediate and rippling impact. If we think of the state wide implications on schools, communities and the medium term effects of placing greater strain on staff in the system....I am truly concerned and can see a second wave of stress, sick leave and unsustainable work/life balance emerging for teachers/schools/communities .

As a matter of potential solutions and requests for change moving forward:

- I would like to see schools removed from the mandate given the strong research that shows that school students in particular face a low risk of the effects of COVID.
- Reinstatement of staff that are non-vaxxed but with daily antigen testing and PPE being utilised as a strong measure of defence.
- I would like to see the 'Antigen' test become an alternative to the PCR and would gladly pay the daily cost for it, if it meant I could keep my job!

My career, finances, housing and place in my community are on the line today and my family and I are facing an immediate critical challenge.

Should you be able to lobby for realistic changes to help my wife and I keep our jobs, remain in our community and support the full staffing of the education system, I/we would be very grateful.

Educator 196

My name is J, and I live on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

I have been employed in a full time capacity at an Independent P-12 school in X for the past 23 years; my role being in the finance department of this school. Administration and business staff, together with grounds and maintenance, ensure smooth and efficient operations of my school, all year round.

As part of the finance team my role involves interaction with staff across the school campuses; with parents and friends of the school; and with various State and Federal government educational departments. I have a Diploma in Business Administration and many years 'on the job' experience.

I love my job and have built many strong relationships over 23 years of service.

Now, however, because of the recent mandates in Education in Queensland, I have been excluded from my workplace, because of my decision not to vaccinate against COVID-19.

This is incredibly distressing for me and although my Principal is sympathetic, his hands are tied: I have until the end of February to 'comply' - take the injection/jab/vaccination - or face dismissal.

I never imagined that I would be locked out of my workplace because of my personal health choices!

Exclusion from my workplace has impacted on my health significantly; I am more fearful and anxious than I ever have been and sadly this is affecting my family as well. I am the major 'breadwinner' in my household and although not yet ready to retire, may be forced to do so.

I want to work. It's difficult to imagine what the new school year will look like for my school with staff in key roles excluded from their workplace. Including me, there are TEN support staff no longer permitted on school property – these are the staff I am aware of and there will be others.

How will this affect our students; their parents; the entire school community? And this in only one school in Queensland.

I can only hope that common sense will eventually prevail, and the mandates revoked...and ALL staff, stood down or dismissed, returned to the jobs they love.

Educator 197

My name is D. I am 46 years old and am a very passionate teacher with 25 years' experience. I am the Head of Curriculum at a primary school, years Prep to 6, in X, Central Queensland. I love my job and go to work with a smile each and every day. I am known as the positive ray of sunshine. I was mandated to take my first COVID vaccine by 17th December. As I have chosen to decline the COVID-19 vaccine I am no longer permitted to attend my workplace when school returns in (week 0) 17th January 2022. They have managed to fill my position, but I can assure you the person replacing me does not have the experience and expertise that I do. I am caring and driven and know most of the 785 students by name. I have a wealth of knowledge and skill in pedagogy and curriculum and am a great support to my colleagues. My school has a total of 6 graduates starting in 2022 and my fear is that they will not receive adequate support. The care, support, understanding and knowledge I bring to my school cannot simply be replaced.

Being mandated has caused a severe impact on my mental health and I have suffered terribly. I am now medicated with sedatives at night so that I can sleep and awaiting a psychiatric appointment. My doctor has created a mental health plan for me to see a psychologist locally to help me process my feelings of dread and grief at being forced to leave my career that I so dearly love, although wait lists are long. My family have experienced terribly due to watching me dissolve in front of their eyes. They live in constant worry that I'm ok. My friends no longer call or in pop in to say hi, but rather check that I'm upright and not in a ball on the floor. This is simply not ok. I know and am more than my profession but why should I be forced to choose between my job and my health, when I know my human rights mean I am entitled to both. How I have chosen to live my life outside of work will change dramatically. My husband and I had great plans on early retirement to travel and see our wonderful country but, without my income that dream has now been quashed. Vaccines and mandates are dividing our nation, putting stresses on families and creating hatred and fear. This simply is not the free democratic country I have been blessed to call home. I am a very proud Australian.

Stop the mandates as soon as possible. Let people live by the choices they choose to make. Better still, stop the COVID vaccine program. People should not be used as guinea pigs in a clinical trial. Leave the children alone. Stop pushing the jab for children. If children become mandated to attend school, I fear there will be a mass exodus of students from traditional education settings. No-one wants to see that. Finally, I hope with every fibre of my being, that people who have been vaccinated, and those who continue to get booster vaccines, will be healthy and safe in the uncertain future ahead and will not suffer medical injuries and illness caused by this COVID vaccine.

Educator 198

My name is J, and I am writing to express my concerns about the vaccine mandates in Queensland. These mandates are affecting me personally and they are having an enormous impact on my general health and wellbeing.

I began teaching in Townsville as a Special Education Teacher within Education Queensland in 1995. As a single mother I had moved from New South Wales with my sister. Teaching gave me the opportunity to provide for myself and my daughter. I was able to buy a house, put food on the table and give her the opportunities.

As life progressed, I met my husband, had more kids and moved quite a bit around regional Queensland. I taught in Sarina; Primary, High School and Special Education. In Mount Isa: Special Education, short term contracts, casual teaching: Chinchilla, Dalby, Cloncurry, Charters Towers, Dalby again, South Burnett and finally X. Everywhere I went I was able to get work. I took what was available because it allowed me to support my family and you know what? I was good at it!

I could teach anything. In my last position I taught Year 9 Science, Year 9 HASS, Year 9 English, Year 8 HASS, Year 8 ART, Year 4 Technology and Year 1-2 Technology. I'm a Primary trained teacher with Bachelor of Education- Special Education and a Master of Education in Guidance and Counselling. I needed a job, and you needed a teacher, so we danced the dance, again.

I am a professional. I am a mother who studied full time for a master's degree while I worked full time, raised 3 kids and dealt with a multitude of heartbreak and sorrow due to my husband's mental health issues. I thought my masters would get me out of the classroom but still allow me to be in the system while my youngest moves through, she's 11. But I doubt that is going to happen.

Fortunately, I took leave before the vaccine mandates were announced, unfortunately I am burnt out. My growing sadness is that I have lost my lifeline to security. I choose not to be vaccinated because I believe everyone should have the right to choose what happens to them. I feel I have earned that right to choose. I do not feel threatened by the virus, and if I was, I feel I have earned the right to adequate medical intervention.

I have played the game, paid the taxes, brought up good and honest children. I feel I have had the rug ripped out from under me and am now laying, crying on the floor wondering what the hell am I going to do. At the moment I sit at home, watching my daughter getting more and more withdrawn. I am getting more withdrawn. We are isolated from family and friends and I'm doing my best to make each day count. I'm trying to use those years of juggling experience and improvisation to come up with a solution.

If I do get vaccinated in the future, it would only be to be employed. I could join the line of the coerced but at the moment I can't. I am too disgusted. I am disgusted by what I see as medical apartheid and I am disgusted by the political systems that support it. I am gravely concerned that they will mandate children's vaccination as they did in the early childhood sector. Please drop these ridiculous restrictions which are dividing our nation, our livelihoods and communities and our homes.

Educator 199

I am a female Teacher Aide from Queensland. For the past 7 years I have loved educating primary children and special needs children. My gift is that I always put a smile on children's faces and they enjoy being in the classroom every day. I get to know each child's individual needs and love seeing them grow over the year. The parents always compliment me and say how much their child loves me and loves coming to school because of me.

I have not spoken to my employer about the mandates as I have felt too overwhelmed with it all.

The mandates have impacted me and my family in a negative way. At a time where we are usually enjoying Christmas and family time and resting, we are instead worried about me losing my job.

This has had a huge negative impact on my mental health and my families mental health.

I haven't been sleeping well and have felt anxious. I absolutely love my job and the thought of being forced out of it has been absolutely devastating. My children aren't doing their usual fun things, we have restricted things that cost money because I may not have an income. My concerns are that my students will miss me terribly. At my current school over 6 out of the 20 staff have left last year so the students have already had a huge change. The parents will suffer also because they know how much effort I put into their children.

I am asking to please stop the mandates.

I want to see passionate human beings able to stay doing what they love. The mandates are forcing people to give up what they love and that is killing peoples souls. The children need us to stay with them and we need them. It hurts to think of the damage the mandates are causing.

Please stop the mandates, they are destroying people's lives.

Educator 200

My name is A. I am a 42-year-old mother/stepmother of 3 boys aged 2, 8 & 12 who graduated with a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) in 2010. I am a Primary School Teacher, have been a Specialist Health Teacher and more recently a Student Wellbeing Worker (SWW) 2 days a week at X State School. My position as SWW came just 5 months prior to the mandates being putting in place. This role was very exciting for me as I felt I had finally found my dream job within what I believe is my 'calling', part of which is to create 'space' for children to feel heard, have their feelings and concerns acknowledged, feel a sense of connection and be able to freely express themselves. This job allowed me to do this and more.

Being employed through an external agency, X Youth Services, I was fortunate enough to have 2 bosses that appreciated and valued the work I was doing with the students at X SS. Both worked to find a way to keep me employed in the position but felt their hands were tied when it came to the mandates. They both respected my choice to remain vaccine free and are extremely upset that they will not be able to extend my contract to 2022.

Before returning to work, I was diagnosed with post-natal depression. Living in a small rural community as a new Mum, not knowing many people, has been extremely difficult and felt very isolating. Since being back at work, I felt like I had my spark back and some purpose again outside of being a Mum. My relationship changed not only with my Partner, but I was a happier Mum and my relationship with my 2 stepsons also drastically changed in such a positive way! Not only that, the extra income I was bringing in made a huge difference! It took some pressure off my partner (who owns his own business) and covered most of our rent. I am also someone who thrives with people around them so being back at work I made many new connections and friendships that enhanced both my and my family's lives. Now that I am unemployed again, I am concerned that I will struggle with my mental health again, my partner now has added pressure to work harder being the sole provider for our family and I am once again feeling quite isolated.

I worked extremely hard in my position as SWW to establish trusting relationships with both students and staff at X SS. The students trusted me and found comfort in spending time with me. They had someone they could turn to if they had a rough day, were having trouble with their families or friends or were just finding life hard. I gave them space to share their concerns and fears without judgement. This in turn allowed them to be more focused and more successful within the classroom and learning environment. I had also implemented incentives and ideas for the staff that helped them feel more appreciated and connected to each other.

Yes, I am replaceable but when I last spoke to my boss at X they were struggling to find someone to fit the position. This type of role takes a special kind of person, and I am concerned that come the beginning of the school year 2022, when anxiety is extremely high with the students (especially in the current climate), there will be no one there they can turn to. This becomes stressful for not only the students but is also an added pressure for the classroom teachers as there isn't that extra support there that they can rely on. The ripple effect this will cause is enormous not just in the present time but will continue to have ongoing effects as these kids get older.

Like I said above, this was my dream job, working with kids is where I shine! To have that taken from me with the possibility of never being able to return, I don't know that I can put into words how sad and concerning that is for not only me but also for all the children I could be working with. I would like my job back! I ask that you think very seriously about the long-term impact on these kids and make a decision on what is best for them because after all, they are the most innocent and vulnerable of everyone....and not in catching a virus but for long term mental health issues.

Educator 201

My name is G, I am a female relief teacher aide 47 years old and had been working in the sector as a paid worker for 14 months and probably a few more months as a casual volunteer in primary school settings. Originally I am an engineer, but life never really allowed me to work in the field. I lived on 3 continents and 5 countries in the past years, I became a mom, overcame language challenges so needed a work where I could have enough time for my children and pursued my career in aged care and disability care in 2015. At the beginning of the pandemic I needed something new so I only changed the age group of my serviced customers and started my TAFE course to become a teacher aide and commenced paid work in schools in 2020. Short story, not 20 years experience, but I am taking my time and willing to support my tribe. It is worth every second. Being a mum I am frightened for the future of my children that they do hopefully never have to go through this experience as adults.

I am a casual worker. On the last day at my school in December 4 teacher aides were sitting in the library and doing all sorts of admin work. At one point one of my casual teacher aide colleague asked me if I am vaccinated, and I said yes, but then she asked again, fully? I nodded. Few weeks before another teacher aide asked me the same question, then I said not yet. Probably words might have gotten out. But I did not want to discuss the topic, so I waved it away with a lie. Later that day I learned that I might get calls from the school to fill in but they took away my only one permanent working day. Which I understand.

In another school, teacher aides were not brave enough to ask me, so two of them sitting next to me were playing a game, obviously. They asked questions like: "What are you going to do next year?" Then the other one said: "The government is changing the rules all the time." I joined and said: "It is not fair". then they continued the conversation about how they uploaded their vaccination status onto their smart phones. It looked very sneaky.

Since I am a casual worker, my income is not certain. So my approach is, the better I get the more hours I can get. It looks like my hours will be reduced to none next term. It will be sad not to be able to go to work, but being labelled, challenged and ridiculed at the work place is not worth any effort.

I had a long history of depression. Isolation from people, my work and social encounters has a huge impact on my health. The only place I enjoy is my walking outdoors. There is not always someone who has the time to walk with me, but this days it is hard to find like-minded people. Everyone has her, his story and all of them are right. Many people are scared and I am not always in a mood to explain them at every level why our coercing mandates are not valid.

My girls are introverts, great academic achievements but difficulties to socialize. Not being able to go to places in the school holidays is a hard, but we explain to them why we are doing it.

It is a real concern that communities are divided by an artificially created fear which is fed on a daily basis with false facts. Children's vaccination is really not to their benefits. Dr Robert Malone expert in mRNA technology explained on an interview that young people until the age of 30 do not need mRNA jabs because the statistics show higher adverse reaction at this age group than benefits.

My daughters GP told my 14 years old daughter, that she can go on her own and get the vaccine without my consent. In front of my eye. I was not happy with my GP. Where is informed consent and what does it teach to a still dependent child this advice? That same GP said it in November that she can't wait for the decision to be able to vaccinate her 10 years old child. Would it be the same if she would not have the indemnity provided by the government.

What if no one could be made liable for their mistakes? Where is this all going regarding ethics?

I ask you as a person with authority to go back to your core ethics regarding the well-being of the population and revise the actions were taken under the umbrella of "emergency state"! What have we achieved and was it worth it? Compare your data and prove us, that the measures and mandates were taken under the "emergency state" were to the benefit of the population and who gained the most out of this discriminatory act? Is it really to our gain to threaten people with losing their jobs if not vaccinated with the experimental exclusive jab, which is so exclusive that we are not recording valid data about its adverse reactions.

Why do we have to create so much fear in an age group -school aged children - which can get sick with Covid-19, but can shake it off just like a common cold without any serious symptoms. A positive test is not equivalent with a hospitalized person. Prove me wrong with data! Before that there is no valid right to mandate a group which is not under direct threat!

After 2 years in the pandemic if we are aiming to herd immunity which is not guaranteed through the vaccine by professionals what is the long term strategy for us. Changing the directions every few weeks does not look very promising for any sector!

Who gains from such action? Not the common population that is for sure! But why the common population has to comply if their interest is not the most important in our game?

Educator 202

My name is S. I've been a teacher in a whole variety of capacities since I was a teenager. From refereeing football, to coaching, captain of the Surf Club, school holiday programs, youth training programs, tutoring and finally in schools. It adds up to about 35 years experience.

I've worked with students from 4 to 21 and am comfortable training teachers as well. I can easily teach literacy and numeracy from K to 12.

I currently live on the Gold Coast but have worked as an educator in Asia, Europe and NZ. I also run a small online tutoring business hosting students from around the world.

My current employer is guilty of the highest degree of coercion and has already banned me from campus. I expect some form of letting go early in 2022. They've passed all responsibility onto me and refuse to put together even a risk assessment, let alone provide me with the safety data I've requested. Never mind, I see where they stand now. It doesn't appear to be for the students.

Because of the mandates I haven't seen my daughter for 2 years, my brothers have been made homeless and I face an uncertain future regarding servicing my mortgage.

Fortunately I have been preparing for this for 18 months so I am mentally and emotionally ready to face what may. I am prepared to sell my home if I need to - of course I don't want to do this.

My greatest fear in the future is that we'll all be forced into some type of social credits system and every one of our movements will be controlled. In fact I know people who are welcoming this.

All I want is to be able to offer my gift to the world and live in peace. That the medical tyranny will end and I can hold my child once more.

I think this process will birth something new and better. An education system with integrity and closer relationships between parents and educators with the best interests of the children in mind.

Educator 203

My name is J, female (56) and I am a teacher's aide at X State High School. In my department, there are between 3 and 4 teacher's aides that may not be returning next year because of the mandates. That will be about 50% experienced teachers aides all have been there approx. 10 years. I have been with X for approx. 10-11 years and have been a teacher's aide for about another 4-5 years prior. I have a Cert III and Cert IV in Education Support as well as certificates for office, MYOB and Information technology. In my current employment, I work with students with disabilities. This provides me with much satisfaction, continuing to be a part of these student's development and being able to celebrate their successes. Teachers' aides work with the most vulnerable in our community and I feel lucky to be able to be a part of that. I have watched students I work with not being able to sit through a lesson in class to become B students. It comes with a lot of hard work and experience to be able to help a student achieve this. As a result of the mandates, it would appear that I will be unable to return to work in a job that I love when the students return because of my decision to decline the vaccination for Covid-19.

When we were first advised to the requirements to be vaccinated by 17/12 and the second one by 23/1, I contacted our union, who basically told me, too bad. In fact, I have sent an email to them regarding termination rules and they have not replied. I heard about the Red Union from another staff member who was able to provide us with the support we require. I am not sure I am going about my decision the right way but unfortunately it is my only choice to fight this decision so far. The Red Union has a series of letters that we are required to send to our line managers, which I did. Essentially they advise that I am willing to work and to request a copy of the risk assessment. They are supposed to be written by solicitors and we have been told not to change them. My line manager is the Business Manager so I sent it to her. We do not have contact with her on a day to day basis and have to make meetings to see her and these are not necessarily timely. Regardless, I know that she is unable to do anything other than to convince me to get the vaccine. The response from this letter was that I was 'rude and disrespectful' and she even saw fit to show it to my HOD. The whole department knew despite me not telling any of them except the others who were also doing the same. On my last day, I advised my HOD, who told me to discuss this with my doctor, which I had already done. He then suggested I get another opinion and to get another lawyer as the letters were incorrect. I have access to another lawyer too. Further letters have been sent to my Principal as per the union's advice. His replies were generic letters that seemed to have been written by the department in response to the letters. I have had no contact with anyone to discuss in person.

My doctor told me to get the vaccine as it was the way we could get rid of this virus and compared it to smallpox. He also told me I should trust him. I replied with 'but the vaccine stopped Smallpox!' Every time I saw him it was the same story, get the vaccine despite it not being the issue I have been seeing him for. At the time, I was supposed to be being referred for a colonoscopy and I did not receive the form and when I rang to check, did not get a return call. I feel as though this is all linked.

My mental health has deteriorated as a result of the Covid-19 mandates. I have been crying all the time, depressed, staying at home too scared to go out in case I am victimised for not being vaccinated, including going to the doctor. I wake up, and the first thing I think about is Covid and how I am probably losing my job, what will happen to the students I work with and what will happen to me. At my age it is difficult to find employment and even more difficult because I am not vaccinated. I am scared to get vaccinated, scared to not get vaccinated, and scared that the virus or the vaccine will make me ill or dead too. Mostly I am scared about the way it has left people who are normally friends fighting with each other for the choices they are making. I am also concerned about my future. At my age, I need to be building my superannuation and preparing for retirement but I am now going to be going backwards. I called the Employee Assistance Program and the woman I spoke to was very helpful but it doesn't solve the issue that I no longer have a job and I feel as though I have let the students I work with down. I didn't even get the opportunity to

prepare them for me not being back next year and I work with some high needs students and worry about them.

My decision to not get vaccinated is for a lot of reasons including my health and safety. The vaccination is only Provisionally Approved according to the TGA. To me, that means it has not completed full testing. The negative effects of the vaccine outweigh any benefits it may have with over 80000 reports of illness as a result of taking one of the vaccines (according to TGA). And it doesn't even stop the virus! Every day the politicians change the goal posts for when the vaccinated will be allowed their freedoms. Information provided is often contradictory to each other - masks don't work and now they do; Astra has age limits and Janette Young is recommending not to have it, then its ok; don't need boosters and now we need to have them - not every six months - suddenly its ok to give them every four months. When is it going to be enough? Most importantly, the people who were the safest, i.e. teachers and teachers' aides, who were required to babysit students during lockdowns because it was safe as Covid left our students alone, are now at risk more than other jobs in the community. People are losing jobs and their rights and freedoms. There are many other examples of these types of incidents. Most importantly though, we are not getting unbiased reporting in the media and it is concerning. We are all Australians and we are no longer equal. We are squabbling about who's right and who's wrong. No one is either. We all have different ideas on how to fight this virus and mine is to use my own immunity. That's what we were given to fight all diseases and if I am to die as a result of this virus, then that is what was intended although I feel I would be extremely unlucky for this to happen. At the moment, I feel safer to remain unvaccinated and risk Covid than I am to have the vaccine. Too many people are having extreme side effects within days of having the vaccines and they can't all be coincidences and the TGA website would appear to confirm this.

I would like to see an unbiased discussion take place showing both sides of the story so we can make informed decisions on our health. A politician is not qualified to give out medical advice and health care needs to be individualised. There needs to be consistency - how can an unvaccinated person have less rights than a sexual offender or criminal. They can go to the movies, get health care, sit down in a cafe and have a cup of coffee. From the 13/12 to 17/12 we could all enjoy the same things. The borders were opened and Covid was free to roam around the community without discrimination. What's changed? Most importantly, no one should be penalised for not being vaccinated, especially having their job taken from them. I want to work in a job that I love and with the students I care about and I know I contribute to their successes. I am prepared to continue wearing masks if that's what needs to be done to keep me employed, but don't punish the students because ultimately they will be the ones who will be left without their familiar support people that make their days a little brighter.

Educator 204

I am a 51 year old female teacher who lives near Gympie, QLD. I have been a contract and relief primary school teacher for the past 17 years.

I love teaching children and encouraging them to be curious about the world around them, to try new things and become life long learners. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing eyes light up and excitement when a child has discovered something for the first time, or a concept has 'clicked'.

I am absolutely devastated that I have lost my job because of the government mandates. I am not willing to be vaccinated as it is still in it's experimental phase. I do not wish to take part in the experiment and will await to see if the results have proven it is safe and effective.

My husband is an avocado farmer and we rely on my income to supplement the income from farming. We are concerned about how we will survive financially.

I would so look forward to be returning to the primary schools I have worked in, to see the students and colleagues who have become friends and to have some income in 2022. I wish with all my heart that the mandates be stopped.

Educator 205

My name is D, and I am an 18 year old female currently living in Cairns. I graduated high school in 2020 and during my studies I completed my certificate 3 in education support. By completing this during my senior schooling I was able to gain a job in an after school care service as well as be a teacher aide at school. Straight after school I have gone to university to study teaching.

As of December 2021, I have lost both of these jobs due to the vaccination mandates. Both of my employers have stood me down. Through these actions I am left wondering how I am going to support myself through my university studies. Additionally, both of my parents are teachers and have taken leave at half pay. With having less than half the usual income, I am left worried and wondering how my family is going to get by and how my brothers are going to be supported. As a result, I have found myself living out of home. Moreover, it has added additional but unnecessary stress to my family.

While I understand the benefits of the community being vaccinated, I do believe that some cases should be looked at in more detail. I personally was diagnosed with histiocytosis as a baby as a result of vaccination hence my hesitation to receive the vaccination for covid 19. I ask you members of parliament to rethink your mandates so I am able to reach my goal of being a teacher and having jobs giving me the best possible experience while not having the stress of worrying if this vaccination will do the same to me.

Educator 206

My name is H, I am 48 years old and a mother of three daughters. I have lived and worked as a primary school teacher in Brisbane since 1999.

I graduated from the University of Southern Queensland in 1998 with a Bachelor of Education in primary teaching. Since graduating I have been a permanent employee of Education Queensland having worked in both X (12 years) and North Brisbane (11 years) teaching predominant in years 1-3.

During this time as a teacher I have volunteered to manage sporting teams for metro selection, participated in leadership teams, mentored beginning teachers and participated and supported school and local community events. At every opportunity given I advocate for and defend the amazing job I have. I have always considered myself to be blessed and fortunate to be given the opportunity to work with the many young children and their families throughout the last 23 years.

Late in semester 2, 2021, I read an email stating as a primary school teacher I am now being mandated to vaccinate. For the first time in 23 years as a primary school teacher I am being faced with losing my job, my financial security, my team my work family. For the first time in 23 years of teaching I feel completely isolated and alone.

To adequately explain the stress and personal anxiety I have felt since learning of our mandate to vaccinate late in term 4 seems beyond me, but I am going to try.

First, started the panic and the anxiety. Every waking moment, thinking about life without my job and profession and then alternating these thoughts with anger at not being able to make a personal choice about what I choose to put into my body.

I grew up with a father who was an alcoholic and unemployed for the majority of his life. I grew up in a home where financial insecurity and pressure caused emotional, psychological and physical damage daily. There was constant fighting and arguing between my parents about bills, money and our future.

I have worked from the age of 15 (a casual job while still at school) to begin supporting myself and my parents. I have supported my 3 daughters as a single parent and I have made it my mission in life to never put my children through the emotional stress and insecurity job loss and no income can cause.

Now for the first time in my life I am faced with unemployment. Unemployment if I refuse to get a needle. Of all things!!! Not because of my work performance or anything to do with myself as a professional primary school teacher. But unemployed because I don't want to accept a medical procedure yet.

Now this has not only impacted me. As I explained before, I have three daughters. They are all stressed and anxious for me also. I have had multiple conversations with them about how their anxiety and stress about how my employment status is affecting their lives. My family too are concerned and express their concerns daily. All this adds up to increasing pressure and anxiety for me.

Before school ended I found myself daily sitting and crying in my car in the school carpark. Walking into my classroom feeling completely alone and isolated and insecure. We had a "Step Up Day" where my students for 2022 had the chance to come to my classroom and meet me. I remember feeling sad and lost. Here were 25 little people, happy and excited about meeting me and beginning their new journey. I felt immense sadness at the thought I might never get the opportunity to work with these keen and enthusiastic little souls. I have never experienced this before. Ever.

To further add to my increasing stress and anxiety during these last few weeks of school I begin receiving emails from the Department. Emails reminding me of the mandate, reminding me to complete a survey about my private medical information, reminding me I will lose my job. All of this continues while having to continue teaching, complete assessment and

report cards, commence end of year tasks, cleaning classrooms and participate in 2022 planning.

Term 4 ends and I feel like I should be taking as much home as possible. I lock my classroom door and head off to end of term celebrations not knowing if this may be my last.

All of this is a life I have lived and known for over 20 years. I love my job. I love teaching children and working with their families. I love seeing them experiencing success and I love seeing the personal joy they exude when they overcome a challenge or finally 'get it'.

I decide to consult with my doctors of over 15 years, because that is who I will consider medical advice from. Both my doctor and specialist agreed the government is acting in a draconian way and it could have been handled differently. Both my doctor and specialist agreed there are adverse side effects to the vaccines and spent time with me going over options and statistics. Neither one of my doctors tried to coerce me. They wished me luck in my future.

I was on holidays, I should have been relaxed and looking forward to Christmas and family celebrations. Instead I was anxious, emotional, angry and worried. I have a friend who is a high school teacher of more than 30 years. She is not going back. She is advertising to do dog sitting, lawn mowing, anything. My brother, a teacher of 25 years, tells me he's been coerced and is getting the needle. He needs to pay his home and personal loans. My three daughters all conceding because they work in hospitality and health and are young and want to go out and don't want to lose their jobs.

I have just refinanced for bathroom renovations and was granted a new loan based on my permanent employment. So do I sell my house and car and look for something else? My daughter's home? I feel sick in the stomach going over all of this again.

Left with no alternative I resentfully and reluctantly made the call to my local GP clinic and booked a first dose. I cried before going, I cried after going. I try to pick myself up and be positive. I feel violated and no longer feel I can trust my employer. I am angry. I still continue to get emails harassing me for my personal medical details. Will the person sending me these requests share their private medical details with me? I doubt it. Never have I felt so unsupported and alone.

The following week I had nightmares. Waking up screaming and crying. My daughter coming in to check on me because she wakes to me screaming out 'stop' and 'help'. Waking up sobbing. I am three weeks into holidays and the stress and anxiety has not subsided. I am constantly thinking about school, work and what will they mandate me to do next. I worry for my students and their families. I do not support separation, division and segregation. I teach my year 3 class every year come Anzac Day about the significance of what our soldiers fought for. For our freedoms and rights. Freedom of education, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of choice. All of that no longer true.

I am writing this letter in the hope that mandates will end and be overturned. I don't want to see years of valuable teacher experience lost because of draconian actions.

I want to be able to work in an environment that supports personal choice and freedoms.

Vaccination statistics are published daily and there are public accolades from our heads of government for the people 'choosing' to vaccinate. I want another category

Educator 207

I have been a fulltime teacher employed with Education Queensland since 1998 (23 years). For the past 16 years I have had the great pleasure of being a Teaching Principal, both teaching children from the age of 5 through to 12 years and, at the same time being responsible and accountable for the administration, governance and safety of our school community which includes our children, staff, parents, volunteers, wider community members, visitors, Regional and Qld Dept officers, contractors and anyone else who contributes to the learning, welfare and wellbeing of our students.

My employer, Education Qld, has implemented mandates, directing all EQ staff to be vaccinated by 23rd January or they will not be able to go onto school grounds to do their work. Consequently, EQ has now severely cut off the efforts and passions of many, many people who deliver its service. In my school, this mandate takes away choice for 37% of my staff who will not be attending their work for the start of 2022 school year. Remaining staff are angered by the erosion of choice and freedoms and particularly frustrated to be left to "pick up the pieces" to keep the school operating.

From informal conversations with parents regarding the start of the 2022 year, over half our families have advised me that they will be withdrawing their children from any school if EQ persists with mandates or, in particular, vaccinations for children from 5 years of age. They have indicated that they will be home schooling their children. What does this do for EVERY DAY COUNTS? That's a lot of empty desks in schools if you extrapolate that across all our Queensland schools. So, the start of school in my community is predicted to be with significantly diminished enrolments, uncertainty, mental stress for all and a very frightening context (rather than safety) for our children and parents. How can this be optimal for childrens' learning?

There is an abundance of evidence within Australia that these mandates are not lawful, nor do they comply with Queensland's Workplace Health and Safety Act, Protocols and Rules. There is also now a large quantity of DATA and evidence that vaccines do not protect one from catching COVID nor spreading it. So what is the purpose of such a mandate?

Departmental Policy insists every school and teacher does Risk Assessments for any activity, excursion or learning action that may cause harm. There is a plethora of evidence across the world, from eminent experts, to show that this vaccination is causing harm to people. Surely Departmental leaders have COLLABORATED to gather and review EVIDENCE BASED research to inform their choice to mandate vaccines for employees, volunteers, contractors etc.....on school sites. Where is Education Queensland's RISK ASSESSMENT for this mandated vaccine?

By implementing this mandate, Education Queensland is eliminating thousands of years of teaching experience and masses of educational support personnel. The disruption to student learning and teaching, and the smooth running of Education Queensland, through Regional offices to each and every School will be severely disrupted. Thousands upon thousands of employees and their families' health, wellbeing and livelihood will be severely diminished and for some, irreversibly harmed. What responsibility is the Department taking to mitigate risk and for the impact of its actions?

How can teachers, Principals, School support staff, Regional employees uphold Departmental Policies for the education and wellbeing of our children when their employer contradicts its own Policies and implements INEQUITABLE mandates which discriminate. Blind Freddy can see that EQ is contradicting its own Policies which it espouses! Education Queensland needs to show LEADERSHIP and bring back sanity and good governance. Reverse these illegal mandates! Let all our dedicated educators get on with their jobs that they love doing and to provide the fundamental rights and services for our children to learn.

As a mother, grandmother and long time educator, I have never seen such deliberate sabotage on a grand scale of our childrens' future. I am deeply distressed and disturbed that our Educational leaders are failing our children. It has to stop! Mandates need to be reversed before it's too late.

Educator 208

My name is A I am a 47 year old lady that has worked for Queensland Education for the last 10 years, both as a teacher aide and primary school teacher. I have currently been working part time teaching Physical Education and Health as well as relief teaching in the Southside of Brisbane. I previously worked full time starting out my career as a teacher aide and loving the work so much, completed a Graduate Diploma of Teaching and Learning to become a teacher that married well with my Bachelor of Arts degree. I have a particular interest in helping those students who are disadvantaged, come from difficult home situations, students with behavioural and cognitive issues. Most of these students find classroom activities academically challenging and feel restricted to express themselves. I have found a passion with excelling these students in the physical and sporting side of schooling.

I was completely devastated when I received the email from the department mandating the vaccine to all staff at schools. I have not been given a choice to choose what is best for my own health and family. I am feeling completely powerless in this decision that has been made for me. The students who I absolutely adore teaching, will be missing out and they are the ones that will be negatively affected by these decisions the government has made for us. The teachers that they respect, adore and look up to will no longer be there. My principal is gutted by these mandates. She is very supportive of my decision to make my own choice. She is not supportive of the mandates and is highly upset about staff at my school leaving their jobs.

My family has been under so much pressure and stress since mandates were announced. I have 3 dependent boys still living at home, who are uni students, that feel that they are being coerced into getting the vaccines, just to be able to continue their study. My youngest son Michael who is studying teaching will not be able to attend pracs at school without the vaccine. My other two sons have been notified by their University of Qld that they will not be able to attend campus for lectures. My husband and I are now both suffering from anxiety and depression from the stress this has caused us.

Living in a free and democratic society, I feel that each individual should be able to freely choose for themselves what is best for them. This choice has been taken away from us. Stop the mandates and allow people to choose. It is unfair and unconstitutional to have to take a vaccine or face losing your job. No Jab, No Job, No Way - this is completely wrong. My ancestors fled Communist Russia to escape the atrocities that were peddled as the common good for everyone - history has proven that it does not work. Why are we now bringing this idealism into Australia?

Educator 209

Hi writing to advise that my employer X Early Learning in Cairns stood me down because I couldn't prove my vaccination for covid.

I made the decision to not have the jab because I'm scared.

My mum and I both have massive amounts of cysts on our liver. My mum had to give up work at age 52 due to the pain. I'm 53 and doing well. When my mum had her covid vaccine she got a lot worse and end up getting sepsis. A life threatening condition. Due to the inflammation of her liver she cannot undergo any sort of surgery and is on antibiotics to keep the sepsis at bay, basically the antibiotics keep her alive and whenever they stop working she will die.

So, I made the decision to wait and learn more about the vaccine instead of just jumping in, when nobody really knows its long term affects.

In making this decision I lost my job of 14 years in the day care setting. I'm a diploma qualified team leader and an amazing educator and role model for children. Just tossed out, just like that.

Prior to childcare I was a stay at home mum of 4 children. Paid \$8000 to get my diploma. I don't know any other work. And honestly there isn't much around now that doesn't require vaccination. I can't afford any more courses, and scared to pay anyway in fear of that field now be mandated.

This country can get back to normal when people like myself can get back to their jobs and end this madness.

Educator 210

My name is R. I have been a teacher in Mackay for 20 years. I have stepped up at every opportunity to give the young people of Mackay a chance to love learning and grow and excel in many areas of life. I have mostly taught high school students throughout my career with a focus on Learning Support and Health and Physical Education. I have coached and managed many sporting teams over the years, and I know I have been a valuable contributor to the Mackay community.

As you are well aware, on the 30th November 2021, Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk announced that the covid vaccine mandate will apply to all state and private school staff. If I choose to not abide by the vaccine mandate it will mean losing my job and subsequently losing my house, and my identity as a teacher. My husband and I are currently renting out our house and living in our motorhome, to save as much money as possible to help us survive through this current situation. Many of my friends have been scared, bullied, coerced and forced into lining up to receive the covid vaccine. They did not do it for health. I have an autoimmune disease and have spent the last 7 years regaining my health. I am not willing to potentially destroy it in one go. My doctor is unable to provide me with an exemption as his hands are tied and he would risk losing his job if he granted exemptions for conditions other than anaphylactic reactions. It was comforting to know that if it was not for these inflexible rules around exemptions, he would provide me with an exemption based on my previous adverse reactions to traditional vaccines.

My family and friends are behind me 100%. My students and members of the Mackay community will find out they have lost a great teacher and community support person when school resumes in 2022, as I have not made my stance public at this stage. Queensland teachers are some of the best in the world. We are committed to improving our practice inside and outside the classroom at all stages of our career. The state government is now willing to kick us to the curb and replace us with overseas teachers or undertrained university students. What could go wrong?

I ask you to really consider the short and long term effects of these mandates. The consequences will be felt across the school and wider community. The lack of trust in government starts now. When classrooms full of students across the state start losing their favourite teachers and are left with substandard replacements, they will blame the government. You will have a whole generation of young people who will be loyal to their teachers and no longer loyal to you. The public trust in our government is already on a downward trend. Add another generation to that and you have decades of work to rebuild the trust. This is a huge gamble the government is willing to take, especially when there is no evidence that school mandates actually work.

We are the smart state. Let's reverse the mandates, get our teachers back in the classroom and avoid a generational disaster.

Educator 211

My name is N, I am a female teacher living in the Far North Queensland town of X. My gift as a teacher is the ability to connect with students and make students feel seen.

I recently secured a teaching position at a local primary school, however the principal has told me that due to the mandate I cannot be employed at the school if I am not vaccinated.

Despite being transported to hospital via ambulance and having two stays in hospital with pericarditis in the past, I am unable to obtain an exemption from the vaccine which has reported pericardial and blood clotting side effects and I believe are likely to exacerbate my preexisting health conditions. I am not an anti-vaxxer, however the current vaccine 'choices' I believe will harm me.

I am the sole parent of two children aged 16 and 10 and I am very concerned about how I'm going to make ends meet for us. I really am just praying that God will look after us. I have had moments of significant despair and I am ashamed to admit my children have had to observe that. Further, I am mostly concerned about other students and the experiences they've had within their family structures and the stories I have overheard in the playground whilst on duty. Students also voice that they're impacted by the mandates, as a byproduct of their parents struggles such as job loss, family breakdown and in two cases I know of suicide.

I am seeking the ability to work in my area of expertise. A profession that I have invested in for over 10 years financially, emotionally and academically without the bullying, coercion and persecution I have this far had to endure.

Educator 212

My name is H and I am a female Early Childhood Teacher. In 2021 I opened my own Family Day Care service in X, north of Brisbane and I currently run a kindergarten program for 2.5 - 5 year olds from my home. I have been working with children for over 20 years in a number of different capacities, before, during and after receiving my Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood). As a nanny, as the ECT in the kindergarten room in child care centres, as a full time mother and as a family day care educator on two separate occasions. Parents value my gentle, well-considered, child-centred and holistic approach to early childhood education. I have children in my care who are thriving where they once very obviously struggled on a daily basis in centre-based care...I saw that with my own eyes.

Although I work as a self-employed business owner, the Family Day Care scheme I am registered with have recently delivered the news to all of their educators that they can no longer have educators registered with them who do not provide proof of double vaccination against covid-19 by the end of January 2022. My scheme claim they are pro-choice and want to support all of their educators but they have also explained that they feel their hands are tied when it comes to this mandate as they would receive large fines if they were to continue to register educators without proof of vaccination.

The impact of this mandate and the decision by my scheme is significant and devastating to my income and what I can provide for my family of 5. In order to continue working with the current families of the children in my care I have been forced to consider how my service looks to families and myself without access to the child care subsidy that we had up until December 17th. This means I either continue with my current fee schedule and the parents pay full fees – double, if not more than what they currently pay OR I reduce my income by approximately half to continue to provide an affordable service to the families using my service. This is a very unfair and difficult decision to have to make in a position where bonding and connection is a key component of my work and success. Of course the other option would be to close down my business altogether which would make providing for my family very difficult and put a lot of strain on my husband, his health, our relationship and our family in general. Not to mention the impact on the children and families who consider my service their second home.

Over the Christmas period when I went away on holiday and I should have been feeling excited, relaxed and joyful. Instead my mind was constantly racing about what the future holds for myself and my family. The pressure was immense and there was a massive sense of force and feeling trapped. My mental health certainly took a dive into decline. All over a mandate that makes very little sense to me in my occupation. Throughout the 2 years of this pandemic, children have consistently been deemed low risk with extremely low numbers of cases and deaths from the virus. It seems all of a sudden the Queensland Government has decided that these children in the low risk category are now high risk. I work only 3 days per week, in my own home, on my own with 4 children at a time, one of which is my own child. It baffles me as to how this environment could be considered “high risk” and that it is essential for me as a healthy 35 year old woman to be vaccinated. I do not consent and my medical information and choices should be a private matter. I do not work when I am sick and the children do not attend care when they are sick.

My concerns for the community is that great teachers and early childhood educators are leaving the education and care industries in droves because of this mandate that violates freedom of choice. How will the positions be filled and by whom? Will we end up with education and care systems that do not meet the needs of children because all they are left with are the workers who are very inexperienced or are not in the job for the love of children and their passion for it. What does this mean for our future generations? Or will these industries crash altogether? It makes me sad and very uneasy to think of those possibilities.

I would like to see that vaccinations remain optional as they always have been. That freedom of choice and bodily autonomy be respected among all humans. I feel there are many other possible ways to handle a virus such as the current one we are dealing with without forcing people who love their jobs to choose between their health and their livelihood and passion.

I urge the Queensland Government to hear the people that they are elected to serve and respect their basic human right to earn a living and their right to freedom of choice. What we put into our own bodies is a personal choice and should not be clouded by force or coercion. This vaccine is experimental and still in its clinical trial period. Medical procedures cannot be performed without informed consent and how can we be properly informed of the risks involved in this rushed, experimental vaccine without any long term data? I value my health and the health of my family over everything else. I will not put that at risk.

Educator 213

Just call me C. I have been working as a high school teacher for 21 years and am an experienced senior teacher. I started at 36 years of age after completing my degree at USQ in Toowoomba. I taught 4 years at my first school which was X State High. My initial subjects were maths, science, English, SOSE and art and even teacher librarian for a year. I then transferred to X State High school where I taught for a further 10 years teaching maths and science. I took 2 years leave without pay to teach in the Kingdom of Bhutan. This was 6 days per week in a very poor area of the Himalayas. When I returned I taught a further 3 years at X State High School and then worked at X for 6 months. I am currently teaching Mathematics in a remote school in Far North Queensland. I have been there 18 months.

Since covid-19 has come to Queensland I have hardly had to increase my level of health care and practice of the appropriate hygiene measures as I hold serious concerns for the health and well-being for my colleagues and my students. I have always practiced the utmost cautions to help prevent, acquiring and spreading illness. I am acutely aware of how disease is spread and do all that I can to remain in optimal health given my current vulnerabilities. Before vaccines were mandated for Education workers in Queensland I made extensive enquiries for information on all aspects of the Covid-19 disease and vaccines. I was satisfied that I would not be needing a vaccination.

Now in view of the mandates for the vaccination I have had to seek further clarification to be able to give reasonable informed consent. What I have found is that information is not forthcoming and nor is it reasonable. I have enquired about the risk of contracting the disease with regard to me, my colleagues and my students whether vaccinated or not and what is the diagnosis, treatment, recovery rate and possible long-term adverse effects. I have enquired about the risk of spreading the disease for me, my colleagues and my students whether vaccinated or not. I have enquired about risk of possible side effects from the vaccine. I am aware that the federal government will pay for funeral costs if the vaccines kill me or anyone for that matter. I have not received any information with regard to risks in my place of work as a mathematics teacher. Indeed, I have been told it is not necessary for me to know these things. My own GP has told me, 'just get the vaccine so we can all get back to normal.' This is not medical information. How is it possible to consent without knowing the answers which need to be provided to me?

Since the mandates and because of my desire to remain healthy I have earnestly increased my research into the validity of receiving a vaccine. The lack of honest information from my employer, work place and healthcare provider has placed an enormous amount of stress on me. I have not been able to sleep well and thus my sleep patterns are erratic and insufficient leading to chronic tiredness. As a consequence of this exhaustion, I have acquired a debilitating arm injury. I am suffering painful digestion disruptions which includes daily nausea, bloating, gas, constipation and diarrhoea. I am so listless and depressed trying to fathom why you equate my ability to teach with my having been vaccinated or not. This is especially exacerbated since no one can give adequate information to satisfy my enquiries. My value as a teacher has been diminished to a medical procedure. I am a non-smoker and completely abstain from alcohol.

In my time at X, I have become a valued and accepted member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait community. I dearly love the people and it is reciprocated. Most children and staff are desperately in need of folks who are reliable, dependable, consistent and trustworthy so they can feel safe and participate effectively in education. The alternative for the children is to leave community and live in isolation at boarding school at least 1000 kms away. This does not suit many of the local families and increases the trauma they already suffer.

There is currently a massive shortage of experienced teachers in the Northern Peninsula Area which is a major disruption to the genuine education of local children. I want to continue to live and teach in X without being vaccinated and I believe that is what the communities there want.

Educator 214

M. 56yo female.

Two state primary schools in south east Queensland. 10 years of teaching and coordinating Religious Instruction (volunteer). Connecting with students to represent the interest that local Christian churches take in them; teaching the values of the Christian faith through key stories of the Bible, from Creation to Jesus, his miracles, teachings, and actions; what it means to be a Christian, how we are all imperfect people, that we need each other and how having God in our life helps us live positive, productive lives; allowing students opportunity to explore and develop the spiritual and moral side of their lives, even if they never embrace Christianity.

My team of RI teachers and the Principal of the school where I am currently teaching have expressed sincere disappointment that I will not be continuing this role in 2022 due to the vaccine mandate. My departure will exacerbate the difficulties already encountered in finding enough volunteers to fulfil this role.

While I have always stayed away from school when unwell and fully respect the need to protect children from viral infections (that can then be taken home to their families), this mandate makes no sense when there is no evidence whatsoever to support a view that by enforcing an experimental vaccine onto teachers, students are protected from catching the virus.

I would like to see the mandate withdrawn immediately, teachers who have been forced to resign be given back their jobs without any loss to them, and that the push to vaccine children be STOPPED IMMEDIATELY. A safe and common-sense approach to containing the virus is to have teachers and students stay away from school if they are unwell. **The holiday season and re-opening of the borders on December 17 has clearly shown that vaccinated people carry the virus!**

What is the sense of destroying so many teachers' (and others) careers, livelihoods and incomes with ineffective and damaging mandates?

Educator 215

My name is Y, and I'm a 48 year old single mum of 3 teenagers, 2 of whom have managed to complete their final year/s at high school during 2020/21. I was blessed to be a stay at home mum until my youngest commenced school in 2011. Having 3 children in 3 years was hectic, but I believe it set me up to become a great organiser, scheduler, and planner – skills that I display in my role as an administration officer in a state school in Brisbane. When my youngest son, now almost 16, started Prep, I had just finished my Cert III in Education Support and worked as a casual Teacher Aide at local schools. In Term 3 of 2011, I gained a contract at a school in an adjoining suburb - initially I was employed as a teacher aide, and then was given an opportunity to work as part of the Admin Team, which lead to a full time position at the end of 2018. I love my job, I love that every day is different. I love the students, who come shyly into the office and their faces light up with gappy grins when they realise I've remembered their name. As each year ends, another cohort of students who I met in Prep, transition to high school - watching them grow, learn, adapt, persist and become school leaders is such a privilege. I love my co-workers, some of whom have become wonderful friends. I love the school community as a whole – the joy we share when new babies arrive, or the sorrow we share when there's a death in the family, or just an understanding between parents that the parenting gig is sometimes pretty tough.

When the first email arrived from the ADG on November 30th advising of the mandate, my heart sank. To learn, to read in black and white on my computer screen, that I had two choices – submit to a vaccination, or lose my job. The job that I love. I walked around for the rest of that day on auto-pilot. I just had to focus on the tasks at hand, to get through that day. Honestly, the rest of the term just feels like a blur. I learnt to put on a brave face at work, but at home, I couldn't hide it. My children knew something was up; I tried to hide it from them as long as I could, but the bubble finally burst and I knew I had to tell them the truth. That my job was on the line. I had to choose between the job I love, or submit to a vaccination.

Finally, I saw my GP. I spoke to her about how I'd been feeling and learnt that I was suffering from anxiety. NEVER in my life have I suffered from anxiety. I've been a confident, independent woman. I travelled alone overseas in my early 20's for 18 months and thoroughly enjoyed it. I worked in high pressure Executive Assistant roles and thrived. But the thought of having to choose between having a vaccination or losing my job, had rendered me anxious and in need of professional support. I have worked with women with Post Natal Depression, as an advocate, and would always reassure them that it is ok to ask for help, it's nothing to be ashamed of. Now it was me, needing to ask for help and trying to deal with the shame.

I hold grave concerns for other members of our school communities. It's been a tough 2 years and we possibly can't even imagine what some of our families have been dealing with – whether it is family members overseas or interstate they haven't been able to see, small business owners doing it tough due to the lockdowns, mental health issues due to the lockdowns, stressed families due to learning at home, anxiety due to the mask mandates.... The list goes on. My heart goes out to children unknowingly bearing the brunt of households where their parents have had to make decisions they never dreamt they'd be coerced into, to provide for their family.

How did it become that Australia, The Lucky Country or Queensland, Beautiful One Day, Perfect The Next has been reduced to this level of coercion?

Educator 216

My name is S, and I am a female specialty teacher aide in Brisbane, I'm a 65 year old who has spent the last 17 years helping develop my working department into a successful subject for students whether it be for a food and nutrition career or for those choosing a certificate 3 in hospitality. I have poured many extra hours to make the students and teachers lives as seamless as possible.

My employers have informed the whole school employed community of the Queensland government mandates to be vaccinated or have no job. There would be no exceptions and that they had no choice but to follow the mandates.

This sudden new mandate has taken a toll on my career and how I played out how I finished the year. I am devastated that I have had no time for closure with either the students I aide or the teachers I have supported for many years.

This information of comply or lose your job has left me devastated and given me much anxiety and sleepless nights trying to decide whether to override very personal medical reasons to not be vaccinated or comply and keep my job to help my students and teachers.

My absence now leaves a huge hole as to who will coordinate each class with ingredients to be ordered over 13 classes and preparation for those classes. The background work involved that only I can do has caused me much anxiety as to how all involved will manage to continue to provide the students with the ability to do what they need to do. So much of what I did was to provide a positive and streamless learning environment for everyone.

All I want is to be able to do the job I was trained for; I want to be able to continue to help my department which was perfectly ok to do over the previous two years and was classed as an essential worker keeping things working for school and community in large. I desperately want to do the job I have loved for 17 years and am passionate about.

Educator 217

My name is M, male, I'm a 31 year old permanent, full time middle years teacher in Outdoor Education in Far North Queensland, teaching both public and private school students. I have 10 years teaching experience and am qualified with a Bachelor of Arts (Outdoor Education), a Diploma of Education, a Certificate 4 in Outdoor Recreation, in Wilderness First Aid and hold a Recreational Marine Licence. I am highly experienced in leading groups in high ropes, expeditions, abseiling, canoeing, rock-climbing and kayaking. I teach water quality, biodiversity and sustainability subjects with passion for these topics. I also teach soft skills including leadership and team building to get the best out of my students in the short time they are on program.

With respect to the Queensland Government Mandate requiring teachers to be fully vaccinated by January 23, my employer, the Department of Education Queensland, has responded by simply informing me by email that if I am not vaccinated that I will not be permitted to enter a school, and I will be asked to show-cause why I should not be suspended without pay. I feel there has been no meaningful face to face consultation where the outcome wasn't pre-determined with respect to the mandates. Furthermore my Principal has not responded satisfactorily to my request for my school's COVID-19 vaccination risk assessment.

The mandate means that over the school holidays and the festive season, I have the very real prospect of losing my hard earned job weighing heavily on my mind. All because I do not consent to being coerced to take these still experimental COVID-19 vaccines. I am the main bread-winner in my family and I will have to find employment elsewhere outside of my field of expertise because of this mandate. I've had sleepless nights, anxiety over what is happening, feeling that it is all hopeless and that I will not be able to keep my job.

I know of *many* amazing teachers both from my school and other schools locally who are in the same inevitable position as I am. I have very real concerns for my school's ability to stay open as I anticipate the remaining staff will likely be seconded to other schools to fill in the huge staff shortages these mandates will bring about. If our school closes, students across FNQ who would ordinarily come on their school camps will miss out on what can be an irreplaceable and formative learning, growth and development opportunity and experience. What a shame!

I would like to see these ridiculous, coercive and dangerous mandates repealed permanently. It is clear from the science that children and healthy individuals - like myself - are not at a high risk from COVID-19 and so far any of its variants either. Furthermore, it is clear that even if I did get vaccinated I can still catch the virus and transmit the virus. What would make more sense is introducing rapid antigen testing for *everyone*!

I am not just an employee number, I am a valuable and skilled staff member who loves his job and goes above and beyond to make our Outdoor Education Centre thrive. We urgently need you to stand with us to throw out *all* of these mandates and *all* of the extremely discriminatory and un-Australian policies of the Queensland Government.

Educator 218

My name is L. As a 54 year old female primary school teacher aide in Queensland, with 13 years of service in the education department, I am extremely worried and truly sad about what has happened with the mandated vaccination.

This might sound a little big headed but the kids love me and one example of this is from a mum the other day telling me her grade 2 child commented on how she is so excited because she's going to have me in her class next year. That nearly broke my heart. Well what parts that weren't already broken from finding out on the last week of school that I won't be able to go back next year if I don't get the double vaccination. I didn't tell the kids at the end of the year that I couldn't go back because I wanted them to enjoy their holidays but I know they are going to be devastated, and hopefully not angry that I didn't say good bye.

My anxiety was already high knowing we were going to be pushed to get this and now it is through the roof not knowing what will be happening next year for me and my family. I don't want to get the vaccination because I have heard of many friends having adverse reactions and as the only person working in my house I can't take that chance. Surely there is a better way than standing every one down. Surely there are other options.

My employer, although sympathising with my ordeal, was compassionate but knew there wasn't much they could do.

I am devastated and was in tears every day for the first couple of weeks.

The kids need us.

Please help us find another way.

Educator 219

My name is K, and I am a 44-year-old woman living in Mackay. I completed my Bachelor of Education degree at Central Queensland University and began my journey as a primary school teacher in 2000. I work as part of the Catholic school sector in the Diocese of Rockhampton and have done so for the past 21 years. For 10 years of my career, I have worked in a full-time capacity and have more recently moved to part time work. In the past 2 years I have also worked as a supply teacher, regularly servicing 5 schools in my area. I believe I am a caring, fun-loving educator who prides herself in assisting students with special needs and developing a personal relationship with my students.

When news of the Covid-19 vaccine mandate was brought to light, my employer emailed all staff with as much detail as they had received about the mandate. In subsequent emails, they asked us for our vaccination status to determine numbers of employees continuing in their role and who would not fill the vaccine requirements and need replacing. I wrote to my employer expressing my concerns regarding the mandate, however they simply stated that they needed to comply with the requirements and Public Health Directives.

This mandate has placed enormous pressure on me and my family. We are in the process of building a new house and are relying on dual incomes to pay back our loan. My husband has felt it necessary to receive the vaccination, but as I don't suffer with any underlying conditions, I have never felt the need to be vaccinated for Covid-19. This mandate has fuelled arguments between my husband and I - about the need to provide for our 3 children and how we can pay our mortgage should I decide not to take the vaccine. In the end, I felt I had no choice but to be vaccinated because I am afraid that any other job would not satisfy the requirements of our loan. The future of our marriage also hangs in the balance.

The news of the mandate has also had a devastating impact on my mental health and the mental health of my family. The stress and concern of not being able to provide for my family has me constantly on edge. I have been riding an emotional rollercoaster as arguments between my family members escalate and I feel like I cannot win, no matter which path I take. My youngest child (11) has been very concerned for my wellbeing since I have taken my first vaccine as he sees the stress it has caused both parents.

I have grave concerns for the students who I have in my care. There is no doubt in my mind that there will be a shortage of teachers this year, and this will force the students into larger classes which in turn creates a less personalised approach to learning. Students with special needs will be lost amongst classes with many children. I have seen the impact of the pandemic response on my students since the pandemic began, and am afraid the mental health of the students will continue to deteriorate with the loss of teachers. The impact will also stretch to the volunteers of our schools (e.g. canteen, P &F) as numbers for these were already low. This will put more pressure on staff to do more in an already overloaded job.

I believe that vaccination should be a choice. People deserve the right to weigh up their options when it comes to anything that has a direct impact on their health. Making the Covid-19 vaccine mandatory for educators, or any other profession, takes that choice away. What I would prefer to see is people making decisions about their own health without undue pressure, coercion and the threat of losing their job.

Educator 220

My name is xxxx and for the past xxxx years, I have been working in the Education industry in Brisbane. I have worked both as a foreign language educator at kindergartens and more recently at a school supporting students from diverse backgrounds and learning needs. I am originally from xxxx, mum of xxxx children and a former lawyer. I also hold a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and about to graduate as a Primary Teacher.

I believe everyone comes with gifts to share and as a parent and educator, my goal is to help others unearth those. I grew up in a country plagued by terrorism, lack of freedom and fear. As young child I struggled at school, in part due to undiagnosed trauma and ADHD. However, as I matured, I learned to embrace and use my unique strengths which allowed me to graduate in the top five of my generation at university. For this reason, I believe that one of my gifts as an educator is to help those who don't believe in themselves and help them see that they all carry something unique within themselves. Working in Early Childhood I spent a lot of my time trying to convince parents, children and sometimes colleagues, that anyone can learn to speak multiple languages. This past year, I have worked with a wide range of diverse students, including those diagnosed with autism, ADHD, emotional dysregulation, refugees with a history of complex trauma and multilingual students. I learned that half of my gift is not just about teaching students the skills or the knowledge I have gained through all my degrees but convincing them that despite what they think they lack, they too can accomplish great things.

After vaccinations were mandated for the Education industry, I was sent a letter from work urging me to upload my vaccination status as a requirement for work next year. I contacted the principal and informed that due to prior severe side effects from medications I did not feel safe having the vaccine at this stage. I asked her if the school could provide me with alternative work arrangements as per Fair Work states, perhaps differentiating content for students given the high level of students with learning disabilities or in any position they think my services could be needed. Unfortunately, I was told that without a medical exemption, anyone who is not vaccinated would not be allowed into the school premises next year and to let them know if I changed my mind before the end of January.

This mandate has taken a big toll on my physical and mental health. Lack of financial means to pay for my own children school next year and discrimination from people and public places has been incredibly hard for me and my family. I also believe that it sets the path for further segregation within our community with the risk of hurting even more those who are mentally vulnerable, including those who have escaped from traumatic experiences, been forced to wear masks for months without consideration of their history and those who for various reasons already struggle to feel they belong to their close community.

I came to this country and proudly became an Australian citizen because I wanted to live and raise my children in a free and welcoming environment. A place where they could live without the fear many of us grew up with. All I want is to be allowed to graduate and continue my job so that I can provide for my children and help others believe that with effort and dedication one can set themselves on a path of success despite past struggles.

Educator 221

I am a vocal, instrumental and drama contract teacher in Queensland. I work with over 100 students in private and small group music/drama lessons at both primary and secondary schools. Since finishing my Bachelor of Theatre, specialising in musical theatre I have been working with young performers and musicians for over five years. My timetable is always full, and I have waitlists of students asking for lessons. As a teacher I believe students enjoy working with me because I create a fun, positive and very productive environment for lessons that student enjoy.

After teaching over 40 students individually and in small groups I have had to leave my work and students at schools due to the vaccination mandate.

Thankfully my husband and family all agree that these mandates are unreasonable and have been very supportive. However, since the introduction of restrictions and mandates on those choosing to be unvaccinated, I have for in the first time in my life experienced panic attacks and anxiety. The emotional toll on having to choose between doing things I love and do for a living verse having to take a provisionally approved vaccine that could impact my health for life has been devastating. Being healthy is an important part of my physical and mental wellbeing.

Music an important part of many of my student's growth, confidence, and development. They have created a relationship with me in lessons where they feel comfortable to express themselves and learn. I am concerned they will no longer have a teacher to motivate and work with them.

Please remove all mandates for those unvaccinated. Make it clear vaccination is a choice and that it doesn't stop you from spreading the virus.

Please don't let these mandates and discrimination continue. Please give us back our freedom of choice. Don't let these mandates take away my career that I love and have worked so hard to build.

Educator 222

My name is S,

I am a fully registered female primary school teacher on the Gold Coast, and I am due to start back at work in a full-time position in January 2022. I love my job and I was so looking forward to starting with my new class in 2022. I am now devastated to realise that I will now be letting the children, their families, my principal and all the staff down because I cannot possibly take this full-time teaching position because I will not be fully vaccinated as it is against my best interests and the best interest of my family.

I have spent a decade teaching our future Australian Citizens because I absolutely love guiding and teaching our younger learners to reach their full potential. I inspire children to believe in themselves, their intuition, and their abilities, so they thrive. I also like to fuel a child's capacity to always ask questions, even when those around them don't, that is how we learn. Imagine a world where no-one asks 'that question' the one we all secretly want to ask but are too afraid of the recriminations. In asking questions my children in my class thrive and grow. Finally, I always encourage children to show courage and be brave, because to do the right thing especially in the face of adversity allows you to develop and become the better version of yourself. Unfortunately, I won't be able nurture and grow our children by working in a mainstream classroom until the mandate for teachers to be fully vaccinated ends.

I had my first vax in September because I was coerced by work 'colleagues.' I had adverse reactions to this. When this happened, I did not know who to turn to as it was nothing that anyone wished to speak about or acknowledge. I was also told there was no recognised sick days, so I made sure I had this injection after work on a Friday so I could have the weekend to recover (just in-case). My weekend was focused on healing myself and recovering from this injection. I did no planning for school and was in bed all weekend, so my children had to 'fend' for themselves. As a single parent, I would rather give up my 'job' than my health. It's as sad and as simple as that.

Instead of being a successful career woman paying my taxes and raising my children independently from Government handouts, I will now have to apply for Government handouts for my family due to the loss of my job and loss of income, all because I do not agree with this mandate as it goes against my health and also against everything I have taught both my own children and my children in my classroom- believe in yourself and your intuition, ask questions, show courage and be brave.

Since the mandate (that was introduced a week after my work finished for the year) I have felt isolated, confused, and terribly worried about what the future holds. The Christmas holidays have always been a shining beacon, especially in those long 12-hour days-60 hour week long sessions, where as teachers we are over worked and micro managed. I have not slowed down and rested, I have not had the opportunity to be proud of my past year accomplishments and thus recharged enough to start afresh for 2022.

I am extremely concerned that this teaching mandate will have a negative impact on our students, families, and staff. Not just financially, but socially and academically. What will happen to all the students if they do not have access to a teacher that has been trained to teach and successfully unpack the Australian Curriculum? How will these students learn if their learning environment is impacted by higher-than-normal teacher to student class ratio's because teachers like me have lost their careers and there is only a skeleton staff to teach. What will happen to the children that seek safety, support, and kindness because they come from a hectic or abusive family life. Who will be their voice in an overworked stressful classroom environment, because the school is lacking specialists, teachers and teacher aids?

In closing, I would like to say thank you to all those wonderful MPs and senators who love and respect the work we do as teachers. To those who are making a choice on behalf of myself and my brilliant teaching colleagues: Have courage and please be brave for us as the future of our children's learning and their ability to contribute as active citizens in future years depends on you.

'Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently.' Maya Angelou

Educator 223

I'm B, 45-year-old mother and I work fulltime in the Independent School sector in the Central Queensland region. I am a Teaching Assistant in our Secondary School and Special Needs Unit as well as facilitating extracurricular programs for Primary students. I am also a faculty advisor for a community-based school club, part time bus driver and WHS rep. I hold a Certificate 3 in Education Support, first aid and other relevant certificates to my role. I have been employed for 4 years and in this time, I have worked from Prep- Year 12. For 4 years prior I was an active volunteer and P&C member. For the past 8 years I have been making valuable contributions to my school community. My gift as an educator is my ability to connect with my students. To be available to them for support and guidance or just to listen. My adaptability and strength is seen by them in a positive light building them up. This is what I do.

The initial response from my employer was one of compliance. Limited understanding for individuals and hesitancy in relation to discussing alternatives to the mandates. Survey to fill in, emails and now no response. Concerns for legal implications from not complying with the Health Directive mandates is their main concern.

I have chosen not to receive the vaccination and therefore face the reality of losing the job I love. The impact from these mandates on myself and my family has been immense. Uncertainty for our financial future, my children's education, general life stability are all real problems I am facing. As a single income family, I am constantly worried and waiting for the new year to learn my employment fate is horrible.

The mandates have put immeasurable pressure on my family unit. Anxiety is at an all-time high for myself and my children. Tears are regularly shed as we try to navigate what our future will look like. For my children the uncertainty of if they will have a school to return to and what it will look like have profound effects on their mental health. Can I trust the system with my children, are they worthy of them? What do I do now? Questions are always on my mind. We are all trying to manage insomnia, anxiety and fear. Our collective strength is drawn on daily to cope with and to maintain our mental health through this period. It is exhausting.

In rural Queensland education staff turnover is high and replacements are difficult to find. Many positions remain unfilled for long periods of time and this puts extra pressure on staff. Workloads are ever increasing and education workers are exhausted.

Due to the current vaccination mandates the losses we are seeing in education settings within our region will impact the students and the wider community. From childcare to year 12 the impacts will be devastating. I am concerned that the schools will not be able to cope with the demands imposed by the introduction of these mandates. They barely managed before. Students will suffer, communities will suffer.

Education is so much more than a classroom. I am a support person for students throughout the year and relationships are forged through highs and lows. These relationships are vital for the wellbeing of students as they grow into life. I am concerned for the students as they lose the support they require. What happens to the student that feels suicidal today? What happens to the student who feels sad and alone, the student that struggles with social interaction? When the support system is no longer available, who do they turn to? I will no longer be there to support them. It truly scares me.

I would like for the government to understand the impacts of these vaccination mandates on a system already at breaking point. Children are watching, they see and they feel the world around them and we need them to see a positive and fair future.

I would ask that these health directive vaccination mandates are offered without coercion and freely to those who decide to take them with no punishments for those that choose not to. No Australian should have to have a medical procedure to maintain their employment. I want to keep my job and continue the work I love, to make a difference in the lives of our young people. I want to live my purpose, free to choose, Australian.

Be the reason the community chose you. Live your truth.

Educator 224

My name is L, male, and I'm a high school teacher in Brisbane South. I'm 26 and have worked as a full-time teacher in the same high school teaching both junior and senior maths (Maths methods) and science (chemistry and physics) for two years now. I'm a dual degree holder in both Education and Science (mathematics major). Prior to the announcement of the vaccine mandate, I had another full-time year-long contract at this school for 2022 of which I was timetabled to take both my current year 11 classes into their final year (12 Math Methods and 12 Chemistry). Additionally, I was given another year 11 Math Methods class for next year. (3 of my 5 timetabled classes for 2022 were senior classes). Apart from actively engaging with peers by creating resources and assisting with writing assessment at this school, I have consistently also been active with extra-curricular activities such as weekly school-run year 11 and 12 math methods tutoring and hobby club.

In the last few weeks of term 4, my employer has instructed me to clear my desk and has reallocated all my classes to other teachers. I've also been advised to apply for special no pay leave for term 1 in 2022. Additionally, it was mentioned in our conversations that my little sister's enrolment (currently in year 11) was at risk should I not be employed by the school next year. In my household, my two younger sisters have been coerced into having their COVID-19 vaccinations because of vaccine mandates at their workplace. My parents, my brother and I have not taken our COVID-19 vaccinations. Both my mum (general practitioner) and I have not been able to work at our respective workplaces since the 17th December 2021 due to refusing to take the current COVID-19 vaccines.

As such these mandates have had a noticeable impact on my mental health recently. On top of being restricted in society except for essential and emergency services, the degree of uncertainty I have about my job and position at my school as an early career teacher has significantly contributed to the deterioration of my mental health. On top of this, I've noticed increased hostility and harassment in week 9 and 10 of term 4 this year from heads of department and colleagues in the workplace about my personal health decision to not risk taking these current brand-new COVID-19 vaccinations as a young male (who have an increased risk of adverse heart reactions). Colleagues who I'd thought were close had begun distancing themselves from me or interrogating me about my decision.

As a teacher, teaching senior subjects at this school, I'm extremely concerned about my two year 11 classes moving into their final year (of which I was initially timetabled to teach in 2022). These students will be at a disadvantage compared to most of their peers of the rest of the state due to having to adapt to a brand new teacher's teaching style and expectations. Additionally the new teacher wouldn't have a year's worth of knowledge about each of my student's strengths and weaknesses in this particular subject like I do. Additionally, since this school had been having issues finding teachers to volunteer their time free-of-charge to run after school year 11 math methods tutoring, my weekly presence for these sessions will be hard to replace. Unless another teacher steps up, these sessions may have to be cancelled, further disadvantaging any struggling year 11s or 12s of the school.

I'd like to clarify that I'm not against obtaining COVID-19 vaccinations. I'm against receiving these current brand-new COVID-19 vaccines and the vaccine mandates that the government is imposing on their population for vaccines that neither completely stops infection nor stops the transmission of the virus. My hopes for 2022 and beyond is that the eligibility for a teacher to work is not dictated by whether or not they've had the COVID-19 vaccine, especially for high school (where all students and staff can choose to receive the vaccination themselves). Alternatively, teachers who have expressed interest to wait for a more traditional protein sub unit based vaccine (like Novavax) to pass the final stages of FDA approval should be allowed to keep working until it is available.

Educator 225

My name is M and I am a 51-year-old female living in Brisbane. I am a teacher aide at a local high school which I absolutely love. I have been in this job for 14 years. It has been very rewarding and definitely challenging at times. I love being able to leave work with a smile on my face knowing I have been a positive influence on teenager's lives. Some children from not so happy homes need that support person in their life and I believe I am that to many.

I have not had any response from my employer yet regarding if I can return to the job I love or not.

I have not been coerced into taking the injection and am facing losing the job of my dreams (one I have worked so hard for). The mandates have affected my family as well as close friendships. It is tearing us apart. Everyone wants to know if you are vaxxed or not. It is no one's business but our own. Now we get uninvited to some events because we are not vaxxed. This is just awful.

It has caused a lot of friction and arguments between my adult children. One of my daughters is a registered nurse. She got treated so disrespectfully and unlawfully by members of her own nursing team. She was so down and very upset by this for weeks. She even got in trouble for speaking to her work mates about this. My son also got let go from a hospital because he did not want to get vaxxed right then and there.

Some concerns for the students I work with is the constant talk about this Vax. Even teachers are asking the students if they have had the Vax. This is so wrong. Where is the medical privacy in this? I really don't want to see this be made mandatory for students. Some students look forward to going to school to socialise and especially to escape their home life if it isn't that good.

I am asking that these mandates stop immediately. It is causing a divide in our community, mental health problems, stress from losing jobs and just a whole lot of heartache for everyone.

Let's all work together and do what is best for everyone, including our students and our families.

Educator 226

My name is B. I am a Secondary Teacher in , Queensland. I am 48 years old and I have taught in my school for 22 years. I have a Bachelor of Education and teach in the areas of Senior Geography and Junior Social Science. I am a Year 8 Coordinator and I love my subject areas and the pastoral aspects of my job the most.

My employer has shown some empathy though I have not been told too much yet, except that the school will be following the Health Orders. Once the Health Directive was made, I spent time reading through the long email sent by the principal and I made a definitive decision not to have the Covid vaccine. I was told a contingency plan was required as to place a teacher in front of the students at the start of the 2022 school year and a replacement for me was organized. I am hoping to get more information about how long my job will be held for me in the new year. I am hopeful that the mandates will end very soon.

I am facing a tough period as my husband lost his job due to Covid last year and with an ill child, he needed to stay home to facilitate Distance Education for my son. As I will not be coerced into taking this vaccine, we face losing our home and our livelihood. I am willing to hold the line and look for alternative ways to generate income but this is not ideal and is not my desire long-term.

My mental health has been impacted greatly. There was already financial and emotional strain due to the impacts of Covid in the past 18 months. When the announcement was made about mandates for educational staff, I felt disappointed, somewhat rejected by others around me and alone in my decision. It seemed that everyone knew my decision which was not well-supported by my colleagues. I am still processing the fact that everyone knows my medical decision which should be a private matter. It is not easy to feel judgment by your peers. This has been difficult to process as I have worked in my school for 22 years and I had hoped to work for at least another 22 years in the school and career I love so much.

My concerns are mainly for my family and my college community. Families have also been impacted by the mandates as have other staff members. Some have been coerced to accept the mandate, despite feelings of remorse. Many parents are unlikely to want their young children vaccinated if this becomes a requirement to attend school. Parents may choose alternative schooling as the fees will be burdensome if they too lose their incomes.

I would like to see problem-solving and alternatives to the vaccine mandates. I do not want my job to be jeopardized by requirements to have a vaccine that cause risk to my health and that evidently does not prevent others from contracting Covid. I wish to be responsible for my own health decisions. I have made this known to my GP, with no question. I would be happy to work with my employer to ensure that my students, school community and I are working together in a safe environment, without having to accept this mandate.

Educator 227

My name is N, I live on the Sunshine Coast and am writing as a passionate and committed female secondary school teacher. I am currently employed as a Humanities teacher and High School coordinator. I am 45 years old and have 15 years of teaching experience. My education qualifications include a Bachelor of Arts and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education. I pride myself in bringing my subjects to life in the classroom. My staff describe me as approachable, honest and generous with my time and energy.

Following the announcement of the COVID-19 vaccination mandate, the principal emailed directions requiring that I must comply with the COVID-19 vaccination requirements and that I show evidence that I have received the prescribed number of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine by the 23rd of January 2022. Whilst the principal announced that the school would commit to do their utmost to support every staff member as the school transitions into the new year, it was clear that I would not be able to continue my employment without compliance of the mandate.

The announcement of the mandate has been nothing less than devastating for my family. Both my partner and I will be out of work and we face losing our house because we will be unable to pay our mortgage. I will only be able to take short term leave and the extent to which my leave will be paid is unclear. My partner who is a delivery driver, was given only two days' notice to receive the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and when he refused he was stood down and is currently using the last of his sick leave. My partner is European and we are currently considering our options of leaving Australia so that we can continue to work and support our children without the restrictions of a vaccination mandate.

The impact of the mandate on my mental health is indescribable. I should be enjoying a well-deserved break over the summer. Instead, I am suffering from sleep loss, depression and anxiety. I am extremely stressed because I have a responsibility to support my family. Additionally, I am deeply committed to my job and my students are depending on my support and guidance in 2022. However, I believe the COVID-19 vaccination will permanently compromise my health and without my health I cannot support my family or work in a high pressure school environment. Hence, the COVID-19 vaccination mandate is a great dilemma for me. I feel that this is an unjust requirement, and I am angry that I am feeling coerced.

I am deeply concerned for the students and for the school community as there are several teachers who are facing losing their jobs in 2022. The school will be short staffed, and the students will not have the subject specialists required to support them as they commence/continue their senior studies. In addition, we have a strong community and many concerned parents have already indicated that they will be removing their children and commencing home schooling.

I want to see Queensland adopt a business as usual approach in 2022. This means that the mandate be removed and all teachers (and all workers currently impacted by the mandate) continue their employment in their respective positions in 2022, vaccinated or unvaccinated. Everyone in society must be given the freedom to make their own medical choices and this must not impact upon their right to be employed in their profession or workplace.

Education is and will continue to be the most important sector in guiding and supporting the next generation, the young people of today. Vaccination mandates are damaging for all concerned, the students, staff, parents and wider school community. We need to be working for the greater good of all, and therefore I trust that you will remove the vaccination mandates as a matter of urgency.

Educator 228

My name is C and I have 3 children of my own who love going to school. I am 43 years old and have been an employee of Education Qld since 2000. I graduated in 1999 with a Bachelor of Education and have amassed almost 20 years of teaching experience. I have vast experience having worked in classrooms, supporting roles, as an itinerant teacher, as an acting principal and in advisory roles. Most of my service has been in regional and rural areas, spending many years away from my family. In my current part time role of Students with Disabilities Teacher, I support teachers in providing inclusive education for students who are unable to access the curriculum as most children can. I love my job, I love the children I work with, and I love X School, the school at which I am currently permanently employed.

Recently, I have received the devastating news that I will be unable to continue in the job I love so much. This came with no warning or consultation from Education Qld. My employer/ principal has ignored requests for risk assessments and there has been no personal communication from my principal in regard to the mandates. I have received 5 text messages and 6 emails (most of which were over the Christmas holidays) demanding I complete a survey, with no option to speak to anyone personally about the matter. In a year where staff wellbeing has been a focus, it is incomprehensible how this can be dumped on us, with no support or consultation.

These mandates have had a significant, negative impact on me and my family. To be given the impossible decision to either have the vaccination (only provisionally approved) or lose my job, has caused immeasurable stress on me, my husband, and my family. The coercion placed on me to go against my personal values and beliefs, has contributed to the most challenging time in my life. I have been anxious, withdrawn, angry, panicked, cried myself to sleep, argued with my husband, lost friends, fallen into depression, and to be honest, some days not wanted to be here. I have burst into tears at my local Woolworths, I have considered driving my car off the road, I have stayed in bed all day, not able to face it anymore. It has been traumatic for my children seeing me upset, worried, and stressed, and also the uncertainty of what school will be like if their teachers don't return. Time spent defending my position, has been time spent away from them. The financial aspect of this decision has created additional pressure for my husband who already works in an industry where income can be made or lost based on the weather or other factors outside of his control. These mandates have gone close to tearing our marriage apart.

I am very concerned impact these mandates will have on all schools, but especially regional and remote schools. My current school already has difficulty filling positions, and the students are already disadvantaged due to their rural location. How is a dramatic decrease of staff going to be best for the safety and education of our children? How is this best for the already interrupted education of our children? Where will QUALITY teachers come from if the pool is already limited? Our children and the future need passionate, experienced, caring teachers – where will these come from? They need reasonable class sizes, stability, routine, all of which will be lost with these mandates. Taking the best away, is not okay.

Parent volunteers are essential in small schools such as ours. How will our P&C survive when unvaccinated parents aren't allowed to volunteer? Who will help raise money for new playgrounds, updated resources, excursion and incursion opportunities for our children? Who will man the tuckshop? How will our children feel when their parents aren't allowed to come and watch them on parade? Who will mow the lawns and come to working bees?

My greatest concern is that this will lead to mandatory vaccinations for children and this will be rolled out in schools. Data shows our children are at minute risk from Covid. I am not prepared to support a system where our children become guinea pigs or part of an experiment.

What I'm asking for is simple. Lift the current vaccine mandates for people working in schools. Let us go back to work, doing what we love, giving the children, Australia's future, the best education we can.

Educator 229

My name is K also known as Mrs M to my beloved students. I have worked in Prep to 2 as a classroom teacher for the past 15 years. I have also been a HOC, collaborated and presented for Apple education and enjoy specialising in brain based learning for early childhood. I have led my fellow teacher in many innovation pedagogical practice which have seen huge improvements to students' academic growth but also their learning dispositions and 21st century skill set. I have worked on the Sunshine Coast in both State and Private schools in a mostly full time capacity.

Following your mandate for compulsory vaccination I have had to stand down from my job. My employer was apologetic and was clearly stressed by what he was being asked to implement. I have been called/ emailed by previous employers, as well as school principals I have never worked for, asking if I can work for them as they are obviously scrambling to fill teacher vacancies with experienced and qualified teachers.

These mandates mean I can no longer contribute to the financial stability of my family. My income was needed to pay bills including basics such as power, water and food. Our Christmas was spent trying to keep to a very tight budget, which is very hard when all any parent wants to do is give their child a special treat at this time of year. I will not be coerced into taking a vaccine when basic human rights were created to protect me from such laws.

The impact this has had on my mental health is extreme. I struggle to sleep, often cannot think about the future due to the anguish of not knowing what the future holds for us. I often feel like there is no escape from these mandates, although I know that is the intent behind them.

Although I am concerned for my family financially and myself mentally, I am also concern for my school community and the other communities that are been torn apart due to these vaccine mandates. Strong school communities contribute to healthy, strong, and successful towns, regions, states and ultimately countries. People who are connected to communities as less likely to have mental health issues and give back to others more. You cannot just replace and substitute the people who contribute to and create these communities. The negative effects of these mandates on community have been grossly underestimated.

I am asking you to abolish the vaccine mandates. Please look at what could happen to our region, state and country if school communities as torn apart. I can guarantee the negative impact will be far worse than anything we have seen over these past two years.

I have always told my students that if they know they have made a mistake they need to stop and make it right. I'm asking you to do the same.

Educator 230

My name is L, 29years old, and I am a female Early Years School Teacher on the Gold Coast. I hold a Bachelor of Education- Primary and I have been teaching children for 6 years. I took maternity leave in December 2020 and was to return January 2022. I absolutely love working with children. My job is not like any other, I get to guide children through their education journey and see them blossom. It gives me so much joy and pride to see these little humans succeed.

I was contacted in regards to my maternity leave coming to an end and I have since extended that leave to June 2022, hoping to do Some Casual/Relief teaching. I have not been contacted in regards to the mandates.

The mandates have hugely impacted my family. Now that my maternity leave has come to an end, we are now relying solely on my partner's income. We have a 10 month old baby so I was hoping to only return to my job with EQ part time. I have not had the injection - I am currently still breastfeeding and the thought of it impacting my baby in the future gives me a lot anxiety. I'm stuck in a really hard place right now. I can't return to my job that I love so much, my passion, my classroom full of little faces. I also can't contribute to paying bills, putting food on the table, our savings. The thought of not even being able to step foot in a classroom anymore makes me so so sad.

I'd be lying if I said this hasn't affected my mental health. It's also caused a lot of tension and worry between my partner and I because he now has the pressure of providing for us. I've been having panic attacks and suffering bad anxiety.

Our students need us. For most, we are the only ones that believe in them, the only stable person in their lives.

I'd like to see the mandates for teachers dropped. We just want to do our job, and we want to be there for those young people who need us most right now.

Every day I question my decision. Have I made the right choice? How will we survive? Maybe I stop breastfeeding my baby and just get the injection? How will I ever be able to do what I love, what I'm most passionate about? What will this look like for all the kids pulled from the system? What will the future of education look like? And please don't do this to the kids. They're just kids.

Educator 231

My name is S. I have been an early years teacher for 11 years at a beautiful public school on the Sunshine Coast. This school was also my primary school as a student and represents much more than just a job to me. I am 35 years old and currently working .8 due to also raising a young family. My most enjoyable experiences over the 11 years of teaching is seeing the individual growth, both emotionally and academically, in each and every one of my students that start with me as a shy prep student and leave at the end of year one with the courage to take on the world! Having a bright, well spoken, confident year six student come to you at the end of the year to sign their shirt and tell you that you are still their favourite teacher is priceless. I can guarantee I am not their favourite because I taught them how to read or do addition; I am their favourite because I made their learning enjoyable, real life, child centred and provided lifelong learning opportunities. I connect to every single student that I teach. I give them the respect that I expect from them.

I value their education, and because I value it, so do they. That's what makes me a damn good teacher. That's why I deserve to keep my position, vaccinated or not. I am deeply disappointed by the way Education Queensland have dealt with this mandate. The time of year to give such news was appalling. Furthermore, my principal admitted to knowing no more than I did, and was unable to assist me. At a family level, my husband is a Paramedic and has been faced with the same mandate as I have. This has put our entire family in a state of severe trepidation.

Our children are concerned what will happen to our house, our life. They are used to coming to school with me, and facing the year ahead without me has created confusion, concern and anxiety. I feel like I have not been provided adequate information to make an informed decision with this vaccination.

I am spending my entire summer holiday break in a constant state of fear at what is to come. My mental health has diminished substantially. Deciding whether I need to start finding another job, whether my family will lose our lives as we know it! The level of coercion for this injection is inhuman and unjustified, particularly while this drug is still in its clinical trials and is having thousands of adverse reactions. Furthermore, I am deeply concerned for the well-being of my students and families of children that I teach as we are a multi age school and I keep my students over 2 years.

I have already conducted my interviews with the prep students, looked them in the eyes and explained that I will be their prep teacher next year. My prep students will be entering year one expecting me to still be there for them. I take this commitment very seriously, and feel for the continuity of learning and starting the school journey with an unknown teacher will be very unsettling for both students and parents.

I am asking for these mandates to be abolished. For the freedom to choose what goes into my body. For a comprehensive risk assessment to be provided for both the risk of contracting COVID in my work place, and the risk of the mandated vaccine. For the ability to keep doing my job because I believe I am an asset to my school, and my community. I am asking you to put yourself in my shoes.

Try to understand a possible alternative opinion, and ultimately fight for sovereignty.

Educator 232

My name is D. Last month I was stunned by the news that the Queensland government have imposed mandatory vaccinations for all education staff. I tearfully bid farewell to my year two students, their parents and my colleagues. I tried to engage with my principal on this issue but the message was clear.....no exemptions. I have 22 years' experience teaching in ECE and in the blink of an eye I was suddenly no longer needed.

I live in Townsville and we have not even had a large covid problem here at all. How disappointed the parents will be next year, as I know of several who have requested to have me as their child's teacher. I have a reputation of being a kind, fair and engaging teacher. My classroom is a place where everyone feels like they belong. We learn, grow, discover, share and create together. Everyone is challenged, accepted and encouraged in my classroom. I will miss my students and they will miss me!

My concern is not just about what I have lost however. I am also concerned for the school community and what they have lost. There will be many experienced, caring and accomplished teachers who will be lost to the school community. Those that remain will be overworked and the students will suffer as a result. It's always the innocent that bear the brunt of poor decisions unfortunately.

I am the breadwinner in my family so it has not been easy for me to walk away from my livelihood. However, I cannot go against my conscience and take what I believe to be an ineffective and potentially unsafe vaccine. My husband and I have had many fights about it. I've felt coerced not only by my principal and the government, but also my own husband. This is causing severe stress and anxiety in our family.

I want to know why this decision was made. There was no consultation process, no transparency and no science data to back up this decision. I would like to see real facts and not vague, fearful and sweeping statements coming from the government. This would help me to have more faith in their leadership. I would also like to see more compassion from those in power.

Surely there is room for religious and other exemptions? Surely there are other solutions besides just one way forward. For example, if rapid testing is suitable for border control, why is it not suitable for work place safety? Please know that I realise governing is a difficult job and I want to be a supportive member of the community. This is difficult for me when I feel my voice is not being heard. Many community members are thinking individuals like myself, and we require intelligent debate on this subject instead of a one-sided approach which does not allow for differing opinions and viewpoints.

Educator 233

My name is M (BA Dip Ed), I have been teaching in High Schools for 46 years. Over the past 16 years this has been in a casual capacity, in the Queensland Catholic Education system, Gold Coast. I graduated when teachers were in the top 10% of academia. My area of expertise is the Humanities. As an educator I have always encouraged students to communicate effectively, research thoroughly and critically analyse based on fact NOT emotion. When teaching full time in NSW some of my Yr. 12 students received not only top marks but awards based on their ability to present an informative essay and reach conclusions based on thorough research. This is what education is about not the current system that prescribes the knowledge to be learnt and squashes intellectual debate.

Brisbane Catholic Education had mandated vaccination despite the fact that I have worked throughout the so- called pandemic for the last 2 years without and illness. There has not been one case amongst the staff or the students. We cannot socially distance in schools that have 30 students per class and congested staff rooms that are air-conditioned! As a Supply teacher I have no rights when it comes to my job but I need to support full time staff who are pro-choice.

There has been no overt coercion but mandating is coercion. I have lost my casual job with no recourse from Brisbane Catholic Education. The impact is the loss of my profession before I was ready to retire. The loss of income to supplement my funds and the social network of the staff which is paramount. This loss will impact on me mentally as I lost my husband to cancer two and a half years ago and teaching has given me a purpose to help me move forward.

My psychologist is concerned that not only the whole COVID issue but now the loss of my network could impact greatly on my ability to sleep over the coming months. My family are concerned but supportive. Neither of my children have been coerced to vaccinate but it will come!

Students will suffer because there will be a shortage of experienced teachers. Class sizes could increase and poorly trained staff rushed in to fill the void. Nothing can replace experience in the teaching profession. It is not just about the appropriate qualifications it is about behaviour management, compilation of resources, learned methodologies of effective teaching techniques and the ability to create mutual respect with the students.

I'm asking for our Constitution to be acknowledged. This is a Democracy not a Totalitarian State. Free choice is a God given right. I did not vote the Government in to take control of my health choices. The vaccination mandate has nothing to do with health. It is about control and taking our freedoms away. The vaccination of children is inhumane. These cohorts have a 99.97% chance of recovery without vaccination. These vaccinations have an Emergency Use only authorisation. I have the right to reject being part of an experiment without losing my profession and the right to live in my society. This is why we have the Nuremberg Code and the Magna Carter.

We need a different political system. One that represents the people not the wealthy and big Pharma. Vote the major parties out. Make Australia one country without the dominance of State Premiers and bureaucrats.

Educator 234

My name is D. I have been working in the public sector as a high school teacher for over 15 years across both NSW and QLD. Although my main subject has been Visual Arts, I have also specialised in English and Ancient History. As opposed to those who do remote service at the beginning of their teaching career, I decided to take my experience to a remote indigenous location later in my career – which is where I am now.

My husband and I are both teaching at the same school. At the time we signed our contracts to move to a remote location there was nothing mentioned about Covid-19, or vaccination mandates. Under the new Public Health Directive, we now have new terms to our employment, and we do not feel we can consent to them because we are being coerced financially. With four young children, and both parents about to face unemployment – this is obviously having an extreme impact on our family. We were given such a short amount of time to receive the first dose, and the immense pressure this has put on our family means I can barely think straight and I feel physically ill. My husband and I feel like we have been backed against a wall, cornered. We never thought that our government would do this to our family.

All of our children have received vaccinations in the childhood schedule. We are not 'anti-vaxxers'. We simply believe these mandates are crossing a line and we feel protective for our children's futures. We want our children to grow up in a world where they are free to choose what happens to their body, while participating in a civilised society, free of fear mongering, overt control and segregation. Right now, our children are absorbing everything. They are learning that our family is 'different' to others, because we can't go to the pool, or out for dinner tomorrow night for my eldest son's 9th birthday. We can't even have jobs and we are now selling our house back home to survive. Our world has been turned upside-down overnight. It feels like war times, and we need to wear stars on our coats.

I am currently seeking advice from my GP regarding my mental health. This is causing incredible anxiety for us, particularly financially. On top of losing our homes and jobs, The Department of Education has announced that we will be forced to foot the bill for not only our transport home, but the original transport costs as well. For a family of six, to transport all our belongings, including cars and costs for flights, each way across the length of QLD the estimate for this is upwards of \$90,000. This is what the department have threatened our bill could be. I cannot fathom how this is fair on our little family. It feels like we are being punished for volunteering to come to a remote location. We could have opted to transfer home at the end of 2021, however we chose to stay because we have a passion for working with First Nations students, and now we are being threatened to be thrown on the curb with our children, homeless and unemployed in a remote community, with no way to pay for our transport home. It's inhumane.

It really feels like we are being held hostage by the department. Our options are to pay up to \$90,000 to go home, OR stay in this location with a high cost of living, no employment opportunities to support our four children. The only way out is to have the vaccine. If that is not coercion, I do not know what is.

When the Directive was released, my husband and I requested to meet with the Head of Campus of our school, who chose to be vaccinated herself. She expressed her absolute disgust that her "two best teachers" were being put in such a position. She understood and respected our decision and was appalled at the lack of communication she had received from the Department and had little faith that the staffing crisis would have a workable solution at her school. The school already collapses and merges classes daily due to understaffing - this is before the Directive was released. The students at our school are high needs, and need Trauma Informed teachers – not PTT undergraduates, or teachers from overseas who will struggle with the Indigenous language barrier. It is the students who will suffer, and I doubt that this will be received well in our Indigenous community. For the government to lack enough foresight to see that remote Indigenous schools will suffer immensely with staff shortages, in my eyes, equals discrimination via negligence.

I wish I could understand how I am supposed to give fully informed consent to this vaccination. All I could see, and my GP agreed with this, is that in our circumstances, you cannot separate the consent from the coercion. I thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I trust that you will consider how this has affected our family and choose to stand on the right side of history.

Educator 235

My name is J. I am a 37 year old teacher who has taught in multiple locations within Queensland as a primary, special needs and high school teacher. I have been a teacher for almost 15 years in Education Queensland schools, graduating in 2007 with a Bachelor of Primary and Middle Schooling and then went on to complete a Masters of Educational Studies majoring in Guidance Counselling and Career Development in 2012. The biggest gift I have given ALL of my students is my listening and problem solving. Many of my students have had traumatic backgrounds and they have entrusted me with their problems that I have been able to help and support.

My employer has done NOTHING to help with any of the decisions or problems that I have had to face since this mandate was spoken about. My employer is Education Queensland and even through these WELL EARNED school holidays I have constantly received not only emails to my school email address but now text messages and emails to my personal email address. It is constant harassment! Not ONCE has Education Queensland even considered those that are facing domestic violence or have faced domestic violence and are trying to navigate the life of trauma that exists after the relationship ends. The thing is, unbeknownst to me I was already in another domestic (professional) violence relationship and it only made it completely apparent when these mandates came out. So did the coercion, the threats, the blackmail, the name calling, the belittling, the financial control and the relationship control.

When the mention of mandate was made during the last 2 weeks of school I lost all hope. I lost all respect. I lost all control. I lost everything. We are taught our body is our body and that is what I teach children. Yet now, we are being told what to do with our body. Do I give permission to be raped again? Do I give permission to allow my body to be used and abused just to keep somebody else happy? What about me? What about my happiness? I went through a time where I started to believe I am here to serve others and then with that mindset came the belief I had to have the vaccination. I walked into the first appointment and cried uncontrollably while I filled the paperwork in and then sat there for that needle! That was the day I was raped again, in a different way, but this time I allowed it to happen.

I thought I had to do it to keep food on the table and my child safe. But never again! I will lose my homes, and my family, and my income but I will never lose my dignity/self respect. So, as a result my students lose me. Their support person, their confidante, their carer and their teacher. I have taught ALL of my students to believe in themselves and trust themselves and without me showing that I practice what I preach I would be failing them. And me. So that is not an option for me.

These mandates are destroying our culture. Now I know how the Indigenous felt when they were robbed of their land and culture. Now I know how little the words of reconciliation meant and how shallow the people that run our country are. I have paid all of my taxes, supported decisions that were supposed to be in the best interests of this country, but now I have to support my daughter and myself. Mandates are not law yet they are still given as the best way to protect. If our country really valued its citizens it would be really easy to see how far away from this value the mandates are and they would be removed.

Educator 236

My name is S and I have been a teacher for 26 years. I first started in mainstream primary school in 1995 in X, Tasmania, and moved around various schools until I relocated to Victoria in 2005, where I continued teaching at a special school, having transferred over to special education in 2003. I then relocated to Queensland in 2011 and continued with special education in various education settings such as private kindergartens, early intervention and then into the Queensland Education Department settings.

I have a Bachelor of Education – Primary (Hons) (1995) and a Master of Education (2003). I became involved with special education on the passing of my daughter in 1999 who had special needs, which led me to commence study and work in this area. I also received a Diploma in Children's Services in 2011 which allowed me to extend my teaching into the private kindergartens and early intervention setting for children with special needs. I have spread my passion, skills and knowledge far and wide; I want to do this for as long as I can. I chose this as a life path – a lifetime career.

I want to retire as a teacher. I am in a school which I love and who loves me as much as I love my work. I am at X Special School; my second home. Teaching is my passion; it is my life. I will stretch my time in the classroom out for as long as I can physically and mentally. For over half of my life, teaching has been my life. I want to see out my teaching life for as long as I possibly can. And that time is **not 'now'**.

I am at a stage now in my life where my own children are now adults and I continue to commit myself and my time completely to the children who I teach each year. I don't 'work a 25 hour week' – I work a 60 – 70 hour week and up to a 90 hour week at the moderation and reporting times. I spend weekends in my classroom preparing resources and making my classroom as inviting and engaging as it possibly can be. I spend thousands of dollars of my own money on resources and equipment. I spend endless hours scouring markets and second hand shops to find the resources to make my classroom feel like home to my students. I contact people online to buy resources and when they know the items they are offering are going to a classroom it brings them joy too. I spend hours awake at night thinking of new ideas and ways to make school fun for my learners. I also 'take home' the concerns I have for my students and their families; working in special education has become part of who I am. This is what makes me happy, and brings me endless joy.

I sacrifice family time to prepare work; to complete professional development and I average 50 hours per year of professional development – double the requirements of the QCT.

All of this is by choice because teaching is in my heart. School is my safe place, after enduring some quite tragic experiences, and I have always had my work as my sense of safety and purpose.

My colleagues describe me as passionate, and over-worker (in a good way!) and as one of the most caring and committed teachers they have worked with. I have had enduring support from my principal and deputy over the last two years as I have gone through some extremely challenging times on both a personal level regarding my relationship and health, and on a family level regarding the health of my children. My 'team' have helped me remain in my classroom with my students by providing support and compassion, and a Maintain at Work plan, as they know that teaching is my heart and that teaching has helped me through what I have needed to deal with.

2022 is going to be 'my year'. In the sense that I have developed a management plan for my health concerns; my children are on the right path as adults, and I am now able to fully immerse myself even more into what I love. These holidays I have already accumulated a car boot full of resources and a mind full of ideas and am ready to go into my classroom. I would be in there today, right now, if I could be!!

However, now this is uncertain. My principal who has been behind me one hundred percent and who has 'had my back' is in a situation now of which I am not in envy of. I am in position of being torn too – torn between my own instincts and internal sense of 'justice' and morals, and a mandate of which, if I apparently don't comply with, would mean I lose that part of myself which is everything to me – my teaching. My employer (in this sense I am referring to my principal) does not want to lose teachers – GOOD teachers, like me, when it is already hard to find teachers who are knowledgeable and skilled and who hold the personality characteristics suitable for the cohort of students I am engaged with – SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS!! And their families will suffer as a result. It takes time to build trust, and this will all be shattered if teachers are forced to walk away from a job which is 'who they are' and to leave families who have given their children to them with a sense of security, trust, partnership and love.

Educator 237

My name is A and I'm an administrator in the [X] school system on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. I've worked in education in various roles since 2010 gaining a lot of experience and knowledge specifically using a database called TASS. I have solved many inefficiencies with my skill set and made teacher's lives a lot easier. I am truly passionate about education and how I can support teachers to do what they do best.

I have been currently suspended which will no doubt turn to termination once my principal and HR director are back from their holiday. My principal has said he can not adjust my role to a working from home arrangement. I was actually offered a new permanent role on 3 December which I've now seen advertised on my school website. Truly heartbreaking to go through an interview process and to be told I was the best candidate by far, only to have the job be re advertised.

This mandate, just before Christmas has been devastating both emotionally and financially. I have two children who attend my place of work but I can no longer afford to send them without my salary. I have withdrawn them and plan to enrol them in distance Ed. My oldest starts year 11 so the disruption to his schooling is huge. The ripple effect of removing someone's income is huge.

I have worked incredibly hard my whole life and to have a role that I love taken from me due to the mandating of experimental vaccines is very hard to comprehend. I have a complex health history but it's not deemed important or relevant even though my health is incredibly important to me!

I am very concerned about the long term impact mandating vaccines on some workers will have on children. We have focused on teaching students about consent only to have the government show, consent means nothing. To lose highly skilled teachers and administrators because of this mandate is highly destructive. The knowledge that left qld education on 17 December can not be replaced quickly.

If there is any logic and compassion left in the Qld government, I urge them to reverse this mandate immediately.

Educator 238

My name is I, I am a 46 year old mother of 3 and we live in X, near Brisbane, Queensland. I have been working as a teacher aide at a local school for the past 4 years. Due to my work and family commitments it took me 2 years to finally complete my certificate in Education Support in September 2021. My work has become my new passion. The constant rise in students with additional learning needs in every single classroom has shown me how essential a good cooperation between the classroom teacher and the assistant has become. I have learned that I can make a difference in the students' learning experience every day by ensuring individual learning needs are met and the students receive the support they deserve and need.

The recently announced mandates have had a major impact on my family life, my mental health and surely on my future colleagues and students. Next year I would have supported another class 7, my fourth one in a row. I have been offered this position because of my former experience with this age group and also because the future class teacher of this class has personally requested me to support her. At this stage I won't be allowed to support her and my students simply because I have chosen not to accept a vaccination that is still in a trial period. Where there is risk, there must be choice. My choice means that I will be facing losing my job in 2022.

Teacher aide is not my first career. My family and I immigrated to Australia in 2009 from Germany on permanent skilled visa. At that time I had been a well experienced midwife for over 10 years. I fought for years to get my training and work experience recognised in Australia but failed as AHPRA would not accept my German studies and experience. I was devastated. I felt worthless and experienced years of mental health challenges until I finally decided to give up my profession and passion for midwifery and start my new career as teacher aide in 2016.

I am concerned. I am deeply concerned.

I am concerned for my mental health. I am concerned for the wellbeing of my husband who will now be the only income earner again. I am concerned for my colleagues at school who are going to struggle to deliver the same quality of teaching due to too many vacant teacher and teacher aide positions. I am concerned for my children who are losing amazing teachers and teacher aides next year. I am concerned for my students, especially for those who need extra support in the classroom. I am concerned for the quality of education in Queensland.

I am asking you to review the recently announced mandates for school staff. I am asking you to at least consider the introduction of Rapid Antigen Testing for ALL school staff, vaccinated or vaccine free, instead of weakening our education system by excluding vaccine free teachers, school staff and volunteers. Our children deserve better.

Educator 239

My name is S. I am a 42 year old female from X Bay. I currently hold a Certificate III in Education Support in which I was lucky enough to gain employment from for 12 months after the completion of. Prior to this, I was a school volunteer for 14 years, I assisted in the classroom, in the tuck-shop and was also a member of the school's P & C Executive Committee. I feel my sole being, is to be able to help and support children, especially with regards to intervention – one on one.

Over the past weeks, I have felt extreme pressure from Education Queensland to undertake a medical procedure in which I do not feel comfortable with in order to pursue my passion. I have been bombarded with both emails and text messages on my private account, whilst we as a collective, are meant to be on holidays and enjoying some "time out".

The current mandates have meant not only am I unable to work but my 16 year old son has been stood down with view of termination of his casual job. My 20 year old daughter can no longer attend university to complete her Bachelor of Primary Education, my husband's employment is a "wait and watch" situation.

The emotional stress on my family is currently extremely high. Not knowing what tomorrow will bring. What action we need to take today to make it through the next week without feeling coerced into taking an experimental mRNA vaccine. My family and I struggled with Christmas this year, my favourite time of year. As much as we tried to stay away from talking about the current world situation, it is always at the back of our mind and would always become part of the conversation due to offering up ideas to improve our possible situation. We have been ostracised by family and friends due to our beliefs and stance. It is like having a new born in the house, the sleepless nights are back. We did have a strong extended family, now feeling extremely isolated.

The evidence in the community of the mass division is very concerning for what it is teaching our very impressionable children of today. Our future is not looking of one of a peaceful world but more of one from Nazi Germany 1939. This breaks my heart to think of all the lives lost through wars of the people who were fighting for or freedom which has been slowly eroded away. This whole situation goes against what an education setting is teaching the children of today.

These mandates must be recanted. The many thousands of people who are going to be made unemployed from not just a means to and end but also what fulfills them and gives them purpose of life on a day to day basis. I want my children to be taught by passionate teachers, not one's who have been hired from another country with no idea on how to relate to our children. The education is about statistics. These high statistics will not be achieved without the current devoted staff.

Please have empathy and compassion and most of all save our kids.

Educator 240

My name is 'E' and I am a 42 year old female full time secondary Maths teacher working in the Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) sector on the Gold Coast. I have been a teacher for twenty years but have spent the last eight in my current school. I have a Bachelor of Education, Masters in Educational Leadership, a Cert IV TAE and recently achieved Highly Accomplished Teacher status in 2020. I currently lead the Junior Maths Department at my school and through my initiative and creation of programs, have significantly increased my school's Maths NAPLAN results. I am looked upon by my leadership team and colleagues as a strong classroom teacher, not only in delivery, but in classroom routines and management. I have developed incredibly positive relationships with my students who more often than not, exceed their previous academic standards after my tuition.

Since Annastacia Palaszczuk made an announcement regarding mandates being implemented in Education, my new principal (since Term 3), has followed all directives and instructions from BCE Head Office. This action started two weeks prior to the CHO officially mandating the Education sector. Whilst my principal has engaged in dialogue with me alongside a Red Union industrial advocate, and personally called me to gain my vaccination status, he has been unable to answer any of my questions around: Rapid Antigen Testing; alternate work arrangements; waiting for safer vaccines that are non-RNA/mRNA to be released; how the school would respond to adverse reactions and who is responsible for this; leave entitlements such as long service; when my pay may cease if I am stood down; and, if I can come on site to collect my belongings if I lose my job. No risk assessment specific to my school's context around the mandated covid-19 vaccines, has been provided after I twice requested it. I have been made aware by my principal that a risk assessment does not exist. My principal has admitted the mandate is political. So, at this point, I am sitting in limbo (since 13th Dec 2021) and have been waiting for my principal to get back to me around my specific medical concerns and needs and whether I can take half pay long service leave in Term 1.

As single adult without children, I have no direct effect on a spouse or children, but my own family who are all vaccinated, have tried to convince me that I am throwing away my teaching career because I have worked hard to get to where I am. They have been emotional over it, more so than I have. I have been shut down in conversation and treated differently, been blamed for my mother's physical and mental stress, not believed when I talk truth, and this has been hurtful at times. Whilst my family have not directly coerced me to get the covid-19 vaccine, I feel they would prefer me to, so I don't potentially lose my job. These mandates have affected me in various ways and ultimately, I face losing my job and further backlash from my family. I do not deserve such treatment as all I have done is advocate for my own personal health choices.

I am a strong person who has been able to manage my mental health throughout this ordeal so far. I have a good team of like-minded teachers around me as well as very supportive friends who also feel the same way about the covid-19 vaccines and their unproven safety record. My gut instinct for a positive outcome is strong, but I know this will be challenged when we hit bumpy and uncharted waters as teachers are stood down all over the state and potentially face large scale job losses. Whilst I am not the only teacher facing such an outcome, I know this time will test my mental capacity and survival skills around this life changing and incredibly political event.

I feel the greatest losers in all of this will be the students. This is going to emotionally devastate them and filter through to their parents. We could potentially see civil unrest due to the actions of the QLD Government. Furthermore, the impact on learning is going to be significant, with students academically falling behind because they either haven't got a teacher in their classroom, are being taught by a teacher aid or current university student, or are being taught in overcrowded classrooms with the teacher unable to manage the students nor get to one-on-one necessary teaching for students with learning difficulties.

For students with ASD in particular, this will set off ticks and emotional breakdowns due to lack of consistent routine and teacher attention. It's going to be diabolical for the students and teachers on site will not cope. The Education system will collapse as it is doing in NSW and VIC. No amount of political games will save it. I want to see the mandates overturned NOW! No educator should have to go through unlawful punishments all because they do not see the trial phase covid-19 vaccines fit for their body. My body, my choice.

Educator 241

My name is P I have been a primary school tuckshop convenor for the past 2 years at X State School. I enjoy providing great food for our school community. In the past few years of employment at the school I have improved the quality of the food and the service to students and staff. I have increased the orders in our tuckshop by 50% and we are making a profit for the first time in years. I want to continue in my role and expand food options for the staff and students at the school and continue to increase profits which in turn benefits the school community financially.

My employer although empathetic has not addressed any of the concerns I have raised or answered any of the questions I have asked concerning the mandates. They have advised me that unless I have complied with the mandate by the 23rd of January my employment will be terminated.

This job has not been an easy road for me and I stepped up and went full time when they were left without a convenor this year. I had not worked full time in 20 years so this was a big step for me. I have not had 1 sick day in all the time I have worked there and I have gone above and beyond to turn the business around, never saying no to coming in to work when they needed me often doing work outside school hours. The Tuckshop now have a great team of staff and volunteers. I have just negotiated a 3 day a week contract, the job is close to home and I love what I do. To be now told that I can no longer attend my workplace due to making a medical decision is devastating. Not only do I love my role the it allows me to contribute to my family's income and gives me financial freedom. The loss of this job will put a lot of emotional and financial stress on myself and my family. It will also impact the other staff and volunteers who I work with who will now have to work extra hours to keep our Tuckshop running.

It is a bitter pill to swallow when it is quite clear this has nothing to do with protecting our health or that of the school community. It is becoming very apparent that the vaccine does not stop the spread of the virus and that the vaccine is not giving people who have had it long term immunity, now being told we will need to have a boosters.

I think a much better solutions would be for all staff to provide a negative rapid antigen test before attending their workplace. This would be a safe and effective solutions and experienced and committed staff would not have to lose their jobs.

I feel these mandates are dividing our communities and our children are the ones that are going to suffer with schools already being short staffed this will put even more pressure on the system. Teachers are already working under stressful conditions. I am sure that we will lose years of experience to this mandate and many parents will choose to home school as an alternative. Our children will lose teachers and staff that they love and trust. These mandates need to be dropped they are unethical on so many levels.

Educator 242

My name is K. I am a 22-year-old female teacher and I have been teaching for one year. I have been employed by X College – in X, Queensland for the entirety of that year, teaching middle and senior school classes. I have a Bachelor of Education (Secondary)/ Bachelor of Arts from the University of the Sunshine Coast which I acquired with a major in English and a minor in History. However, in the next two weeks, I will lose my job because I have chosen not to get vaccinated.

In response to the mandate that all teachers and educators in Queensland must have received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine by 23rd January 2022, my employers have informed me that my employment will be terminated if I do not comply with this mandate.

The prospect of losing my job has been a difficult one to process. Becoming a teacher has been a lifelong dream for me and I have worked towards it since I was 5 years old. To lose my job after only one year of teaching is an abrupt and disheartening end to a long-time dream. I have been fortunate enough to have the full support of my family as I made my decision, regardless of what I chose.

However, this does not mean the decision was easy. I wish to keep my job that I have worked so hard for, and I can guarantee that it was a decision I did not make lightly. I weighed up all of the consequences of both receiving and rejecting the vaccine, including the possible health repercussions and my employment status. This has led to many tears and heartache as this decision is a lose-lose situation for me, and the uncertainty of my future career and financial position has been emotionally taxing.

Large teacher shortages have been predicted once this mandate takes effect, and I am concerned about the impact this will have on the students in our schools, both academically and personally. I have built valuable relationships with my students over the last year and will greatly miss them. Due to the time when the mandate was announced, I did not have a chance to say goodbye to my students and they will return in the new school year to many of their favourite teachers missing. Teaching is not a moment in time but a journey that I take with my students, growing with them as I teach them skills and information and support them throughout the process. As a teacher, my job is to teach my students. Not only do I teach them academic skills, but I also teach them skills and values, and the relationship that I build with them creates a safe environment for me to offer guidance. This is what I have been trained and employed to do, and my vaccination status does not impact my ability to effectively and successfully do this. I am asking that these mandates be revoked, and unvaccinated teachers be allowed to work in schools to do the job they are qualified to do: teach.

My decision to remain unvaccinated is an exercising of my personal values, morals, and beliefs, something that I as a teacher am encouraged to teach my students. If teachers are forced to take a vaccine to keep their jobs, then we are not displaying the same freedom of choice that we teach them to support every day.

Educator 243

It is with great pride that I introduce myself, B, as a permanent full time classroom teacher at a Northern Gold Coast Public primary school.

I'm a 48 year old female with a Bachelor of Education (Primary) degree and 8 years of classroom experience, including 4 years teacher aide experience in Australia. Plus 5 years international experience in private international schools teaching pre-schoolers and tutoring.

I am a dedicated, enthusiastic, committed, and caring teacher that goes above and beyond for her students, families, and the community. My impact on students goes deeper than providing an education. I provide a lifelong aspiration for my students to learn, to belief in themselves and to aspire to their dreams and desires.

My Principal has provided a supportive undertone during the last few weeks of school after the directive of mandated vaccines was received. Although, this support has been impersonal and received through online platforms rather than in person. She has been tense and it was felt that her speeches were very scripted. When I approached her personally in her office she was supportive and agreed to grant me with LSL, although this was then reneged 2 hours later. Her spoken words have been very cautiously delivered. The stress for us both, to navigate these uncertain times was evident. The last 2 weeks of school after the mandates were delivered produced a wave of emotions. Emotions from other staff in the form of bullying. Also, sadness from staff that had been coerced to take the vaccines and now have health problems that may be related. Loss of close friendships with colleges and support and respect from others.

I have fought so hard for the last 8 years to resettle in Australia with my 3 amazing children as a single mum and obtain cars, houses, and a career. Finally settling into a comfortable position just as Covid arrived on Australia's doorstep. The last 2 years have plunged me back into a range of emotions that I though had passed during the years of separation from my husband and the turmoil of re-establishing my life and career and settling my children. I really did not want to feel this way again so soon. This has been particularly disturbing for my children to see me go through another separation, a separation from a career.

A career that I love and cherish, a means of supporting and providing for my beautiful children and myself. I have experiences extreme insomnia, waking in panicked hot sweats from my sleep, uncontrollable crying, continual mental searches for answers and solutions. The mental and physical exhaustion, the inability to eat and the nausea. Pacing and busying myself with medial tasks to try and busy my mind with other thoughts. The holidays are supposed to be a time for teachers to decompress and recharge. This year has not been an easy year with high class numbers, many students with diagnoses and high needs. Leadership challenges, year level team changes due to illnesses. Lastly on top of all that Covid. To start the year, we had students that had missed a large amount of school and the educational disadvantages this had created. Nervous parents and families returning small children to school in an unknown environment. Hand washing and the pressures related to acquiring resources to implement the covid protocol thrust upon us. The rush to re set our classrooms to be as covid safe as possible, with little advise and help. The continual strain physically and emotionally to perform the necessary tasks to keep the students and ourselves safe. The lack of help to assess ventilation of our classrooms. All this while continuing to teach and the continual change in curriculum delivery and expectations to produce amazing student results.

My concern for my students and community include the education of the students is going to be stretched because of reduction of amazing experienced teacher working in the industry because of mandates. The strain this will create for other staff at the schools. The strain that will be felt by families and the community losing these professions. Also, the main concern is the transmission of the virus in the schools. The vaccines don't stop you from getting and transmitting the virus, so I ask the question... Will this help keep our school community safe? The schools will still be in jeopardy of deep

Educator 244

I am writing to you today to express my sincere despair over the current vaccination mandates for all education staff. At the age of 22 I graduated from USQ in 2011 and since this time have been a fulltime employee of Education Queensland. I completed a Bachelor of Primary and Middle Schooling majoring in Special Education. Upon graduation I worked for four years in Central Queensland in both Primary and Secondary settings. I then worked three years in Townsville as a Special Education teacher and I am currently employed in X as a specialist Special Education Educator. My true passion is providing a safe space for students to learn and provide them with a curriculum that is aligned with their peers but at their level to ensure success.

The last weeks of the 2021 school year were the most distressing time of my working life. I felt completely at loss with the prospect of not being able to work in the place I love the most because of a personal medical choice. I spoke with my Head of Department and the Principal, both were incredibly supportive of my decision but they were at a loss of what my options moving forward were. My advice was, 'it is still early days, we will wait and see what happens.'

When I am at school, I have a class full of students that come from vulnerable, un-settled and broken backgrounds. School is their stability. I am their constant.

These vaccine mandates do not only affect me and my students, it affects all my loved ones. The financial hardships that will face us next year, the worried look on my three-year-old daughters face when I suddenly start crying when I remember our uncertain future.

2022 would be my 10th year teaching. Teaching has been my life. What will next year look like for me and so many others who are facing losing their career and their passion? Every day I wake up hoping that this is all just a terrible dream.

I sincerely hope that you re-consider this mandate. I am not just losing my job. I am losing my passion. My current and future students are not only losing a teacher but losing their stability and support base. My family is not only losing money but losing their future financial support.

Educator 245

At 60 years of age I can truthfully say that I have dedicated my life to public education. With 37 years teaching experience in everything from early childhood, special education, learning support and reading recovery to teaching foundational skills to juvenile offenders at the Townsville corrections centre, I have had a full and varied career. I have dedicated a great portion of my career to the explicit teaching of reading and as an experienced senior teacher consistently offer collegial support and guidance to teacher aides and teachers alike. I love what I do and enjoy the challenge of re-engaging disengaged students and offering them hope for a brighter future.

My principal was very supportive and sympathetic to my decision to decline vaccination as his wife finds herself in the same situation: however, some members of staff have been extremely unprofessional and discriminatory, going as far as to say that anyone not vaccinated 'Does not deserve to be allowed to teach'. I have sent a letter to both the premier of Queensland and the department that employs me, asking for certain aspects of this mandate to be clarified with regard to legal process and how this relates to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act Section 109 and to date have had no response other than to say that my letters have been received.

I suffer from an autoimmune disease and was diagnosed with ovarian cancer late last year. I currently see a biochemist and a practitioner of Chinese medicine for my treatment. Both have indicated that having this vaccination at this time would interfere with my treatment plan. Not to mention that at this stage the vaccination is still at stage three trial phase and not officially approved. However, I have been unable to get an exemption, despite visiting several doctors. I have been told that I must be vaccinated or risk losing my livelihood. I am constantly bombarded with email and text messages from the department asserting the mandate and need for vaccination. My private life has been in turmoil for many months and my stress levels are at breaking point. The coercion is tearing my family apart because my husband is vaccinated and my inability to travel to our pre-booked, pre-paid destination, has total ruined our Christmas holiday plans and my 60th birthday celebrations.

Before the education vaccination mandate was announced, I was consulting with an EQ counsellor in regards to work related stress and the cancer diagnosis, not to mention the 2019 floods and my husband's 22-month suspension over an unsubstantiated charge. This mandate is just the icing on the cake. I'm not sure I will be able to recover from this final straw. My GP is talking about PTSD as a possible diagnosis. My marriage is also under incredible strain due to the financial burden this job loss will place on our mortgage and day to day living expenses. I married late in life and need to work for a number of years yet to have any hope of paying our mortgage.

The current teacher's shortage will only be compounded by these forced vaccination mandates and schools and their communities will be under even more strain than they were before. Students need good teachers and experience takes time and dedication.

I taught through the pandemic, as did most teachers all over Australia. Our students were never at risk. They are no more at risk now from someone unvaccinated than they are from the vaccinated. We all know that the virus is not curtailed by vaccination. My biggest concern with Mandated vaccination is the undermining of the Australian constitution, the erosion of human rights, which will affect us all in the long term.

I want to be able to go to work and do my job without being coerced into taking part in an experimental vaccination. I want bodily autonomy and the right to make a living in the profession of my choosing without stipulations, that go against my human rights, being imposed on me. The Nuremberg trials determined once and for all no one would ever again be forced into an experiment against their will. I want my human right acknowledged and respected, without consequence. Australia was once an envied nation, a place that I was proud to call home. Australia needs all its leaders to make sure that they are on the right side of history. Decisions against human rights will have far reaching consequences.

Educator 246

My name is J and I am 52 years old. I have a Bachelor of Education and I have been a teacher since 1991. I have worked for Queensland Education since 1998. I have been a music teacher in small country schools, a special education teacher (3 years) and a classroom teacher (7 years). I have worked in the South X, Brisbane and on the Gold Coast. The most rewarding time of my career was when working with students from lower-socio economic backgrounds in the X Schools as a trusted relief teacher, contract and finally a permanent teacher.

When faced with being mandated Covid-19 vaccine I was extremely angry and upset. The school principal's initial response was to laugh at me, which he later apologised for and invited me to talk to him further, an invitation that I was not able to take up. I sent two requests for a risk assessment to him and was sent back two generic responses that were cut and pasted from Queensland Education emails.

Queensland Teachers Union emails regarding the mandate were also not helpful, not supportive and lied outright about consulting staff about this mandate. Further to this, it was made known to me that two of the QTU school representatives were less than supportive, one stating to a peer that she would prefer not to work with an unvaccinated staff member and the other expressing her pro-vaccination opinion via a Facebook post.

My family has been significantly impacted by these mandates. Obviously, the loss of my income will impact financially upon my family, now and in the future. The salary that I would have earned in the next ten years was safeguarding my retirement. I have an intellectually impaired adult son who does and will rely on me financially, he will now need to be supported by other family members. My daughter was currently studying to be a high-school science teacher, mandated by Griffith University and unable to complete the degree that she has been paying for up front. Mandating vaccinations has changed our family plans for our future.

This has been an extremely stressful time. I was so upset when mandated I left school early, unable to continue work. My husband was so concerned that he booked me to see our family doctor and I was given sick leave for the rest of the term. I did attempt to return on the following Monday but again, was too upset to work. Since then, I have been teary throughout the day, suffered panic attacks where I have not been able to control my breathing and I am not sleeping at night. I have found doing the simple things difficult and have become disorientated, overwhelmed and lost - even writing this is difficult!

As you could imagine, my students were aware that I was very upset and emotional when I left school, even though they didn't know why. In the last week that I was away unable to work, several of the "tricky" students had emotional outbursts resulting in crying and violence with one student leaving school grounds. Difficult students and students with disability in the classroom are what I do best and I will be missed. Some of the parents were also upset by the mandates and expressed their concerns at my absence and I received some lovely gifts and cards. I returned briefly on the Thursday to say goodbye- it was very emotional, not the way I envisioned ending my teaching career.

The mandate for Teachers to be vaccinated has not been a medical choice but one of politics. The research suggests that there is very little to be gained. Asymptomatic spread is unlikely and vaccine does not totally prevent disease or spread. Schools are **not high-risk settings** and people are more likely to catch covid-19 in the home. Certainly, other measures such as Rapid Antigen Testing are now available. The new variant is now proving to be mild. So why mandate teachers? Simply Politics, and as we learnt in "Animal Farm" power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

As for pressure on the healthcare system- If all families were as focussed on their health as ours, 80% healthcare (sick care) workers would be out of work and the healthcare budget would be 20% of its current amount. So, the useless political decision based in fear will again hobble our society. The strongest nations in the future will be the healthiest and while health decisions are made around only one rapidly mutating RNA virus and the fear of ignorant people there is only one direction for our country. Our votes will go to the awake Leaders!!

Educator 247

My Name is Z. I am a 24 year old, female, Early Childhood educator living in X, Gladstone Region, Queensland. I have been working as a casual education assistant at X Early Learning Centre for 5 ½ years. Prior to this I obtained my Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and did a placement at X Learning Centre, X. I also work as a casual in a retail setting and also face losing this position very soon.

I find the work I do with young children very rewarding and love working in a field where I am able to build relationships with children from infancy often right through to kindergarten age. I connect very well with young children and the children are always happy to see me. I think my gift as an educator is that I am a very empathetic person who enjoys sitting down and spending time with the children. It has been a very distressing time for me having to give up this job which I have held since leaving school.

Both my Mum and I work at this childcare centre. It has taken a huge toll on our mental health and we worry about finances and the future. A total of 7 other staff members at X Centre also left due to the vaccine mandate and a further 2 staff were very distressed at being forced into taking the vaccine. I am asking that you remove the mandate for vaccination in the education sector so that unvaccinated educators and teachers can get back to the important jobs which they perform in the community. At the very least please give us some hope for the future and provide us with a time frame for when the mandates may reasonably be removed.

Educator 248

My name is C. I am a female teacher in the primary sector, and I have been teaching at a private school on the Gold Coast for 10 years. Prior to teaching, I was in the health industry but my love for educating children continued to call me, so I completed a Graduate Diploma in Education in 2011 and was extremely blessed to acquire a teaching role at a reputable private school in 2012 where I attained a permanent position. I have the ability to really connect with my students and cater to their individual needs. I am passionate about educating our future adults of this world and tend to go above and beyond to support, guide and nurture the students and their unique gifts and talents. In 2021, I was asked to take on the role of Team Leader for my year level. This was an invaluable experience as I was given the opportunity to also partake in a leadership development course along side our senior leadership team to advance my professional skills. I was looking forward to being Team Leader in 2022 as we are welcoming a high influx of new teachers and I was excited to be leading and supporting my new colleagues.

In response to the recent mandate that requires a teacher to be vaccinated for them to enter and work in their workplace, I have unfortunately been stood down from my role at this stage due to the directives placed on schools as I have chosen not to disclose my personal medical information with regards to the vaccine. This is an extremely personal choice based on health concerns but also based on freedom of choice and sovereignty over my own health.

My employers are extremely disappointed that I will not be returning to the College in 2022 to fulfill my role. My HR manager and fellow senior colleagues have been supportive, empathic and respectful of my choice. They have had the difficult role of trying to make sense of the haste decision to impose the vaccine mandates. This has certainly had a negative impact on our college community and caused unruly stress and mental burn out for leadership as these directives were poorly timed, a week out from school holidays.

The vaccine mandate has had a devastating impact on my family. We will now be relying on one income to support a family of six. With a mortgage, 3 children in private schooling and living expenses, it terrifies me to think where we will end up in 2022. I am still in shock by the harsh mandates that have been directed and this has affected my mental and emotional wellbeing. This is not a great place to be in when you have a husband and four children relying on you to keep it together for the everyday needs and survival of your family. I have worked since I was eligible at 14 years and 9 months. Over 27 years, I have contributed to the community, paid taxes and upheld an upstanding reputation but I am now faced with not being able to work for an income to provide for my family and doing something that I absolutely love and am good at.

I am extremely concerned for my students who are under the impression that I will be their teacher in 2022. At the end of each year, our primary campus has a session where the teacher and their new students meet and get acquainted to alleviate any anxiety or uncertainty for the students over the long holiday period. These students will now be returning to a different teacher because of the vaccine mandates. What will happen to the quality of our teachers if they are forced to step down because they refuse to be coerced into doing something that they should have a choice in? My whole year level will be impacted also because I was the only continuing teacher in this cohort. I know the ins and outs of this year level and now it will be left to four new teachers trying to navigate their way.

I ask that you strongly reconsider the decision to impose vaccine mandates on educators. The negative impact that this directive is having on education in Queensland, on schools, on the teaching community and the devastation that it is causing to individuals and their families is far too great. This is only going to get worse as the year unfolds with rising covid cases. I do not believe that mandating vaccines for educators is viable. If you choose to uphold this directive, I can't begin to imagine what our schooling system will look like over the course of 2022. Quality, responsible, ethical and experienced teachers are such an asset to our community. Their impact on students, parents, their colleagues and the wider community should not be underestimated. Teaching is both a challenging and rewarding profession. It is not a 9 to 3 job, but rather endless nights of planning, critiquing, preparing, reflecting and this all takes place outside of normal direct teaching hours. Teachers give their heart and soul to the job. You are allowing thousands of dedicated and experienced teachers to lose their jobs. How will we recover and come back from this? What happened to building systems rather than taking them down? I thought Queensland was meant to be known as the smart state.

Educator 249

I am S, a 48 year old female employee in the primary and secondary sector for 12 years supporting students with disabilities and learning difficulties. For over ten years, I have been employed as a permanent part-time teacher aide at a school located in the Gold Coast region. Prior to this, I achieved a Certificate III in Education Support and a Certificate III in Business and Administration providing me with knowledge, understanding and strategies of ways to provide support to both students and colleagues in my workplace. Over the past decade, I attended various workshops to further my knowledge of disabilities and strategies to use when supporting students in special education. I can communicate with Hard of Hearing students and staff using Auslan after completing many Auslan courses through Deaf Services Qld. I also use these skills to teach and communicate basic Auslan with students who have a speech impediment when they struggle to pronounce letters or words. I hold current First Aid and CPR certificates and I am qualified to administer Midazolam if required in the event of a seizure. The past three years, I have undertaken higher duties, assisting the school QCIA co-ordinator with QCIA processes and have been solely responsible for compiling and creating the individual student QCIA portfolios, up to and ready for submission.

The week following the mandate announcement, I requested to access long service leave for Term 1, 2022, to allow time to consult with my doctor and specialist regarding a permanent health condition. Long service leave was denied by the principal due to short notice and I was advised to send any individual queries to staffvaccinationstatus@qed.qld.gov.au. I have made four requests via email to my principal and BM for a risk assessment on my workplace and have been advised to forward my queries onto the department which I have done.

I feel I am being coerced into taking the COVID vaccinations to keep my employment. The mandate is putting enormous pressure on myself especially with it being issued so close to the end of term and having limited communication with my school or the department since. I have a medical condition and need further testing to be completed before I can give informed consent and this requires time. The short swift announcement of the mandate and the final date to be vaccinated did not allow enough time to undergo testing and receive medical advice. Beyond my workplace, I am a carer for my partner who has a permanent disability, making my continued health extremely important to be able to provide care and support for him and keep our family unit together. I need further advice and data to be able to make an informed decision and this information is not available at short notice.

My own mental health is in disarray, the mandates and the whole push to get vaccinated has really affected me. I cannot think straight, forget things and I am constantly worried about my and my family's future. My partner already suffers with depression and anxiety due to his disability but the pressure I am under is massively affecting his mental health. He struggles to sleep most nights and constantly worries about the predicament I am facing, financially, mentally and health wise. I have been bombarded with emails and text messages requesting my vaccination status from the department throughout the holiday period which has been extremely stressful and I constantly feel nauseous.

I am concerned for my colleagues being understaffed if I cannot attend my workplace. Term One is usually a struggle for teacher aides trying to support all students needs as funding usually isn't allocated for extra staff until later in the term. I am extremely worried for the QCIA co-ordinator and QCIA teachers as I am the only person that has fully compiled and created the student portfolios the past three years. It took me a long time to learn this process and would be difficult for another teacher aide to learn the process without assistance, also creating added pressure to that particular staff member. Students with learning difficulties/disabilities heavily rely on the support of teacher aides and I worry that the students are the ones that will be massively affected if I am absent.

I would love to be able to continue working in an environment I am passionate about. I would like the vaccine mandates to be stopped, to be able to recover my own mental health and to have a choice.

Educator 250

I am a high school teacher at a flexible school in the northern suburbs of Brisbane. We cater for young people who have disengaged from mainstream schooling and are considered to be 'at risk', for a multitude of reasons such as experiencing neglect, abuse, Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, Autism/Asperges, and a host of other conditions. I support students in a multitude of learning areas including, but not limited to, literacy, numeracy, music, drama, yoga and adventure-based learning. I absolutely love my work in this role, as I am privileged to work with an inspiring team of people, build strong relationships with the young people I work with and witness their growth and transformation over this time.

I consider myself a very positive, caring and authentic person. As such, I believe my gift as an educator is in my ability to connect authentically with the young people I engage with and equip them with the courage and confidence to step outside of their comfort zone and try new things. This enables the young person to experience new growth, personal strength and passions that they never knew they had. The positive impacts of this are life changing and long lasting.

Several years ago, I suffered from a rare auto-immune condition called Guillain Barre Syndrome. Although I was hospitalised and unable to work for several weeks, I managed to make a full recovery, which is when I began my journey into the teaching profession and have never looked back. It is widely understood in the medical field that as a recovered GBS patient, I should receive the flu and other vaccines where GBS is a possible side effect. As such, I have been advised by various doctors not to have the COVID 19 vaccination, as this could trigger another flare up of GBS. However, as the QLD Health Guidelines have tightened, it appears it is going to be near impossible to receive an exemption for my condition. This will soon be clarified when I meet with my neurologist in early January.

If I am unable to qualify for an exemption, my boss has already advised that I will be unable to return to work indefinitely from the 17th January 2022. My principal kindly explained that he is unfortunately bound by the mandates being implemented by the Qld Education Department and it is beyond his control. This is incredibly devastating news. Not only is my work incredibly meaningful and important to me, as a single mum it provides me with my much needed income to support my son and I financially. I am incredibly worried about the financial stress we will be under if I am unable to work as a teacher. I do not know if I will be able to continue my rent payments, buy groceries and other expenses of our day to day life.

Over the past year, the stress of Covid and the vaccine mandates has led to some alarming impacts on my physical and mental health. I have experienced episodes of panic that are completely new to me, but what I now understand to be known as panic attacks. I am also experiencing unexplained neurological symptoms including tingling, numbness, muscle and joint pain and fatigue. I have had to call on additional support from my family to care for my son as I navigate the physical pain and fatigue as well as attend various medical and hospital appointments. I can only put these symptoms down to the intense stress and pressure I am currently experiencing in my life.

Whilst some may say 'Well, why don't you just get the vaccine?', I feel very clear that I do not wish to have it with the risk of a return of GBS. Rather, I will do everything I can to support my immune system to fight the Corona Virus should I become infected. I disagree entirely with the vaccine mandates that are being administered across many professions. I believe this is a clear overreach of the governments powers and violates our rights as human beings. It is unlawful and against the constitution that people should be coerced into any kind of medical procedure not of their own free will and informed consent.

I feel so very strongly about this issue, which is why I am joining with the thousands of other people who are standing up and making their voices heard. It is with all of my will that I urge you to stand up against these mandates currently being implemented. I believe vaccinations should only ever be voluntary, and I will never support any Member of Parliament who supports them. Please, stand with us on this make a difference. I have no doubts that, in doing so, you will be supported by the majority of the population.

Educator 251

My name is L, I have been teaching full time, for roughly 19 years, in the primary sector.

Throughout my career, I have taught overseas but for the past 12 years I have been on the Sunshine Coast, at a private X P-12 school. 2021 was one of my most memorable years as a teacher. My mentorship roles in the field of environmental conservation and sustainability were endorsed by my leadership team and together with an outstanding group of young students we set wheels in motion to support change in both the school and wider community. My job is my passion project, and I love it.

On the last week of school, this year, my world turned on its head, when the QLD government decided to go against the Federal Government and issue a mandate to be vaccinated to Queensland teachers, private and public. In essence – if we refused to be jabbed, we would lose our jobs. From the start of the issue of the mandate, to the first jab date of 17th December, we were effectively given less than 3 weeks to comply. These rules were delivered via email as non-negotiable.

Having already spent months keeping my opinions to myself and avoiding the confrontational opinions of others, regarding “anti-vaxers”. Sitting through staff meetings where derogatory comments were made towards families that may not be able to attend events, such as Christmas carols. My stress levels were very high and my ability to share or offload was diminished. I felt sick, pressured and isolated. My decision was forcibly changed from a health choice, to a financial, marital, health and values stance. Let me repeat that, ***I was forced through mandates to change from making a health choice, to taking a stance or complying in order to maintain my family's financial stability.***

On Dec 16th, after a long, emotionally exhausting doctor's visit, I agreed to get the jab, but only if my doctor was present. The available date was Jan 20th. I communicated this with my school leadership. They said this was unacceptable and it was suggested that I use my long service leave, until such time as I was double jabbed. Within an hour of an email and a phone call, I had signed a leave form that would give me the term off. I would be on half pay and then no pay for the final two weeks, in order to be able to do this. I did not feel that I had any other options at that point in time. All my teaching resources are at school and I am no longer permitted to step onto school grounds.

The impact on my family is huge. My husband has been double vaccinated as he works in the Disability Care sector, however he is only a casual employee so as a family, he will need to work more hours that will see him sleeping overnights and travelling more. We have a 10 and a 12 year and they are both concerned that they will be forced to have this injection and they are very aware of the pressure being put on me, their mother. It is the school holidays and I cannot take my children to Australia Zoo, out for cake and treats at the local cafes or to the cinemas. We are home bound and restricted, due to the additional laws that restricting the vaccine free from accessing community.

My life is education and the promotion of active thinking. This current existence of enforced mandates and segregation is setting the next generation back decades. We fought long and hard to support minority groups and fight for our Right to Choose, and now it is gone in the space of two years.

I despair. I am constantly worried about myself and my job and my children and what the government will put into place next year. If my husband and I do attempt to discuss the issue, it ends in tears or silence. I want the government to represent ALL people, from the majority to the minorities and to reverse this removal of rights, to return us to a democracy, whereby everyone has the right to choose. Consent should never be coerced. Informed consent is what we teach our children from the moment they learn to say, “no!” We let them know what their rights are. I say “no”, to living a life of compliance that does not allow for the individual uniqueness of each human on this planet. We are all equal in God's eyes and we all have a right to sovereignty of our own bodies.

I want to continue to teach, but I am sickened to think that my government can dictate my choices regarding my own body. By saying ‘no’, I feel I am still teaching. I am teaching my own kids and hopefully helping change this trajectory that we are on. As Mahatma Gandhi said, “be the change you wish to see in the world.” I am hoping this term will see ‘change’ occur.

I choose discomfort and uncertainty over compliance. For my own kids and for my students past and hopefully, in the future as like most teachers, I am eternally optimistic.

Educator 252

When I was about 10 years old, I knew I was going to be a teacher - it's all I wanted to be and it is what I set my heart on. I studied hard to get into the best Teachers' College at the time and thoroughly enjoyed learning about how children learn. Upon graduation with my Diploma of Teaching, I undertook further study via Distance Education to gain my Bachelor of Teaching (Primary). Despite Mr K (in Victoria) cutting hundreds of teaching jobs and closing schools, I kept my dream of being a teacher alive and did 5 years of relief teaching until I began my family. When my children started their schooling journey I finally got my chance to have my own classroom and have been teaching ever since, for the past 6 years at an independent school in X, Qld, as the only Primary teacher.

When this virus first raised its head, we teachers adapted to the situation - first working hard to maintain social distancing with young children, then with bouts of remote teaching - all the while endeavouring to minimise the interruption to the education of the children. We wore masks when required; we sanitised the daylighters out of everything; and we kept on smiling. Then came the 'mandates'. After 2 years of being able to teach during the pandemic, we were suddenly 'dangerous' if we didn't subject ourselves to this world-wide trial of a drug. Having had breast cancer (and teaching through my treatment) I take my health very seriously. I don't even take Panadol and yet suddenly I was expected to have a series of injections for a drug that has serious side-effects (my husband was forced to have it to keep his job. He suffered chest pains and thought he was having a heart attack after the first one and is still suffering dizziness and now loss of feeling in his toes, 9 weeks after having the second shot!) and won't stop me transmitting Covid in the unlikely case that I should get it.

I lost the job I loved on Dec 17th, when my school was forced to sack me for non-compliance, despite me being willing to go on leave without pay until a suitable vaccine was available to me (I would definitely take Covax if it were available and was willing to have Novovax if it got approved) but they were threatened with losing their registration if they had any unvaccinated teachers on their books! So now I am an unemployed teacher who is unsure what the future holds. All I want to do is teach and that has been stripped away.

And my heart breaks for 'my kids'. As the only Primary teacher at my school, I taught the children for 4 years and in that time you build such a close rapport with them and their families and that has been destroyed. I had 2 students with autism, who I had worked so closely with to build their confidence and help them thrive and that has been torn down and they will need to start again with another teacher, who doesn't know them or understand their quirky ways. They won't know the signs that a meltdown is imminent and be able to avoid it, which will lead to more meltdowns. They won't know that the little one who is staring at the ceiling is not ignoring them, he is processing and will answer when he can. Instead of being able to hit the ground running at the beginning of the year and quickly getting back into routines they have known for a couple of years, they will have to learn new ones - adding to their already high anxiety.

What I would love to see happen, is for the Federal Government to take leadership in this situation and say that these mandates are illegal and that schools have to restore their teachers back to their positions, so that the sacked teachers can return to their jobs that they love, teaching the kids that they love teaching and so that you don't lose the wealth of experience that is being lost to an already crumbling system.

When asked what I do, I reply with, 'I'm a teacher.' That won't change because it is who I am. Unfortunately I now have to say 'Unemployed teacher.' Please do something to change that!

Educator 253

My name is V. I am a 35-year-old female working in Primary Education. I worked as a relief teacher from 2009-2011 and then full-time from 2012-2020; totaling 11 years of service. I have been on maternity leave during 2021, returning in term 4 for 1 day a week. I will be returning in to 4 days a week in 2022. I have always worked in independent schools, with the exception of a couple of relief days in state schools. My relief teaching was in Logan, and my full-time experience has been at the Gold Coast. I have a Bachelor of Education (Primary) as well as a Diploma in Christian Theology. I am gifted in teaching Science and Technology; winning a monetary prize from Primary Connections at university for writing a Science Curriculum Plan and being given the opportunity to teach STEM in my workplace in 2017. I was also instrumental in training colleagues and preparing my school for online learning in 2020 when COVID-19 struck and sent us into lockdown.

When the Premier announced that educators would be mandated to be vaccinated, my school administration responded by saying that they would wait for further clarification by the Chief Health Officer. Our CEO was clear that he did not want to terminate anyone's employment and preferred that vaccinations were a personal choice; however, he would have to follow lawful instructions. I believe he was hopeful that there would be a loophole that would allow our group of Independent Schools to somehow keep unvaccinated employees, even if in an alternative role until they could return to teaching unvaccinated. When the Health Order was finally released (after 10 days of unvaccinated teachers anxiously waiting and speculating) our employer released a letter that said if we could not meet the requirements mandated that teachers would be terminated. Our employer was gracious enough to allow staff to take Long Service Leave or Unpaid Leave until the mandate was no longer in effect; or in the case that staff were terminated, they would be reimbursed their sick leave and years of service upon returning to employment.

As a mother of a young baby, having just recently bought a house and having plans to travel overseas in the future due to my husband being from another country, losing my job was not an option. Using my long-service-leave was also not an option because, as any parent would know, children are unpredictable, and I never know when I might need to take leave to care for my child when they are sick or injured. I personally felt sick to the stomach trying to decide whether to be vaccinated or not. My husband and I had discussed not getting vaccinated while I am still breast-feeding. On so many levels I felt like I was being forced to take the vaccine, to the point of discrimination – forced against my will as an employee facing termination, forced against my will as a breastfeeding mother, forced against my will as the wife of a person of colour/other race, forced against my will as a wife. When my husband said that I should “just get vaccinated” to keep my job and for the family, it felt like the government were forcing a domestic abuse situation in my relationship. In any other scenario, I would have been able to make a choice for myself about being vaccinated or not but because the Government says I must be vaccinated, it's now okay for my husband to tell me what to do and I “just have to do it.” That doesn't seem right to me.

During this time of being coerced into having the vaccine, I have really struggled with my mental health. I have felt very angry and short tempered, which is not fair on my husband and child (who is not even one year old yet). I have felt anxious to the point of requesting a calming herbal medicine from my naturopath. And I have felt despondent about normal everyday activities that would normally have brought me joy. This is especially sad to be experiencing at the happiest time of the year, Christmas.

I am concerned that the mandate for all educators to be vaccinated will cause unnecessary division in every relationship in school life. Division and animosity between Management and staff; between collegial peers; between educators and parents; between educators and students; between educators and ancillary staff; between students as peers; and between children and their parents. I also believe that this mandate strips schools of their intellectual capacity to perform risk assessments and decide whether unvaccinated staff truly do pose a threat in their specific school context. I also believe this mandate will cause a staff shortage in the education sector and schools will be forced to hire

incompetent or “not right” employees to do the jobs of very qualified teachers who have been terminated for no other reason than their vaccination status. I also see this mandate causing my very own colleagues and friends to enter financial debt as they lose their income and ability to sustain living costs.

I am asking for the Queensland government to revoke the mandate for employees to be vaccinated to continue employment. I request the government reassess how they can support employers more effectively so that unvaccinated staff can continue working while reducing the risk of transmitting COVID-19. Allow employers the autonomy to conduct a risk assessment in their own context and find suitable alternatives for unvaccinated staff – as per the requirements of Fair Work Australia. Fair Work Australia says that staff should not be dismissed as the first option in the case of refusing vaccination. It is unacceptable that the Queensland Government have contradicted this. School employers must be given the opportunity to discuss reasons and alternatives with unvaccinated staff. School employers may benefit from guidelines from the Chief Health Officer about what protocols and systems should be in place. But ultimately, unvaccinated staff should not be terminated – there must be alternatives available.

I did not want to get vaccinated yet. It was not my choice to be vaccinated by December 17, 2021. I was forced to by the Queensland Government. I was left with no other options (except unemployment and financial ruin). I was happy to continue wearing a mask to work and social distancing. I would have accepted a Perspex shield around my desk in the classroom to avoid spreading any illness to students (mind you, every teacher, every day faces the possibility of contracting thousands of other respiratory viruses that students bring to school, or norovirus, or shingles, or whooping cough, or diarrhoea, or school sores, or lice, or.... the list goes on). Teachers are smart and intelligent, and we know how to avoid getting sick. I believe our intellect has been completely ignored and that the only right thing the government can do is provide schools the opportunity to conduct a risk assessment for their context and allow unvaccinated staff to remain employed when deemed to be safe.

Educator 254

I'm D, a primary school teacher of Italian on the Sunshine Coast. I've been fortunate enough to spend my 20 years as an educator on the coast sharing my passion for the Italian language and culture with hundreds of students over the years in many different schools in this area.

I currently work at two different schools - one in a permanent part time capacity, the other on a year long contract. One of my principals (at an independent school), while sympathetic to the impact the mandates have had on his staff, informed us that he had no choice but to follow these and those choosing not to be vaccinated would be stood down. I have heard little from the other principal apart from the standard EQ line and have already prepared myself to lose this contract that I had signed ready for 2022.

I am worried about the continued and long-term impact of these mandates. I am a single woman renting in an area with high rents and rental shortages and of course am concerned about how I will cover my rent, bills etc. I have a number of health concerns (the main reason for my not being vaccinated) which have exacerbated somewhat from the increased stress and anxiety this situation has caused. I have no idea how I will be able to afford my ongoing medical costs (medication and specialist appointments) without a regular income.

I'm devastated that I haven't had the opportunity to say a proper goodbye to my students, and even more that don't get to start the year with my students - to see how they've grown over the holidays, to share their excitement and enthusiasm for learning and to share with them all that I had planned for 2022. I will miss the relationships and rapport that I have built with my students (teaching from prep to year 6 I have the privilege of teaching my students for 7 years in a row) over their primary school journey. To not be a part of my school community and share in all that we are trying to facilitate for our students' achievement is heartbreaking.

I am asking that the mandates would be overturned, that I would be allowed back onto campus and teach my little people. I feel somewhat like a criminal - banned from entering a school campus because of a decision I have made for medical reasons (please don't get me started on the fact that my specialist is unable to write an exemption that will be granted because his hands are tied), unable to work in my chosen career that I have spent years studying for and continue to do so because I want to share what I love with my students in way that best suits them and best facilitates their learning and understanding. I want to be back with them, without having to wear full PPE (because wearing a hazmat suit is not going to be frightening for my prep students?) and continue to be an unrestricted member of my much-loved school community.

Having these mandates delivered at the end of a very intense year, during a very busy period of the term (and a reporting term) created no end of stress on top of the already stressful time that the end of a school year brings. Starting the school holidays and not being able to relax and recover from the busy school year has been unbelievably taxing and trying to find the mental headspace to find and plan for some other work has been beyond difficult. Teachers pour their hearts and souls into their class/es and their vocation - it's not something you do because you can - it's something you do because you believe you can (and want to) make a difference to young peoples' lives and to have that taken away is heartbreaking.

Educator 255

My name is L and I am currently employed by Education Queensland as a primary school teacher on the Sunshine Coast. I am 56 going on 57 years of age and a female. I have a bachelor of education and a diploma of early childhood education and have been teaching for almost 30 years now.

I have taught children from prep to year 3 for all my teaching career and children are always excited to be joining my class each year while others are sad to be moving to a new teacher at the end of each year.

I have always worked hard to develop the self-confidence and self-esteem of children as well as academic skills through creative ways and seeing how children progress has always been rewarding to me.

I have great behaviour management skills and every year am given difficult children to manage and help.

It saddens me that teachers are being coerced and forced to be given a vaccination in order to keep their jobs.

The department has been constantly texting and emailing teachers and other staff since before school finished ,asking us for our vaccination status and this is starting to boarder on harassment.

I have never in all my years of teaching had to disclose any of my medical information unless it's something that I need them to know for my own personal safety. For example Anaphylactic as they would need to know this to save my life if something happened at school. Staff have always been offered the flu injection and it's always been a personal choice and no one judges others for that choice nor has anyone not been allowed to work if they don't have it.

The mental health of others I know in education has slipped with all the vaccination requests now and many are at breaking point.

I personally am feeling this as well and I am now wondering what the future holds for education in this country, as we have always taught children that bullying is not okay, that bystanders are important in stopping them and that to recognise, react and report when things don't feel right is critical for our safety. (Daniel Morcombe foundation).

I feel like if people do something they don't feel comfortable with then they are saying the complete opposite to what we have always taught and teaching children that in fact bullying is okay and if enough pressure is put on you it's best to do as the bully says!

I have not been vaccinated and I say no to bullying so now look like losing my job in 2022.

This is so sad for all the children and parents who were excited about having me as their teacher in 2022 .My family will suffer financially and just basic living is going to become a struggle.

It's not okay to request people to do something that feels uncomfortable to them and to take away a person's career because they choose not to take vaccination .This is criminal especially when the last few years teachers have been classed as essential workers and could still work online from home if necessary.

I would love to see mandates in education a no go. Let the staff who know how to work, plan, and educate children do the important job they always do !

Educator 256

I would like to introduce myself, my name is B I am female, 60 years old and live about 20 minute drive from Bundaberg in a small town called X. I have worked as a teacher aide in schools for the past 8 years. I enjoy my role as a special needs high school support teacher aide working with students who struggle every day to learn and fit into society. I am patient and kind and also have a great sense of humour and energy for life. My previous work experiences as a secretary, vet nurse, motel receptionist, library technician, horse riding instructor and horse breaker have given me a wide range of experiences with which I can relate to most situations in the classroom.

Currently I'm studying to be a permaculture teacher with a passion for living with nature and enthusiastically spreading the love of gardens and the embracing of a low waste life style. I enjoy walking, bike riding, horse riding, growing our own organic food, eating well, creating low waste household products and personal hygiene products which has meant throughout my life I have enjoyed wonderful health and vitality. My health is my biggest asset as such I rarely take time off from work due to sickness.

I have never needed a flu shot as I haven't had the flu in 15 years therefore the mandating of Covid 19 injections to be able to work has been an incredible upset for me. Although I am not against vaccines I feel that they should be a personal choice and the ability to know your own circumstances is paramount. My decision at the present time is that I do not wish to be vaccinated therefore I am denied the right to work. My husband has been forced out of the workforce as well, leaving us without any income. This has led to deterioration in my mental health something I have never suffered from in the past. I have had one session with the Employee Assistance Scheme and feel I will need ongoing help from now on to cope with the extreme changes in our lifestyle due to income stress.

This seems to fly in the face of the words of Michael De'Ath email dated 23/12/21 "*looking after yourself and taking time for recovery make it possible for us to continue to deliver our important work and provide high standards of service*"

I can assure you I have always taken time to look after my health, I have weighed up the risks of vaccinating and at this present time the risks from the vaccine far outweigh the benefits as I notice the rising cases of double vaccinated being infected with Covid 19.

Then the words of our acting Director-General, Craig Allen in his email dated 6/12/2021

"Building an inclusive culture allows us to perform better, attract and retain the workforce we need, and deliver services that support the communities we serve."

How can schools be inclusive when they are currently segregating the non-vaccinated staff and ostracizing them by excluding them from their jobs?

Again another quote by Craig Allen, email dated 6/12/2021

"Currently, more than one in five people in Australia have some form of disability who are supported to succeed in our schools, but vastly underemployed in the workforce"

This sentence shows that the need for my role as a teacher aide of students with disabilities is an essential role and one, which allows these students the ability to succeed outside the school grounds. For example one of the students I worked with over a number of years was non-verbal on commencement of her schooling and in year 12 she completed three certificate II qualifications. Another student graduated this year with a certificate III in Hospitality. Her smile on graduation day was priceless. I know that my teacher aide role was pivotal to them gaining these qualifications.

I've been forced to take long service leave at half pay in the hope that the Queensland Government renounces the mandate and allows all staff to make an informed choice in regards to a medical procedure. I would dearly love to return to helping more students achieve goals and become independent workers and members of the community. **Our fate and the fate of our students is in the hands of the Government and you can build an inclusive workforce by giving everyone the chance to decide what medical procedures they require for themselves.**

Educator 257

I am S, female, 37 years old, a permanent full time Technical Officer in one of FNQ's state schools which comprises of Primary and Secondary Campus plus OSHC. I am a graduate of Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering (with honors) plus units in MA Math overseas. I have gained my Microsoft certification and extra qualifications when I got to Australia. I'm a skilled ICT Technician with 18 years IT working experience and have been working with EQ within the last two years.

Last term (term 4) week 9, I had a personal visit from the Head of Campus who's holding a long list of documents where you can see check marks next to everyone's name. While in the middle of sipping my spicy soup, she asked my vaccination status. My answer was "Do I need to answer that right now". She smiled and told me that I should think of the ramification of my actions. The week after, I had a visit from our Executive Principal, where I personally informed him my intention of not getting the vaccine. The Principal urged to re-think my decision and that I speak to him if ever I change my mind during the holiday. I pointed out to the Principal the privacy statement on the survey and the URL which is hosted externally and not visible in OSRR Catalogue. He then said that I do not need to do the survey as there is a way for the Department to find out my vaccination status. I've asked if he had done his own research about the mRNA vaccine and he truthfully said no, but he's aware when Novavax is coming which he reckon could be a better alternative. The Principal suggested that termination would be beneficial for me as I will be able to apply with Services Australia. Considering I've only been to the Department for less than two years so I don't have much leave option.

When I first received the vaccination mandate via email on 30th November, I got shocked, I knew something is coming but I didn't expect a mandatory vaccination for school staff. I then had difficulty concentrating at work. It truly was a bad timing for everyone where all staff are trying to finalise everything before the holiday. Being the technical officer, I had to reimage all computer labs, wipe/enrol all iPad, setup all CFTs ready for next year, liaised with HR for an up to date staff list so I can update the email groups and for January staff provisioning. Last week of term was also the time teachers were relocating to different classrooms, so we're being bombarded with phone/projector/panel/ ports/computer "not working" _jobs. On top of that, I had to deal with admin and OSHC staff. It's the time of the year where IT run like a headless chook on the background.

I have received numerous emails from QED QLD asking about my vaccination status - five sent to my personal email, two emails sent to my work email and five SMS messages. Content of the email and SMS were all about my vaccination status, plus all staff will be required to be fully vaccinated by 23rd January.

When I first heard of the vaccination mandates, I had issue sleeping, always anxious and felt helpless. My temper to my two young kids had suddenly diminished as I got worried of losing our only source of income. Also, the friendship and trust I built from the last two years will be forgotten once they successfully terminate my position, but I will not let that happen.

I am concerned about the community being fed with lies from mainstream media, politicians, experts and unelected bureaucrats. I am worried that our students and kids' futures will be led by teachers and leaders who have forgotten to exercise their own critical thinking and who have lost their sense of judgment.

I would like to believe that it is possible to go back to normal, but I am also being realistic here. I just want my job back, so I can be closed enough to protect my own kids and our students from what are yet to come. I have decided to fight until the end, and hoping my mental, physical and spiritual energy will guide me through the end of this dilemma.

I hope more people will start to realise the fear and lies being fed to them all this time. When that time comes, I hope they can wholeheartedly accept the truth and that they will still have their senses, soul and energy to stand up and protect what and who are important to them before it gets too late.

Educator 258

My name is J, I am a female and I work in Primary and my role was Head of Primary. I live in Rockhampton and am 47 years old. I have taught for 15 years. My gift as an educator is that I'm patient, hardworking, have an ability to co-ordinate a team to produce high results in Naplan, am able to remain calm under pressure and have a genuine love for the profession of teaching. I have rolled out Naplan Online in my school, worked on Primary school curriculum, became a profiler for our behaviour management program within the school and met weekly with teachers to coach and develop them to improve their practice.

My employer is following the mandates. I presented a letter to them six weeks prior to the mandate to ask questions should a mandate come into Queensland schools. I am unaware of any outcome or further actions taken by school leadership. To my knowledge, a risk assessment has not been done at our school. I have been contacted by my principal to check how I am going.

The mandates have greatly impacted my family. There has been pressure at work to get the vaccine. There has also been a great deal of negative emotions within our group of staff particularly directed toward those who want to make their own medical choices. My daughter works at the same school as me and she may lose her home as a result of the mandate. If that occurs, her and her husband will have to move into our home. I have another daughter studying law in Brisbane and the loss of one income may impact her university course as we help to pay for her living expenses. She is currently on the honour roll at her university and is doing work experience in a top 5 Australia law firm. This could greatly impact her future.

The end of the school year has been quite emotional for me. I had just completed my first year in a new role within our school as Head of Primary. We had some great successes with results achieved and new things implemented as a result of this new role and were making plans for 2022. It was a devastating blow to hear that I would not be continuing. I remember being the MC for our primary school awards night, feeling quite emotional about the events of the week but having to put on a brave face for our school community trying to pretend everything was normal. My principal commended me the next morning saying it was the best one that he had been to. My whole teaching career has been mainly devoted to working in this one school. I have older children who have completing all of their primary and secondary education at this school.

I cried myself to sleep for quite a few nights as did my 7-year-old son as he learnt that his mum and sister would no longer be at his school. I have spent a great deal of time with fellow staff members as well as we have processed the events of the last week of the school year and considering our future.

My concerns for my students are that there will be many new staff members for our students to get used to. The assistance that students will be receiving will be less as a result of the mandates. The education of our students is going to suffer as a result of these mandates. The experience that has walked out the door is devastating. The teachers that have remained will be working under greater pressures as it will be even harder to find relief teachers. This will then put more pressure on our school leadership team who will be stretched thin with the pressures of school life and then having to manage a large number of new staff.

I would like to have the ability to make my own medical choices and I would like to see our school community with the experience that was currently employed before these mandates. I would like schools and principals have the autonomy to do their own risk management.

I just want to be able to work in the job that I love to affect positive change in that school community.

Educator 259

My name is C and I am a full-time female primary school teacher at X State School. I am a healthy, active 47 year old and have been teaching since 2004. During that time I have had three children and have worked part-time and full-time. I went to University as a mature-age student (age 25) and completed my Bachelor of Education (Primary) in 2003. I had an "aha" moment when working as a legal secretary that I wanted to go to University and obtain my teaching degree and haven't looked back since until now. I am a dedicated, nurturing, supportive and professional educator who is held in high regard in my school and local community and absolutely love my job.

On Tuesday 30 November 2021, I received an email from the Director-General of Education Queensland advising of mandatory vaccinations for all school staff. My principal also forwarded this email to her staff as an FYI. From that night onwards, I have not slept very well. The last 10 days of the school year were marred by these mandates and it was a struggle for me to focus in the classroom. Apart from not sleeping well, I have also experienced higher levels of anxiety for which I have now received medication for. These mandates are consuming my thinking and I find it hard to focus on other things, especially things that I enjoy.

There has been some tension in my marriage due to me not wanting to get vaccinated and the financial issue it will create if I don't have a job. My husband believes I am over-reacting to the situation and finds it hard to understand that I don't want to receive the vaccination. Due to this rising tension at the possible loss of my job, I felt I had no choice but to receive the first vaccination to keep my job. I was coerced to take the injection or face losing my job. I was very upset when I received the first injection. I have never been coerced before to take something I didn't want to.

I have grave concerns about what the future looks like for the students in schools. The quality and experience of teachers will just not be there due to many losing their job due to not wanting to be vaccinated. My school will possibly lose 60 years of teaching experience due to these mandates. That is just one school. I am extremely concerned that mandatory vaccinations will extend to school children and that children won't be able to attend school or participate in extra-curricular or after-school activities if they don't receive the vaccination.

I am requesting that all vaccination mandates cease immediately. I request that children be left alone and not vaccinated if not wanting to. As I sit here writing this, there are record number of cases of coronavirus around the country. Many people are vaccinated. People should not be facing the prospect of losing their livelihood because of a virus that has a very very high rate of survival. The mandates we are currently experiencing are a disproportionate reaction to the virus. These mandates have been the cause of a large amount of stress on thousands and thousands of individuals and families.

To many I may just be a teacher, but to my students I am a hero. Nobody has the right to take that away!

Educator 260

My name is A and I am a 30 year old mother of 3. I am a long term casual/supply primary teacher in the Ipswich area. I have been teaching for 6 years and am well known amongst many Ipswich and surrounding schools. I love supply teaching and believe students need stability in their classrooms in the form of familiar supply staff that they can feel a sense of ease and normality with, a supply teacher that full time classroom teachers can rely on to run their classroom in a way that works for them as well as their students. Supply teachers are a vital part of every classroom and school.

The mandates have severely impacted myself and my family as I face not being able to return to teaching unless I get the double covid vaccination. I am feeling very anxious, stressed and upset that I am at the point now where I feel I have no choice in this vaccination, I am being forced to have it or I face being forced out of a career I have studied so hard for, a career I love.

The impact on my mental health has been huge. I have suffered many panic attacks, have cried more times than I can count, have found it hard to be completely present in family situations as this lingering vaccination mandate has been hanging over my head. It is impacting my partner and I as the stress on him to try and find a way to make more income just so we can have food on our table is also taking its toll. I am at the point where I am looking for alternative employment away from education, a decision I don't want to have to make.

If I were to leave the teaching profession because of this mandate, I worry for the students who rely on stability in their relief teachers. I worry that the students I have bonded with and who look forward to my return, will miss me. I worry that I will be one of many quality relief teachers who will not return, making it hard for our education community who is already struggling to find relief staff.

I am asking for the mandates to be removed. I would be happy to do temp testing and rapid testing if required. I do not want to be coerced into taking a vaccine that I do not have enough trust in yet due to the reported ineffectiveness, the side effects and unknown long term effects.

I don't want to see a huge mass of passionate, caring and quality educators leave their profession because of this mandate. I also don't want to be a part of a profession that has been forced to take this vaccination and it impact my mental health so significantly that I can no longer enjoy the career I was once so passionate about. I am begging for things to change.

Educator 261

J
Female
52 years old
4+ years service at this site... (13 in role)

Primary Teacher Aide
X State Community College
Cert IV Education Support

I love my job as a Teacher Aide working with students with a disability. I believe my special gift is the way I am able to help my students develop a growth mindset and for them to understand how important this is to their education. I model learning to my students as I am currently studying another Cert IV in a different field.

The response from my employer (principal) is hard to gage as the new year 2022 brings a new principal. The previous acting principal was concerned for my position and would employ me in a heartbeat, if it wasn't for the mandates. I am yet to meet with the new principal about this issue.

The mandates have affected both my employment and my husbands. Luckily for us, my husband has secured a new job. I am very concerned about my future employment and am distraught at being pushed out of my job which I love. The uncertainty is stressful which is also affecting my sleep. I am naturally an optimistic person so I want to believe that things will work out. My young adult children, who have just left home, are concerned about us and this puts stress on our relationship with them.

I am having moments of anxiety which is very rare for me. The feelings linked to the unknown are hard to escape. What if my sons are ill or injured and I am unable to see them. How do we pay our bills and keep our vehicles running? All the little things in life seem to be big things now.

I am also concerned about the students that I work with and have made so much progress with. It takes time and dedication to build the trusting relationships that are required if you want to help and empower students who already struggle with low self-esteem. The student must trust the adult enough to put themselves out there and 'have a go'. I have this skill and the teachers I have worked with are happy to attest to that claim. I am even more fearful for the vaccination program planned for our children. We have all worked so hard to promote inclusion in our schools, we have posters and programs everywhere, but now it seems that the progress was a waste of time. People and businesses are being encouraged to segregate and it makes me very worried for the future of humanity.

I am asking for the mandates to be lifted and for me to be able to do my job in 2022. I want to see the segregation ended and life continue where we learn to live with Covid-19. I think the mandates are doing more damage than the virus. Please let me do the job I love and work with the teachers I respect and let me model to my students how to be a kind and caring human being.

Educator 262

I wish to take a few minutes to explain how the Queensland State Government's covid-vaccine mandates have personally adversely affected me. My name is A, and 10 years ago I graduated university with a Bachelor of Primary Education. Achieving this was a mighty feat as I fell ill with 6 months left to complete my degree and had to postpone studies.

I then spent the entire next year basically in bed the whole year due to illness. I then spent another 3 years completing my remaining few subjects and practical teaching rounds all whilst recovering from major health crisis. Obtaining my degree took twice as long - 8 years - and was the result of much hardship, struggle, effort, persistence, and perseverance. It was a huge achievement that I worked extremely hard for.

Having obtained my degree but still recovering, I was not well enough to teach and went into other fields in part time work as I continued to recover.

Ten years later, I began a few days of relief teaching in the State School system in the Brisbane area, and for three short months From August-December 2021 at the age of 35, hit the milestone of relief teaching one day a week. This was huge for me, and also brings with it the very practical relief of a professional wage that I have not had for my entire adult working life due to illness. You can imagine the financial burden of being sick and only able to work part time, particularly when there are ongoing significant healthcare expenses. You can also imagine the way health and financial stress affects a person in other aspects of their life.

To finally be able to make a decent wage in the profession I've spent 8 years of my life qualifying for, begin to alleviate financial stress burdens, mental stress burdens dealing with all of that, social stress of isolation when only working part time etc, was an immense relief and huge achievement. To have that taken away by a government mandate that isn't considering other forms of risk management is a devastating blow and unjust and puts me back at square 1, and does nothing to help my continued recovery.

There are clear risks associated with vaccination, as with any drug, as evidenced by the voluntary adverse reaction reporting systems. As someone who has spent the vast majority of my adult life unwell, it is a matter of great anxiety to be told the government is forcing covid-vaccines on teachers as a condition of employment. I understandably have huge reservations on receiving a medical intervention (with no longitudinal data) that may potentially cause me to become unwell, particularly after the mammoth effort I have proactively put into improving my own health, most of it at my own expense as sadly the government doesn't cover proactive alternative healthcare therapies on Medicare.

The lack of consideration for people's personal lives, livelihoods, wellbeing and circumstances and the lack of other risk mitigation methods that are not exclusively vaccine-based is appalling. I have sent two emails to TRACER asking for a risk assessment and I have not received one.

Teachers facing loss of employment due to mandates are at risk of losing their homes, their mental health and wellbeing, their ability to look after their families, the wellbeing of their families, the ability to contribute to society etc. This will create burdens for Government elsewhere in other areas. The public is at risk of losing good quality teachers, experience that cannot be replaced, and it would be an absolute disgrace if the government imported overseas teachers to fill the gap, at the complete disregard for its own citizens. The school system is at risk of collapsing. Students and families are at risk of being thrown into turmoil, risking the education of the children and the wellbeing of parents and children and the family unit, due to the chaos the upheaval would cause.

The Queensland State Government should immediately end all mandates for teachers and education. Other risk mitigation measures such as temperature checks, and other treatment methods such as

that protocol recommended by Dr Peter McCullough should be allowed to be used as well. Covid vaccines don't stop a covid-vaccinated person from contracting or spreading covid. There is a risk with covid vaccines, people should be able to choose their risk, either the risk of drug side effects/adverse reaction or unknown long-term consequence of covid vaccines, or the risk of personal choice of treatment both preventatively and if catching covid. These options allow the sovereign rights of the individual to be upheld and for them to assess their own state of health and likelihood of recovering from covid, which for most people is extremely high at over 99%.

Healthy asymptomatic people are not a threat to anyone. I ask the Queensland State Government to end covid-vaccine mandates for teachers as these are having a devastating effect on our teachers and community, and these will be severe harsh long-term effects that will not be easily remedied.

Educator 263

My name is Mrs B, I'm a 45 year old, full-time special education teacher working in X who has served with Education Queensland for 23 years. I hold a Bachelor of Education – Special Education as well as being a Trainer and Assessor providing Certificate I qualifications to my students. I am currently working in the administration team at my school. As an educator of students with complex and multiple impairments I have been able to tap into their unique gifts to help them transition post-school into community placements, including paid work.

The mandate affecting those in educational facilities was announced at an extremely busy time for any school and anyone working in administration. Because Principals were not provided warning of this mandate, they did not have time, resources or the information to properly support their staff. I believe this was the case for my Principal, who rather than openly addressing the mandate, chose to not speak to the whole staff about it. To those requesting a work risk assessment for receiving the vaccination for work purposes or for COVID in general (schools suddenly went from low risk to high risk), her response was visible annoyance at not knowing what the staffing levels would be come January and took these requests in a negative way, personally. It was directly stated to me that future working relationships would be affected due to staff asking questions in regards to this mandate. When I sort clarification from Education Qld not once did someone ring or respond in person to emails sent asking for further clarification or to those asking if alternative arrangements could be made for the staff being affected. I had turned into a number, my 23 years of exemplary service meant nothing.

This mandate has flipped my family life upside-down. I am a mother of four whose partner is also a teacher. We are unable to both be without work and continue to feed and house our children. We both fully believe in one's right for body autonomy and informed consent and have taught hundreds of students this over the years. One of us will have to be vaccinated so we can feed and clothe our children and keep our home. We feel forced, coerced - it goes against our family's morality and basic belief system and has caused much psychological distress. I grieve daily over the notion that one of us will have to go against our health choices and one of us will lose the job they love. Even with one of us needing to receive the vaccination, financial hardship will befall our family.

I have been told I must undergo a medical procedure I do not want in order to maintain my livelihood, a livelihood I love. This is causing me so much inner turmoil, grief, fear and the feeling of hopelessness. I have struggled to deal with these emotions and find myself crying daily. I want to be strong for my kids, especially at Christmas time, but I have not been able to do this. I want people to respect each other and work together to solve problems but all I am experiencing is division and contempt for anyone who does not comply with the current mandates. Each day is a struggle to remain positive and I feel tired to my core and I cannot sleep due to the worry I have. I haven't been able to be the mum, wife or even friend I have been in the past. This mandate has affected every aspect of my life.

I once lived in an Australia that was based on trying harder, on one that aimed to repair and make better previous wrongs, especially in regards to discrimination and tolerance for those in minority groups or those that displayed any type of diversity. I once lived in an Australia that taught informed consent was essential for each and every person. In a matter of months I have witnessed these core principles vanish, even to the point now where local doctor surgeries are openly discriminating against those who are unvaccinated by not providing patients medical treatment or are only providing patients services after 5pm in the carpark and charging them upfront. This is happening in my very town. What is it we are teaching our children? We have taught them 'no means no' but now everywhere they look they see 'no' or 'I'm not yet sure, I want more information' means you miss out, you are ostracized, you can no longer access higher education, you won't get a job and that you will be locked out of society. Our children and young people are learning that their decisions about what is right for their own bodies doesn't count anymore if they wish to be an Australian.

So today I ask that you would look at how quickly our society and the principles it was built upon has crumbled, in such little time, under these current health mandates. I ask that you allow people to take back their rights to body autonomy without threat or punishment of being locked out of society. End these mandates that have crippled our basic services, small business, employment and economy. I hope you are courageous enough to allow open and honest dialogue about COVID-19 and the vaccinations and speak about the risks of both to all demographics. A one size fits all approach does not work and we need to look at different ways to go about living with this current pandemic. Wise decisions yield growth, prosperity and unity. Current political and health decisions have brought about quite the opposite for us as Australians.

Educator 264

My name is R, and I am a female teacher at X State School on the Gold Coast in a year 4 classroom. My permanent fraction is .4 however this has increased on a contractual basis as I have picked up more hours, replacing my teaching partner as she took leave. I have been teaching for 16 years at a range of schools, with X State School being my longest standing school. I feel I bring a holistic approach to my classroom, focussing on the well-being of each student, embracing everyone's personality, and fostering love and kindness whilst encouraging self-esteem, confidence and worth. I feel a content child will learn at a greater pace than one who is not calm and confident as a person.

When I asked my Principal if I could have Leave Without Pay for a year in order to maintain my position at the school should these mandates 'blow over' her response was cold and brutal. She said because she had denied another person leave without pay under different circumstances, she couldn't give it to me even when I informed her that other principals were having compassion for their staff in my situation and letting them access Long Service Leave or Leave Without Pay. My personal view is that a person who lacks that much empathy should NOT be running a school and leading children. To be able watch her staff in so much distress and have the power to offer some security but refuse is concerning.

With both my husband and I being teachers, we will be down \$4,500/fortnight, so the financial stress is weighing heavily on both of us. We rely on our incomes to feed our three children and pay the mortgage for our 3-bedroom home in X Valley.

The toll it is taking on our health is evident in my menstrual cycle which has been thrown into disarray which I believe is stress related. I have not had comprehensive test performed but I feel I am in early menopause at the age of 37 due to the uncertainty this has thrown at me.

My husband has been given a medical certificate from our doctor based on his levels of stress and anxiety and his Graves' disease which was in remission has now flared.

Anxiety has been running for both of us since the mandates were announced for teachers in the other states. We knew they were inevitable but didn't expect them as a Christmas present. As mentioned above, he has been issued a medical certificate for stress and this was based on the questionnaire that GPs perform to decipher the level of mental illness. His symptoms confirmed a high-level anxiety and depression. I rarely see my husband cry and in the last 3 weeks he broke down on numerous occasions. This is very unlike him.

For me, I have been on a teary roller coaster, crying at the drop of a hat. My students saw me cry on several occasions with some breakdowns related to Covid and some not. I was unapologetic for this as I believe crying releases emotion however the tears were flowing more than usual in my classroom. We also frequent a Chiropractor monthly and every visit, my digestive tract was flared which is a sign of stress whether it be emotional or dietary. We lead a pretty healthy lifestyle, so the emotional stress has to be contributing heavily.

As for my own children, they are resilient but in all of this, I am grateful for the life lessons they will be taking away: Standing up for yourself, being a critical thinker and knowing the right way is not always the easy way. Whilst I would have liked to have taught this under different circumstances, this may be one of the silver linings in this fiasco.

My greatest concern for the school community is the loss of critical thinking teachers. There no longer will be educators who question the narrative, who can impart their ability to see beyond what's in front of them as gospel leading to generations of adults who continue to follow blindly. The other worry is the loss of years of experience. How will they replace so many experienced educators. Some teachers are stepping away with 30-40 years expertise to be replaced with graduates and in a society where behaviour problems are becoming more complex, the handling of this requires skills sets that are not acquired overnight. The negative impact this will have, I feel, will be generational.

My husband and my wish are for these mandates to be overturned so we can go back to the job we love and have the financial security we have had in the past. For me, my principal has left a very bad taste in my mouth so relocating to another school would be the ultimate. I also would like to see some form of compensation for the stress my family have been through.

Educator 265

Teaching is my passion and this passion is about to embark on its 11th year. My name is J, middle aged man, married for almost 19 years and my wife and I have 7 healthy sons. I have taught in a QLD state school, a Catholic school and now an Independent school. My teaching area is primarily in the Design Technology arena – however, my classrooms have also included science, geography, PE and maths. Taking students on a journey of discovery is where the fulfilment comes from. Seeing students rise up to challenges along their learning journeys, experiencing break through as they create pieces in the workshops is what makes it all worthwhile.

When the QLD government mandates came in last month, my employer really did just roll over and follow the narrative and implement the mandates. Expecting all employees to hurriedly fall into line. There was minimal compassion for staff with significant concerns about the vaccines.

The mandates have impacted my family significantly. As a single income family I have no choice but to 'get the jab' in order to keep my employment and remain able to provide for my family. The government coercion is relentless and very tiring.

The impacts on our family have been a noticed increase in tension in the family home, as uncertainty and anxiety invade our homes and lives. This compounded with the daily changing government rules and regulations, media saturation of the government narrative and the ever-increasing science that shows there are other options. Daily I think of some of my work colleagues and wonder what 2022 will bring for them. Many staff are in the heartbreaking process of leaving the profession after years of service. The school I will return to next year – will be a very different school to the one I finished term 4, 2021. The ambience of the school will have lost its shine with the loss of some of our great staff.

Our students will be devastated when they return to school in late January to the news that some of their teachers will not be returning to school. Many schools will lose many years of experience and a great depth of wisdom as staff decide not to 'take the jab' and move away from teaching.

The government legislation must be revoked and vaccination must be a choice for each person to make on their own merits and circumstance.

I, along with many of my colleagues love teaching. We are passionate about what we do. It is not a job, not a means of deriving an income – it is a passion, a calling and far, far more than a 9 to 5 job. Many go above and beyond the classroom because we care for the students placed in our care.

All teachers teach – and most, outside the classroom, attend meetings, work through lunchtimes, go on camps, run theatre productions on our weekends and early morning or after-school sports training. We mark assignment after assignment during our holidays and late into the night, and spend days creating individualised reports for each student. We answer parent queries about their child's academic progress, socialisation, friendship groups, learning development and mental health.

We care about the kids we teach and we know them. I often get to know my students' families as well. And, I do 'give a hang' about them. But it's hard to keep up the enthusiasm when the coercion of vaccination hangs over our heads.

Educator 266

H, female, Early Primary classroom teacher, Brisbane, 58 years old, 35 years in teaching, Higher Diploma in Education, my gift is my passion for my job. As I have been on lsl (term 4) now on stress leave, I have not had much of a response from my principal.

The mandates have impacted me and my family in a devastating way. Not only do I lose my livelihood, being a widow now affects my ability to provide for myself and one of my children who has returned home. Mentally I am devastated! Teaching has been my stability throughout my emigration, my loss of my husband and my identity as a person.

Being a teacher is the core to my self-worth. Take it away in such a way has caused me to become over anxious, unwell and feel worthless. I have had 3 sessions at a psychologist to help me through this as I have suicidal thoughts. I am unable to sleep and have stressful headaches daily. This stressful time has impacted my family in that their really stable rock is crumbling before their eyes.

My concern for my new students are that they have met me and know me as their new teacher, a very important person in their lives! When they come to school there might not be a teacher for them. My teaching team will feel my loss too as we have formed a huge bond with lots of sharing experiences that expand our teaching practices.

My past students, who visit me daily, will notice my loving support, my positive smile and my stable face is not there anymore. I am asking for me to be allowed to keep my beloved job. I am asking for the mandates to be scrapped.

Educator 267

Hi my name is B I am a 42 year old Early Childhood Teacher with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, although I have been working as a Relief Teacher in a Regional Town: X, Queensland. I work from Preps all the way to Year 12's. In our School System we also have a Hub School which caters for Disengaged Students from Years 7-12's. I graduated in 2004 and have been Teaching ever since only having a break when having my own children. I am extremely flexible and absolutely love teaching students from Prep all the way to Grade 12's.

My employer has been following the advice given by the Chief Health Officer which I understand. Since I won't be getting the jab, I no longer have a job, however, if I decide to change my mind or if mandates are dropped, I will still have a job to go back to. My family line on my mother's side has a history of ovarian cancer and I don't know what the long-term effects would be on me and am not willing to risk this. I am currently attempting to get an exemption to become part of a clinical trial for unvaccinated which is registered through the TGA.

This has been a major strain on my family as I now don't have a job. Having my job enables me to pay for my daughters dance lessons, my son's drum lessons as well as to contribute to buying groceries and pay towards our mortgage.

My anxiety has gone through the roof. I had extreme anxiety around 6 years ago from being bullied by a colleague at work, now I am getting bullied by the Government into a job that has not been tested. I have had to go to the Doctors and have a chat regarding my anxiety and will probably need to go and get a referral to see a psychologist that is if I am allowed to see one due to being unjabbed as I may be discriminated against. I also have issues with depression as I feel like there is no hope. Not being able to wake up with purpose and to do something that I was born to do which is teaching makes me feel like I have no purpose. I have been teaching kids and been actively involved with kids and caring for them since 1996 when I was in high school. How can something be denied for choosing not to get injected by an experimental drug? Don't we teach our students to stand up to bullies and to not take experimental drugs? My own children have been greatly impacted where they have mental health issues and have had to go to counselling due to depression and suicidal thoughts. My children are 13 and 15 they should be living and enjoying their lives not dealing with all of these issues.

I have major concerns for our school, students and the major impact on our community. Firstly, we are in a regional town and already we have teachers that have in the last week resigned due to jobs being available in towns in Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast as teachers who do not want to get the jab has been stood down this is just heartbreaking and so wrong. Regional Towns will suffer and will not be able to recover as they will not be able to get staff. Our students do not even know which teachers won't be there and having bonded well with all of their teachers due to being a small regional school this would be devastating especially to many students who are already suffering with their mental health due to this entire pandemic. At the moment, I am the only person who will go as a Relief Teacher to our Hub school this is one of my favourite places to work as I am able to speak into students' lives, encourage them and give hope. What will happen to these students? We already have a number of teachers leaving the Hub due to these mandates. What will happen to these very vulnerable and students at high risk? My heart breaks for them this should not be happening. Up until now as a school we have managed to maintain an extremely safe working environment in our school as there are many policies in place to ensure there would be no spread of germs. As we are a school in a regional community this would have a huge negative impact on our community as we are often involved in the community being part of events such the Rodeo Floats, Talent Shows and helping in the community giving hope and serving.

I am begging for these mandates to be dropped immediately, up until now we have maintained extremely high standards in our management of covid and so far we have been very successful. If it is required to do rapid antigen testing this should be good enough but to allow educators, students, and education staff to suffer like this is just plain dangerous especially with mental health issues. Students need their safe haven of school to be there it needs to be constant unchanging many of our students especially our at-risk students need this. Please consider our students they need this.

I implore you to have compassion and that you have the best interests of our students at hand. As educators we are trained to know what they need and provide them with what they need to be able to flourish. They need stability and a safe place. If this does not happen, I fear suicide rates and the major impact on mental health which are already through the roof!

Educator 268

Hi, my name is S, and I am a primary school teacher who is awaiting the loss of my job due to the vaccine mandates. I have been working as a teacher full-time for 5 years at an independent Christian School in X, in Ipswich. Unfortunately, this mandate will mean the loss of a qualified relational educator that is creative, passionate, hands-on, and has a fresh understanding of the curriculum and how to teach it to the learner.

I have had mixed responses from my employers, Heads and HR officers in relation to the mandate. Unfortunately, my first in-person conversation was of a negative nature and was discussed during my non-contact time at school. The timing and the handling of the conversation caused me great stress and anxiety. Although I was told the school was pushed into a corner, I was also asked point blank if I had taken the vaccine or if I was planning to get it so that the school could determine if they needed a replacement for my job. The conversation felt inconsiderate, as I too was now placed into a corner. To keep my job, I would have to take a vaccine, or I would need to resign so that I could leave my workplace on "good terms" and give them sufficient time to find my replacement. I felt unwanted, unvalued, and so very replaceable. To make matters worse, I had a few minutes to compose myself before I would be teaching students in my classroom again. Thankfully, later conversations with other Heads were of a positive nature. They were very empathetic and wanted to hear my perspective, restating that they were respectful of my decision, whichever way I went, and sharing how this Government mandate had caused great strain on the college.

The impact this mandate has had and will have on my finances and wellbeing is immense. I am the sole provider of my little family because my husband is unable to work. I pay for our mortgage, bills, car, food, and any problem that arises with these assets. This means that, because I want to choose what's best for my health, instead of taking a provisionally approved medical procedure that could cause long term effects on my body, I cannot continue in a place I love to work in, and I cannot provide financially for my family in this way. From a wellbeing perspective, this mandate has increased my stress and anxiety. I have struggled to sleep, I have felt tension in my body, and I have had to deal with anxiety attacks.

I am very concerned about how this will affect the families and the children in 2022. Not only will they lose a great number of loving and caring teachers, but they will also lose another safe place to go to when home life is difficult, a listening ear, that one teacher that connected with them, and a teacher that believed in them, and walked the learning journey with them. These mandates encourage segregation in schools and their communities. Students will be forced to take sides to fit in, to feel a sense of belonging, and for those family members who have chosen to be vaccine free, they won't be allowed to participate in their child's schooling on campus or out-and-about on excursion. If an adult can be segregated for their beliefs, what does that teach children? It teaches them that it's better to follow along, not to think for yourself or do what's best for yourself, and it's okay to exclude others for their different viewpoints.

I want to see a stop to these mandates. A vaccine or any medical procedure which has any risk to an individual must allow for choice. A person should not be forced or coerced to take a vaccine to keep their job, nor should any employee be terminated for taking or not taking a medical procedure or vaccine. Personally, I have weighed up the health benefits and risks of taking the vaccine. I have determined that the vaccine is not beneficial for me, and I would like this choice to be honoured and protected from the Government which doesn't know my medical background or history. Please stop the mandates before it causes further pain and suffering.

Educator 269

N, I am a Primary-Early Childhood Teacher, I teach Prep to year 2 students and I teach full time. I have 29 years' experience in Education. I have worked in low economic and tough schools from Logan to the Gold Coast. State School Teacher
Bachelor of Education Early Childhood
Associate Diploma of Education Child Care
Post Graduate Diploma of Ministry

I'm a passionate early childhood teacher who works collaboratively with families, students and colleagues. I am a caring, supportive teacher who nurtures my students and helps them to grow into confident, capable learners who achieve their best results. I have a wealth of teaching skills and knowledge gained over the years in working in Queensland schools. I enjoy teaching and find it a rewarding career. I love teaching my students and mentoring student teachers. I enjoy seeing my past students come back to my classroom to say hello and tell me how they are going.

Since educators have been mandated to be vaccinated I have received aggressive email from my school, numerous text messages and emails from the Department of Education demanding I comply or I will be subject to disciplinary action including loss of job.

Since being mandated I have felt stress and concerned for my future as a Teacher this has resulted in stress headaches, worry and lack of sleep. This vaccine mandate has negatively impacted my whole family. This time of year I should be relaxing and recharging ready for a new year. Many educators have been coerced into being vaccinated and they aren't happy that they complied to keep their job. I feel strongly that we should have free choice to decide our medical procedures.

I am concerned for the future of our State and Private schools in Queensland, with a lack of experienced and dedicated principals, teachers, teacher aids, specialist staff, administration staff, support staff and volunteers our schools and students will suffer. This will greatly impact student learning, relationships with children who work closely with particular teachers and support staff, school organization and class numbers. I know my school at times is understaffed when relief staff cannot be sourced and sometimes classes are split for a day or children go without their teacher or teacher aide support.

With so many teachers and educators being lost to this mandate there won't be enough qualified and experienced staff to meet students' academic and emotional needs. State Schools rely on volunteers to support and help out in classrooms, organise fundraisers and run school events and it is hard enough to get volunteers in school without a vaccinate mandate. Students deserve to be taught by highly qualified, experienced and dedicated teachers who make a difference in each child's life. I am concerned our education system will suffer for years to come with this mandate affecting our future generation of young people. Our children are our future; they deserve the best education and teachers.

I am asking that vaccinate mandates be abolished as children are not at risk of Covid and schools are not a high risk setting. We have worked the last 20 months without the need for mandatory vaccination. Teachers and all school staff deserve to be able to choose what medical procedure is best for them. Some teachers have medical, religious or personal reasons as to why they don't want to be vaccinated this needs to be heard. Freedom to choose is our basic human right.

Educator 270

My name is J. I'm a 32-year-old, mother of two, with over 10 years' experience as a teacher/child worker in South-East Brisbane. I hold a Bachelor of Primary/Middle Schooling (6.18 GPA) and also a certification with SPELD. The past few years I have been a TRS (relief) worker receiving almost full-time hours whilst also upskilling to be able to teach and support students with difficulties such as Dyslexia. I have always enjoyed working with children and have created many professional connections through-out my working life.

My employer informed me that I would not be able to continue working, and supporting my children, unless I was double vaccinated by January 23rd. Despite a discussion stating that I needed to wait until Novavax was given in Australia (due to my severe, deathly, anaphylaxis), my employer said that 'Oh, well, you can just get an exemption'. When I let her know that an exemption is not now granted under almost any circumstance, with those like me being told to pay exorbitant prices to have the vaccine given (at my own expense) under hospital conditions, she apologetically confirmed that I would then not be able to work.

Resultantly, I have had to put my health first and know that I face the future without an income. I sold my car and as many other household items as I could to have some money to pay for bills and expenses. Coming without warning, this has been an incredibly difficult and uncertain time.

My mental and physical health has been put through incredible strain as a result of these mandates. During each lockdown, teachers were forced to not care for our own families and instead be exposed to approx. 25 students every day with the government assuring us that children were ZERO RISK. Now, however, these same children are apparently HIGH RISK and VULNERABLE, and I cannot provide food on my table unless I am double vaccinated. It is absolutely appalling that these mandates have been enforced on us without any reasoning or explanation as to why there's been such a backflip on the status of children getting/transmitting Covid.

My family and friends (vaccinated and unvaccinated), similarly, have been very concerned for me and the 'choice' I have before me.

I want to see these mandates lifted as there is no logical reason why they have been enforced. I would like compensation for those who, like me, have had to sell needed items to put food on their tables. I would like to see those responsible held to account for their callous and hypocritical actions. I would like to continue working in the profession I worked so hard to be able to participate in; years of study, sleepless nights, upskilling, unpaid hours, volunteering, all stand to be for naught.

I implore you to consider the faces of those you so carelessly enforce your decisions upon. Interestingly, my children and I walked past the Qld. Premier giving her Covid update/press conference just yesterday (27/12/2021). The temptation was so great to ask her to explain to my children, face to face, why their mother cannot work and has had to sell numerous possessions including theirs. Were it not for the grace and respect I have long since held as some of my strongest attributes I would give in; it is anyone's guess to what avail. My story is far from isolated.

Educator 271

My name is N and I am a 39 yr old, part-time Primary teacher, currently working as a specialist Drama and Dance teacher in a local state school located in North Brisbane. I also use my 'free days' as a relief teacher for my school, so I am very familiar with the students and staff. I have been teaching for 8 years in between raising my four children and presently completing a Graduate Certificate in Inclusive Practices and Strategies of Autism in order to further my knowledge and better cater to my students. I love building a rapport with my students and believe I am particularly skilled at meeting children where they are. I have introduced Creative Generation to our school a few years ago and have co-ordinated a team of dancers each year in my own time, to provide them with an enriching opportunity to deliver a professional show and perform with over 1000 other student performers. I was also asked to join the Creative Generation Co-ordination team last year and was responsible for co-ordinating over 300 Junior dancers, along with another teacher.

When I was first told about the mandates, I was absolutely gutted. All I have ever wanted to do, was work as a teacher. Thankfully my Principal was very compassionate and spoke to me with understanding and respect, however her hands are tied as she must enact on the mandates. When I explained that I have an auto-immune condition and my doctor was very concerned about the reaction of the available vaccines on my body, my Principal couldn't understand why I wasn't eligible for a medical exemption, when she had been advised that this was available option. I explained that the only exemption available was for an anaphylactic reaction to the first one, and generally only for the vaccine that was originally taken. She expressed her disappointment about the possibility of losing me from the teaching team.

The thought of losing my teaching position has been an incredible scary prospect. Even though I know that taking the vaccines currently available would be almost certainly detrimental for my health, I have often considered the thought, as I dearly don't want to lose the job that I love! I was so excited to be asked to step up to three days per week on contract in 2022, teaching more of the subjects I love. I am devastated to be facing the loss of these increased days. I am concerned about the financial impact on my family also. My children ask me every few days if I will have a job next year and I can see the worry on their faces when they ask. All four children are attending a Private school in 2022 and I am really worried about how we will pay for this.

Since the announcement of the mandate, I have not been doing well, mentally. During a time I should be excitedly finishing the year, having fun with my students and making plans to prepare for my new classes next year, I was stressed and emotional thinking about what next year would look like. I find myself breaking down in tears frequently. The idea of not teaching next year is all I can think about, in between trying to complete an assignment for my further study. In the lead-up to the beautiful celebration that is Christmas, I have been feeling angry, sad and unmotivated with panic attacks occurring almost daily.

As unvaccinated teachers are forced out of schools, I am most concerned about our students who will be impacted. My students will begin the year without their familiar dance/ drama teacher and the ability to build on learning experiences from the years before. It is likely that our school's dance club will cease to exist; a club I have been working to build up for the last 3 years. The nomination of students for Creative Generation in 2022 will also be in doubt. These are only the impacts from my own job loss, without adding in the impact from other staff members also. I am also concerned for the loss of experience and talent from our schools, with so many teachers willing and able to step up pending the revocation of the mandates.

I believe all human beings have a right to make decisions that are right for their own bodies; as we know our bodies best. If others would like to take the vaccination for their own good, that should be available to them, however without the threats and coercion involved. I believe that we have a right to be treated with the respect and rights of those who are vaccinated. As our National Anthem states, 'for we are one and free'.

Educator 272

My name is K and I am a 52 year old woman who has taught as a secondary school Home Economics teacher (most of it in full time and continuous service) since I graduated from QUT on completion of my Bachelor of Applied Science (Home Economics) and my Graduate Diploma of Secondary Education in 1991. I have been honoured to follow this vocation across many schools, beginning in X to the Gold Coast, followed by schools in the Wide Bay and finally landing my dream job in the beautiful community of X, near Toowoomba as part of the Technology team (Textiles and Food Studies) at X State Secondary College. Over this time, I found that my real passion and talent lies in making connections with students who sometimes find themselves on the fringe (often through no fault of their own, rather after being let down or left behind by both family disfunction or through not having their needs met at school) and that my subject area of Home Economics was able to give these students a creative and practical way of expressing themselves and looking after themselves in a way that built up their self-esteem. What better way to nurture a young person then to teach them how to feed themselves and their families in nutritious yet sustainable ways and to make them a more informed consumer of textile and food products? All of this while incorporating values of resilience, kindness, persistence and curiosity into my lessons and encouraging my students to find purpose and direction to KNOW and BELIEVE that THEY ARE IMPORTANT for the future yet to be written. When I received the notification on 10 am, Tuesday 30 November, 2021 from Craig Allen Acting Director-General Department of Education, that schools were now to be classed as “high risk” settings, my heart sank. In this email, there was no indication of consultation with the workforce, no mention of the implications for those employees who (for whatever reason) have yet to be vaccinated or for why, after there had been little or no spread of Covid-19 resulting in serious health effects in any school setting, that suddenly schools and education settings were now “high risk”.

I am discussing with my health professionals as to whether or not these current vaccines are suitable for me and my underlying health conditions. Why? Because at the end of 2011, as I was getting ready to send my precious son – gifted to my husband and I through the medical scientific miracle of IVF, to prep in 2012, I was diagnosed with advanced Lobular breast cancer. My first round of chemotherapy began a few days before Christmas and then continued up until I had a full mastectomy and lymph node removal on my left side later in 2012. This was followed by intensive radium treatment and an unsuccessful breast reconstruction surgery (transflap) where I became seriously ill with an unknown infection only to leave hospital and return to work in a limited capacity for the final part of the school term in 2012. I therefore need reassurance from my employer that the vaccine mandates have been fully assessed in terms of personal risk to myself as an employee. Although I have sent a number of emails to my Principle, Mr X asking if EQ have done this, I am still yet to receive any risk assessment.

I have however received numerous emails and texts requesting me to complete a vaccine status survey, and advising me that not having the “required” two doses of vaccine before returning to work in January 2022 comes with the threat of dismissal from a vocation in which I have invested most of my adult life. This has had an incredible impact on my health and my relationships with family and friends. I have been using a psychologist service and through this I am trying to work through the trauma of knowing that I won't be there in front of my wonderful students in 2022. My family have not only had to support me emotionally, but we also have to work together to find other, gainful employment to be able to keep our home mortgage going and meet our everyday cost of living. As such, I have reluctantly put in an application for leave without pay beginning on the student free days of 2022, as I have been offered alternative employment with a company who I have previously declared second employment with. As part of my conditions of employment with Education Queensland, I can take unpaid leave for a variety of reasons, including the reason of taking up other paid employment. I will use my time working for X to improve my customer service skills which I know will make me a better teacher – after all, students ARE customers for our service of education! I fully hope that I can return to X State Secondary College and my wonderful students in 2023 at the end of this leave.

I have very real concerns for my students in 2022, especially for those most vulnerable who I have

worked closely with to build their confidence in themselves and their skills as effective learners. I worry that they will feel abandoned by me and that the teachers who take them through into the next year, especially my challenging but delightful Year 9 classes into Year 10 and my Early Childhood Studies students from Year 11 – 12, will not “find the good” in every one of them. I worry that the reputation some of these students have for their past behaviour will not be put to one side and that the support and advocacy that they found in me to help them progress and make real changes in their lives will be jeopardised. I wish for nothing more than to say that there has been a change and that these mandates have been removed. I could continue part -time work for X to keep my currency for VET and the health tools that keep me well, but return full time to the job that my years of experience have made me exceptional at – making a difference to a school community and helping young people to find their voice and their passion in life as I have been able to do.

My final thoughts and words on this subject of taking away freedom of choice for medical treatment come to me as a result of being the daughter of a WWII Veteran. My father was a prisoner of war of the Japanese and he survived internment as a soldier forced to build the Burma Railway under horrendous conditions. Men and woman like my father who fought for the freedoms of this country of Australia should not have their call to duty and service undermined and pushed into the mothballs of history. The freedoms of choice, the building of an inclusive, non-segregated community and fundamental human rights that they lost their lives or endured unbelievable hardship to achieve, can never be forgotten or taken for granted. I am my father's daughter and I will do everything I can to maintain my right to work and earn a living to support my family in a job that I have spent years training for, honing my profession and making a difference in – my world as an educator and teacher.

Educator 273

G'day, I'm E. I am a mum of 2 beautiful boys. I have spent the last 21 years serving as an educator in Primary schools on the east coast of Australia in a variety of positions. These positions included, but are not limited to, PE in state primary schools and special education schools, relief teaching in a variety of schools in both the private and state sectors, working in schools with high percentages of first nations children and more recently full time in a school with 80% indigenous children mostly from low socioeconomic backgrounds. During the course of my career I have gained so much knowledge about so many different topics and in recent years I have focused on the technology side of things. I have come to learn that iPads are an amazing tool for both engaging students in learning and being able to cater to multiple levels of ability all at once. This has become my speciality and I am the only staff member in my school with the knowledge of how to use Ipads effectively.

My principal has been aware of my hesitance to have the vaccine. We both knew that mandate was imminent and inevitable. Unlike the horror stories that I am hearing from other colleagues, my principal expressed to me in the second last week of term that she had sensed a shift and recommended that I put in for LSL for Term 1 of 2022. She has put contingency plans in place in case I am able to return and has also got plans in case I can't return. Whilst she has been supportive of my position personally, I am unaware if she has made the impact of my potential loss known to the department. Being a principal of a small and difficult school, full of undiagnosed special needs children, indigenous children, trauma/abuse/neglect children in North Queensland, my knowledge/passion/experience will not be easily replaced.

The mandates finally came at the end of term 4, when we teachers should have been getting ready to wind down and relax. Instead this break that I have worked hard all year for has been one full of stress and anxiety. I am fearful of taking the vaccine as I have heard about so many adverse reactions. I have to be able to provide for my children and if I am one the unlucky ones who acquires myocarditis from having the vaccine, how will I do that. As a result, I find myself seeking alternative forms of employment. This is sad and as I've said will be a large blow to the school I am currently employed in, X State School, in North Queensland.

I spent the whole of Term 4 anxiously waiting for the mandates to be issued. I had many sleepless nights worrying about what to do. I suffered panic attacks after dropping my children off at school worrying that they would be pressured into having the vaccine whilst at school (as teenage boys they are in the highest risk category of developing myocarditis from the vaccines) and I arrived at my school bawling my eyes out on more than one occasion.

Over the three years at X State School I have developed a great rapport with the students and parents at the school. The students and the parents come to our school community with 9 complexities that are not seen in many schools. I am concerned for the students in my 2022 class, as if I am not allowed to teach them then who will? A first year teacher who will be so focused on the behaviour management and the planning and delivery of that plan that they will be unable to cater to their individual learning and behaviour needs. Will I be replaced by someone less willing to immerse themselves in the school community? Will I be replaced by someone who simply does not know how to engage my students or worse, does not have the time or care to do so.

In conclusion all I am asking for is to be allowed to work to my usual 110%. To provide the education to my students, the one that they deserve and the one that I can give them. I implore you to remove the mandates and make this possible. Consider alternatives to the vaccine for me, a mum of 2 trying to do the best by my family and my students.

Since the very start of this pandemic I have worked in school as it was considered low risk. Now, suddenly it is a high risk environment but nothing has changed.

Educator 274

My name is D, I am a full-time visual art and humanities high school teacher on the Sunshine Coast. I have been teaching for over 11 years, in public high schools, in both remote and urban schools. My greatest gift as an educator is my love of the students, (and I tell them I love them) also the commitment I have for my job and the many years of experience I now bring to the profession.

I feel the response to the experimental vaccine mandate direction from the Education Department verges on bullying, where you are mandated to make a decision about your teaching career and health choices within a short time frame, and you are not given any alternative solution. All this at a time of year when teachers should be relaxing into their well-earned holiday period and enjoying family and friends.

This mandate means I now face losing the job I love and financial hardship if I do not submit to the pressure of taking the vaccination to keep my job and from losing everything. This also including the risk to the overall good health I have now because of my healthy lifestyle choices. This mandate has cost me the security of a home of my own, that I saved and sacrificed to get.

My mental, emotional and even physical health has suffered greatly and this has also impacted negatively on my family and friends as they are in this uncertain space witnessing my very real distress. I do not sleep; at times I am disorientated, unresponsive and am always on the verge of crying. I cry for numerous and various reason regarding the pressure to be vaccinated with an experimental drug. A big one being, when I think of being vaccinated against my will just to keep the job I love, be there for my students, to live the lifestyle I live, to be financially secure and independent into the future. This would feel like a violation of my body, I'm not sure I could live with without it impacting my mental, emotional and physical health. My general overall good health is the most valuable thing I possess, and this is now at risk, with and without the vaccine because of the mandate.

At the end of the 2021 school year, I was witnessing some very real mental and physical health issues with my students and have concerns about what impact the vaccine mandate pressure will have on the students going into the 2022 school community. All this on children when this virus has no or very little impact on them health wise.

I would like to see teachers having a choice in their personal health responsibilities regarding the Covid Pandemic, and given alternative processes such as weekly testing using rapid antigen equipment for the duration of the Pandemic event. Please consider teachers and students and the community that is built within a school and how this mandate will impact teacher, student relationships that have been established and nurtured over many years. This equals to an environment of learning and accord for both teachers and students in this community.

Educator 275

Let me introduce myself. My name is A and I was a Home Economics teacher. I can remember my first Home Ec. lesson in year 8 way back in 1978. From that first lesson, I absolutely loved the concept of Home Economics. That is why I became a teacher.

I have taught since 1986 (I did take 5 years off for babies!). The schools I have taught at are X (8 years), X (2 ½ years) and the last 20 years at X High. To this day, I still have a passion for Home Economics. Unfortunately, most people think it just sewing and cooking but in the past, it has included: nutrition, management, consumerism, textile science, housing, design, sociology, psychology, hospitality and early childhood.

Like many others, my career was cut short on the 30th November 2021. I have thoroughly enjoyed my career and unlike so many younger teachers I have long service leave and more financial security. Honestly, I was going to do one more year and then change my career course but this has come a year earlier than expected.

Next year, I feel for the colleagues who will be working at school. Staffing X School is problematic as people think it is miles from anywhere. It's one hour from the Gold Coast and Brisbane. Finding Home Economic teachers is impossible. I believe I was the only teacher who has refused the vaccine mandate but cleaners and admin staff applauded me for taking a stand. Personally, I haven't been victimised and I did tell the Executive Team of my intentions and they were so supportive and offered everything that would best help me in my decision.

My concern is for the teachers who will be overworked, stressed and trying to juggle many tasks all at one time. The students who didn't have the opportunity to say goodbye and thanks. I'm standing with those teachers, support personnel and auxiliary staff who have had to make an extraordinary sacrifice to stand up against these draconian measures. 2022 is going to be a very bumpy start to the school year.

I've enjoyed being a teacher for 35 years, but this isn't how you should retire from the profession you love. How can the Premier of the corporation of QLD implement an illegal mandate which overrides federal law and violates human rights? Covid 19 is based on a lie and fear. It can't and won't last as it's foundations is not embedded in truth.

This is my story; one of many. We are all one small piece of a much larger picture. Together, we can: **HOLD THE LINE.**

Educator 276

My name is C and I am a permanent part-time Chinese Teacher in a X Primary School in Brisbane. I have been working as a Chinese Teacher for more than 20 years both in Hong Kong and Australia. I came to Australia to get my Bachelor of Education when I was 24 and I have been living here (in and out) for more than 14 years now. I love teaching young children especially when they are so ready to learn about everything. My passion for teaching is to see my students grow and learn and become responsible global citizens.

When the mandates were announced during the last week of school, I was scattered and saddened by the fact that I might not be able to see my students again and I may lose my job if I don't want to choose the be vaccinated. I emailed my principal telling her I would like to wait until a proven safe alternative treatment is available for me to choose from and I would like to take 6 months unpaid leave. My principal then asked me to fill out the Leave application form with a supporting letter.

The mandates give me no choice to go back to work if I am not vaccinated by the deadlines. I have been coerced in this case because I am not allowed to work until I comply. It could mean I am losing my job in January if my application for unpaid leave is rejected.

Mentally, my husband and I suffer the most as we cannot, cannot take this whole mandates and vaccines issues out of our minds and live without it. It has increased our stress level to the point that we have to control ourselves to not to think about it. It has definitely put a lot of question marks on what if we don't have money to buy food, support our children's education, pay our mortgage, pay bills, buy essentials, go out..... the list goes on.

I am concerned about my students' learning, will there be continuity? It is reasonable to predict that it will be a significant shortage of teaching staff in all subjects. Students may find it hard to understand this reality and may question about why some teachers can't work. The community will be divided, more discrimination will arise, leading to intolerance and hate.

I am asking for justice, truth and investigations about these whole mandates. I want to see people having their freedom to choose what is best for themselves. I want to see people are being able to work even they choose not to have the vaccines. I want to see people and government coming together and working something out for everyone. I want to see the truth about the vaccines and how safe they are, if it is not safe, the government needs to stop giving us the vaccines. More importantly, NO mandates because it is killing people's lives.

I am really worried about the future of Australia. People are losing jobs, children's education are being disturbed, communities are divided, people are being discriminated against, freedom has been taken. What happens to the government the people in Australia once voted for? Are they keeping Australia a better place and serve us a brighter future? We won't survive unless the government hears our voice.

Educator 277

My name is L, I am 45 years young and I am the Garden Specialist at X State School.

When my children began their formal schooling at X, I was thrilled to discover they offered the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program (SAKGP) as a Distinctive Program. I have always felt a deep connection to country and I have a heart for facilitating learning and so I volunteered my time to the Program.

In 2016 the Garden Specialist role became vacant and the Principal, at the time, asked me to apply for the role. For five years I have introduced students to the wondrous world of good food and the fundamentals of growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing. I have achieved a Cert III and IV in Education Support and conducted QLD State training for the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation on two separate occasions. The SAKGP is an enriching and much-loved program that is integrated into curriculum to provide practical and age appropriate, problem-solving capabilities.

In December 2020, when the Queensland Premier announced vaccine mandates for all Education staff, I realised unless I received two injections, I would be forced to leave the outdoor classroom and students I love so much. I have never been in denial about the pandemic. I have, throughout the past two years, been thoughtfully assessing the risks based on information provided by the QLD Government and the Chief Health Officer (CHO). I am a healthy, active, mother of 4 children that has no underlying health conditions. I assessed that based on my age, healthy lifestyle choices, where we live, that no-one in my immediate family was immune compromised and that only a small amount of virus was circulating in QLD, I chose to wait to be vaccinated.

I oppose these mandates as I am concerned that the currently mandated vaccines (Astra-Zeneca, Pfizer and Moderna) have not gone through the necessary safeguard trials. I continue to actively seek clarification and legitimate information, including speaking with GP's, as I am concerned that the vaccines fail to provide protection from contracting OR spreading disease. I am concerned that even if I am vaccinated I will not be protecting those whom I love, including my students, fellow staff members, volunteers or those who are vulnerable at all. It will simply lessen the symptoms of the disease for me.

Making this decision has not been easy. For the first time in my life I have experienced what it is like to be in a minority. For the first time in my life I have experienced exclusion, segregation, and judgement based on a personal medical procedure. I have had to be courageous and engage in open conversations with our 16, 14, 11 and 9 year old children. I have witnessed my healthy 16 year old daughter lose her job and now I face the same fate. As a parent, I listen to my children speak about their fears and concerns, and the pressure they are experiencing from their peers. And yet, I am convicted that this is the right decision for our family. I will not be coerced. Our wealth, nor the ability to earn wealth through employment, should never be taken from those who choose not to receive this medical procedure.

If the mandate is not reversed I will be forced to say goodbye to a job I love, a productive and flourishing garden, students who love participating in the outdoor classroom and my incredible teaching colleagues. As a parent volunteer I will also be required to resign as Chair of the Chaplaincy committee (7 years) and the P&C. This is a devastating loss.

These are the most challenging of times. But I stand firm and continue to seek clarity, information transparency and the freedom to choose what happens to my body and my children's bodies. I am able and willing to work. I want to contribute to our great country. Stop the mandates. Stop the fear. Reunite our great country.

Educator 278

My name is N. I am a high school teacher at in Brisbane and have been there for five years. Overall I have been a teacher 8 years – this was my second career after returning to the workforce post-kids.

I teach Math and Business. I also operate a successful Math YouTube channel with over 1500 subscribers, where I create content in my own free time for students and teachers.

For the past two years I have worked for the X. In short, I worked so hard for my school and my students, and this mandate has basically devalued everything I have done.

I will be unemployed in 2022, and I have two children with hospitality jobs who are now also unemployed. My husband had a great job in NSW (fly-in fly-out) – he had to resign from this in July when the border closed to NSW. He has been in and out of contract work ever since.

I have a congestive condition in my lungs dating back to a severe case of bronchitis that I had four years ago. For this reason I am unable to wear a mask, and I have an exemption. When mask wearing was mandatory at my school, I was made to feel like a leper by several staff members who were “uncomfortable” with me sitting at my desk in the staffroom. I was asked “unofficially” to work elsewhere. As a result, I would eat lunch alone in my breaks in a classroom. This went on for a whole term, and it was a very lonely time. I felt like this was somewhat hypocritical of my peers, as I would enter the lunchroom, and not only was no-one social distancing, but they were often working at their desks unmasked and even sitting in my chair at my desk in my absence. I feel that the government and the media is responsible for causing this kind of division in workplaces, social groups and families all over the country. I was not sick at any time, and yet I was treated as though I was diseased.

I was blindsided by the government in Week 9 when they mandated vaccination for school staff. All through the pandemic we were told it was safe for us to be at work, and safe for children to come to school. I clearly remember the government stating that Covid does not spread in schools. Now all of a sudden when almost everyone is vaccinated, schools have become a high risk setting?! This makes absolutely no sense! Has my employer been lying to me for two years, telling me I was safe when I actually wasn't? Did they knowingly place me in harm's way? Or are they lying now, when the majority of staff (so-called herd immunity) are vaccinated? I don't teach any students aged under 12. As a high school teacher, I never have. Hence I am very confused as to why high-schools are high risk settings for teachers!

For the last two weeks of term, I was called into my HOD's office on an almost daily basis, with requests as to what my plans were for 2022. I felt as though they cared more about their timetable for next year than they did for me, who was about to lose my job. There were 2 other teachers in my staffroom in the same situation – all three of us were harassed and gossiped about for the last fortnight. I had to take three days on stress leave as I could not stop shaking and could not sleep. On our last day, there was no farewell for us. No-one said good-bye, they just looked at us sadly. I actually had to go around the staffroom and wish everyone well, and only a handful said they were sorry to see me go. I don't blame them, I think they were in as much shock as I was, and just didn't know what to say.

I have had a few emails from students who are really upset that I will not be teaching them next year. I had hoped to carry my two year 11 classes through for another year, and am feeling quite

devastated that I won't have this opportunity. Post-Christmas will also be difficult, as I had done all my shopping and spending early this year, and now cannot afford most of what I bought for the family.

I am deeply aggrieved by this government and my employer, who had no risk assessment. I requested this three times. I was told that there isn't one and that there wouldn't be one. I cannot understand how me teaching in my classroom causes a risk for anyone. There was no consultation, and the QIU who had previously assured me would offer support, has done nothing. I cannot understand how it is legal to add new clauses to my employment contract several years after it was signed. I cannot understand how I can be stood down without pay for not being willing to take an experimental medical treatment.

Educator 279

I am a female primary school educator, a senior teacher of 15 years, after a 6 ½ year journey through university whilst raising three precious children. I am a full-time educator in the Lockyer Valley region who has dedicated the last 21 years of my life to educating our youth. This is not just a job teaching the Australian Curriculum, but a calling of love and dedication to our youth, promoting kindness, productivity, caring and nurturing humankind, environments and relationships.

As an educator, my students develop a love of learning based on questioning the world around them, formulating solutions, justifying choice and becoming critical thinkers in a world that demands much. But most of all, a teacher gives love, care and compassion; something not always present in families. The reality is, that for many children, school staff provide this basic human need for love and stability, belonging and purpose. My own children have learnt that sometimes other children need me, my time and my energy more than they do. They have learnt to be empathetic, grateful and mindful. They have lived with the tired, emotional, frustrated, excited, proud and loving teacher. At times, they felt that my "other kids" were more important than them, however, they know the difference I have made to children's lives.

The Qld Department of Education has impeded my ability to continue educating by mandating vaccinations for all school staff. I have to make a grueling choice: what I believe is best for my health and my family given my current health status OR my career that brings value and joy into my life and ability to financially support my family.

Despite repeated requests for details on the risk that is posed by vaccinated and unvaccinated staff within the school settings, I have only been met with a formatted response, not addressing myself or my questions. Communications with my Principal are not responded to and forwarded to Regional Office to be dealt with, inconsiderate of my personal situation. My work and private email accounts, and my private phone has been inundated with repeated requests and reminders throughout the holiday period, about getting vaccinated. This has been imposing and intimidating.

The mandate has led to a high state of stress in my household, as I navigate my emotions, seek scientific evidence of the efficacy of vaccines, adverse reactions and how they may impact me. Data on testing to prove safety for me in my health situation is unattainable. My marriage is stressed/tense as we work out how to manage our finances if I lose my job and our primary source of income. What avenues are open to me to support my family?

My children, now adults, have been coerced into getting the vaccination so they can support their families, travel and live their life freely. Coercion is not consent.

I am in a living nightmare. This situation flies in the face of everything I hold true. I educate: teaching others to question, think critically, justify choices, find evidence, live with integrity and honour, and treat others with respect. I am in disbelief, constantly on the verge of tears, feeling vulnerable and alone. I avoid being with others. I feel their pity, mocking, displeasure, and judgement. I have lost friends and feel distanced from my family who make special considerations for me to be included. Some days I am brave and strong, and other days I look in the mirror and don't know who I'm looking at.

If I am stood down, will I get to say goodbye to my students and community? Will they be part of a world where it is expected just to follow, to not question, to not listen to their intuition nor value compassion and kindness? What of the teachers that remain? Who will fill the gaps? Will my colleagues have to work even harder than they already do? Or will experienced staff be replaced by the inexperienced or recalling retired teachers who will have to learn new skill sets to teach in a modern society. Education is not static. Will class sizes increase? Will those children that need that extra time and attention get lost in an understaffed system. Will they learn to be empowered adults?

Educator 280

My name is K and I am a Primary School teacher on the Gold Coast. I have chosen not to take the vaccination for medical reasons. I am scared for my health due to family adverse reactions and my medical history of anaphylaxis to a vaccine previously.

I feel so much pressure from others and the government making me feel like I am a bad person for simply making a choice of what to put in my body. I have tried to receive a medical exemption which in my experience is near impossible unless I risk my life to see if I react to the first vaccine. I have booked a specialist appointment to see if he can help me find a solution that I feel comfortable with.

My mother had taken the vaccine due to being frightened for our future, food and home. She had a reaction where she was raced to hospital a few days later, yet no one can prove it was from this vaccine, just a coincidence. She will be forced to still have the second one if we want to be able to live in our house.

I feel lost and devastated of the fact that I might be losing the career I worked so hard for. I finally reached my goal in the second last week of school of being a permanent teacher in the school I have so much love for. I was then told the devastating news only a few days later that this now might not be the case. The impressions that I have made on students, the friendships that I have made with my colleagues and the job that I love so much; that I get excited to get up each morning and drive to will be no more.

This has been having a drastic effect on my mental health as my stress level from all of this is through the roof. I worked all through school to get to university. I worked through university and prac placements to land a job. I worked and gave all my energy into keeping my contract ongoing and I finally get permanent at a school, I have so much love and passion for and it can be taken away from me. Not because of anything I did wrong or my work ethic but because I made a choice not to risk my life and put something into MY body.

To think that this is really happening hurts me. The pain it has caused my family and my mental health is not okay. I should not be forced into doing anything I don't feel comfortable with. I have done nothing but work hard, learn new skills and make an impact on students' lives and I get this punishment in return.

This is not just a job to me this is an outlet, a passion, my social life, friendships and a place where I feel valued. That is what you are taking away from me.

Educator 281

My name is K I am a part time and relief primary teacher. I have first class honours in Early Childhood Primary Education, and I am very passionate about my roles. I have particular interest in supporting students who have diverse needs and/or are at risk. I have been teaching for Qld Education in Moreton Bay for 6 years. I am also a Cystic Fibrosis parent and advocate.

I will no longer be able to teach as a relief teacher (I'm offered work every day I'm available) or a part time primary teacher due to vaccination mandates.

The mandates have impacted my family by threat of loss of income, but also the considerable amount of stress over the concern of side effects from a new vaccination without long term data. As a parent of a child with a chronic health condition I am very concerned what would happen if I experienced side effects. I do not have parents alive or family to support us. Without my husband and I, my son has little family to care for him. I feel so coerced to do something without qualitative or quantitative safety data or face losing job.

The stress this has placed on my family is considerable and includes me seeking EPA counselling and visiting the doctor several times about stress, sleeplessness and anxiety resulting in anti-anxiety medications.

I love being a teacher. I graduated as an adult in my thirties and gave up a higher paying Federal Government position for my passion to teach children. I feel very sad for the at-risk children I teach, support and have connection with. I am a high sought after relief teacher, and on my non part time days I am always specifically booked to replace ill teachers. I know this is because I am a passionate, highly proficient, well-known teacher that values making connections with my students and staff in the schools I work at. I know students will be asking where I am next year, and I will genuinely miss them.

I want these mandates to stop. There is no data on the safety of these new spike protein vaccinations. There is a lot of Government data of side effects. There are rapid antigen testing, antibody testing (my close friend had confirmed COVID) and masks available as an alternatives to vaccination for teachers. As a Cystic Fibrosis parent, I know about the importance of avoiding ALL viral and bacterial infections. I teach my students about hand washing, hygiene and immunity. Although sadly through this pandemic most schools have not even encouraged handwashing.

There has been a recent chicken pox outbreak across Redcliffe Peninsula, yet deep cleans were not required. The mortality rates for COVID are less than 1% making these mandates seem very extreme. Furthermore, I know on firsthand that all the children who were admitted to ward 9a at QCH in August 2021 who tested positive for COVID were asymptomatic. Children attend school every single day with coughs and colds. Schools are not a high risk COVID environment, if they had been 2020 and 2021 would have looked very different for children.

Please stop these mandates. These mandates for a vaccination without long term safety data are going to leave many students without teachers. The mandates are limiting enthusiastic consent from the process of a medical procedure.

Educator 282

My name is J and I have been a primary school teacher for 36 years. I have worked in Victoria, London and for the past 26 years in Queensland. I am an experienced Senior Teacher, Beginning Teacher Mentor and my current role is Head of Curriculum.

I started my career as a Visual Arts Specialist, then became very active in promoting multi-age learning as my beliefs about learning is that it is lifelong and done best when working with others. Teaching overseas was an amazing experience and it was in London that I became aware of the need for health and wellbeing practices to improve behavioural outcomes for all students. I have been trained in the Peaceful Kids mindfulness program and I coordinate the staff and student wellbeing committees at my school. I was also trained as a New Basics Facilitator where we taught students to become active citizens, critical thinkers and problem solvers. All of these qualities are high on my list of values and give me purpose when teaching students to become positive, productive adults in our ever changing demanding society. I am currently in leadership working on the LLC.

Over my long career I have also been trained in Positive Behaviour for Learning, Functional Behaviour Assessments, Responsible Thinking Classroom coordinator and also became an Instructional and Growth coach. All of these skills contributed to my successful experiences in my role as Learning support / inclusion teacher. Success stories are numerous, whether it be with working with students with ASD, foster care respite, Gifted and Talented genius hour projects, performing arts, outdoor learning in our school community garden, environmental video making, recycling projects for the whole school, hands on maths games to promote problem solving, explicit teaching of phonics, extension and intervention. I have honestly done it all. My experience after 36 years is something you would think would be valued by any school. Last year I was appointed my dream job as Head of Curriculum at a small rural school of 280 students on the Northern end of the Gold Coast, after doing the role in a temporary capacity for 3 years. I have been at this school for 15 years, with all 3 of my children attending this lovely rural school with a family like atmosphere.

My enthusiasm and expertise is valued by the Principal, staff, P&C, parents and students. I know this because they told me. I feel this every day I walk around the school or stand at the school gate to greet parents. I have instigated and coordinated events at our school that are attended by students, parents and community members- International Day of Happiness, Under 8's Day, Grandparent Day, Naidoc week sky gazing nights, Wellbeing festivals, Eco-festivals and Art shows are annual events that I have actively coordinated.

Relationships are the key and as my husband will testify, I have never been the type of teacher that stops thinking or caring about the children I teach. 24 /7 every single day of the year, for 36 years. I make relationships with the students and parents I have had the pleasure of teaching, not only in the year I teach them, but for years, if not decades later. Teaching is more than a job or a successful career, it is everything to me This is why I teach. I make a difference. I am at school on weekends, helping the community at every opportunity. I teach with IMPACT, and I make sure I leave an IMPACT on everyone in my school.

When I had to make my decision about the mandated vaccine for 2022, my heart broke. My Principal was shocked that the department would make such a decision that would destroy our beautiful little school. I had many parents support me and several have asked me to tutor their children in 2022. My workplace is in a low risk environment. I can work from my office, with my door closed, our school grounds are situated around homes on acreage and I rarely go to high density areas. Our school community is very supportive of me and the other staff who will not be returning until the mandates are dropped. XX school is the community and I am proud of the work I have put in and the direction we are going. This will have a huge negative impact on our plans for our school.

Educator 283

My name is C to those children who have walked into the classroom where I teach. I'm a teacher aide who works 5 days a week for BCE. I get paid for 25 hours per week, and don't get paid for the hour I turn up early each day to start work, or the lunch breaks I work through EVERY DAY. While I have only just been acknowledged with my 5-year Service Award from BCE, I volunteered for many, many years at the school my children attended – also a Catholic school. After much prompting from fellow colleagues, my principal, and after seeing my children through primary school, I finally enrolled to do a Bachelor of Education. I have just completed my first year. That's right, I'm a working mother of 3 children, I cook, clean, chauffeur, attend every sporting activity they play AND I STUDY!

Since the mandate was announced for education employees, I received 1 email from my principal on the 10th of December – a reminder to upload my vaccination status onto the WSS. BCE had initially sent an email with instructions to vaccinate on the 15th of December, two days before the mandate came into effect. I sent an email to my principal requesting a Covid-19 vaccination risk assessment and received a response saying that my email has been forwarded to BCE.

As of today, the only response I have received from my principal is an email that read: *'I acknowledge receipt of your email and have forwarded it to Brisbane Catholic Education who will respond to you.'*

My family and I are firm on being vaccine-free. There are too many factors to list as to why we have made this decision, including the medical issues that my children have. My husband has been standing down from his job since October. Now I face the same fate. Our concern is our children. While we do not live a luxurious life, my children enjoy their weekend sporting activities and attend a fabulous school that caters to their different learning styles. We do not want to have to tell them they cannot attend school anymore or play cricket, soccer, and netball due to our choice to remain pro-choice.

My husband and I try not to discuss and talk about a lot of what is happening in the world in front of our children. We don't even turn on the tv unless to watch Netflix. But a similarity we share is that we do not sleep well. My husband sometimes takes a Valium to sleep. I try and use calming techniques when trying to fall asleep. The constant worry about losing our house or our children having to be homeschooled plays on our minds each and every night. What will happen when I finish these school holidays and I don't get paid anymore? What will happen if my husband does get terminated from his job? The mice in wheels in my head are running flat out. I just hope they get to jump off sometime soon.

When I arrive at school each year, I have 29 worried little faces waiting for me. By the 2nd week, those little faces are beaming ones that cannot wait to get into the classroom. I am real, honest, funny, caring, hugging, helping, tissue giving, high-fiving, praising, and loving in the classroom – to both the children and to the mums and dads who entrust me to look after and teach their child every day. These bonds are so tight that I develop with the children and parents, to the point where students and parents from previous years still come and seek me out for a cuddle or advice.

I ask that the mandates for all education staff be revoked. We taught at the height of this 'pandemic', where children did not pose a risk, nor did the education staff. We do not pose a risk now. You cannot replace experience overnight. You cannot replace the bonds formed throughout the years of teachers and staff when you teach the 3rd child of a family. We do not use coercion as a teaching technique – do not use coercion as a means for us to keep our livelihoods.

Educator 284

My name is S. I am a 52 year old female teacher with over 12 years experience in primary and high schools. I currently work in Brisbane state schools.

I have a Bachelor of Arts (Performing Arts) Graduate Diploma of Education and a Graduate Diploma in Arts Management. I was a professional dancer, teacher and board member in the performing arts industry, as well as an arts manager for major arts organisations before becoming a classroom teacher. During my high school experience, I was heavily involved in the choreography and development of the Australia wide Rock Eisteddfod, as well as school-based musicals. During my professional performing career, I travelled overseas representing Australia, including to East Timor (Timor Leste) and performed as part of the televised *Tour of Duty Christmas Concert 1999/2000* with the ADF.

The Queensland Department of Education has threatened termination if I do not get the COVID-19 vaccination. I have several health issues that put me at high risk of adverse reactions. My doctor wrote an exemption letter explaining my personal situation. It was denied. As a result, I will not be able to go back to school in the new year. I will be unemployed.

I continue to experience repetitive pressure from my employer to get the vaccination even though my doctor has supported my application for an exemption. I don't understand why this right has been taken away from me. I am extremely anxious about the pressure I am under as the vaccine injury risk in my situation, outweighs the benefit.

This is very upsetting and stressful.

The mandates have put enormous pressure on my family. I have a daughter still at school and a mortgage, as well as the usual financial commitments most families have. The situation has put a dampener on Christmas as a result and has changed our future plans.

My concern for my students is that they will be forced to have a vaccine that has not yet completed clinical trials. I fear for their health, both short and long term. I fear for their mental health, already suffering after two years of uncertainty and rapid change. They are confused about what is going on in their country and around the world.

What I would like to see happen is that the mandates stop immediately, and the Australian community is given the opportunity to make their own considered decision in conjunction with their medical health professional.

As a matter of urgency, I would like to see doctors' autonomy restored.

Educator 285

My name is M and I am an Experienced full-time Primary Teacher in the city of Ipswich, Queensland. I am currently employed by the Department of Education. I am 54 years old and have been registered to teach in Qld for just over 2 decades. My gifts as a teacher are Language and Literacy, working with students from diverse backgrounds and helping students achieve their educational goals.

Over the past few weeks I have written to my principal multiple times expressing my concerns and requesting a risk assessment outlining the transmission risks of COVID19 in my workplace. This request has not been met. However, I have requested and have been granted (all of my) long service leave for part of Term 1.

The end of the current school year and the start of the school holidays has definitely not been a pleasant time for me. After hearing of the mandates placed upon us by Queensland Government, I was filled with panic and extreme anxiety at the thought of potentially losing the job I love, which solely provides for my family. This is because I am exercising the right to choose the medicines and medical treatments that are best for MY body and therefore rejecting the experimental, and in my opinion, unethical vaccines currently available for COVID19.

Furthermore, I am very concerned for the welfare and wellbeing of myself and my two daughters, and the uncertainty of my job in 2022. My concerns are: Will I be able to pay my bills, including my new mortgage? What might happen if I cannot pay them? Will I be able to provide the basic needs for my family? Will I lose my job?

As every teacher does at the start of a school year, I would be preparing earnestly ensuring a smooth transition for my new students and their families. Unfortunately, this will not happen this year as I will be on leave. Come Week 1 Term 1 2022, I will be unable to welcome my students into their new classroom. Taking LSL is an effort on my part to 'buy myself some time' while I seek medical advice and decide on a course of action which is right for me.

In essence, what I am asking for is that the current mandates be dropped, allowing myself and all other teachers to return to work at the start of 2022. I am asking that I would have the freedom to choose the type of vaccine and medical treatment that I feel is right for my body, without fear of coercion. I am asking for a Risk Assessment to be performed by the principal of the school where I work.

In closing, many teachers and members of the wider community have already chosen to be inoculated, and others have been coerced to do so against their will by the government, and in turn their employer, colleagues or their family. This is not the freedom that our forefathers fought for.

Educator 286

As a teaching Principal in a small remote school, I am writing to express my deep concerns about the impact of your recent vaccine mandate on all staff and volunteers in schools. I do not believe that you have fully considered the impact that this mandate will have on schools across our state, but particularly on those in rural and regional areas.

I don't believe the data supports the need for this mandate in the first place. All the evidence shows that children (other than those with co-morbidities) are at very low risk of being made seriously ill as a result of contracting Covid-19.

There is plenty of data to suggest that even the double vaccinated are both catching and transmitting the Covid-19 virus to others, so even if every adult a child comes into contact with is fully vaccinated, they could still get sick.

This decision tramples all over the individual's right to choose for themselves. Whatever happened to 'My body, my choice'? Why is it that Queenslanders can choose to abort their unborn babies for any reason and at any time (which is literally killing a child), but I, as an educated adult, am not allowed to refuse to have a medical procedure that can actually kill or severely injure me? Every day more stories are coming out about Queenslanders being hospitalised and/or incapacitated as a direct result of these MRNA vaccines.

Even with all that aside, the impact on schools is going to be horrendous.

Every principal I have spoken to is going to lose staff because of this mandate.

In rural and regional areas these losses will be exacerbated by vaccinated staff taking up roles in schools opening up in the South-East corner, as staff leave those schools over the mandate.

Teacher numbers were already critical in Queensland before this mandate, with many schools unable to hire staff or find TRS to fill in when their own staff were sick. This mandate will simply increase this problem exponentially!

P&C's, which are often the heartbeat of schools, will also lose volunteers, some because they choose not to have one of these MRNA vaccines, others because they do not like the draconian approach that is being taken. Who will run our uniform shops? Our tuck shops? Our fundraising events? It's hard enough to get volunteers as it is. Your decision will only make things much worse.

The line we hear over and over again is "we are just following the CHO's directives". Yet your instructions/press release came out two weeks before we saw the directive! The CHO should be independent, looking at the data and making recommendations, not 'making up' directives to try and keep up with your press releases!

The lack of consultation has been astounding. I contacted a number of people in HR and admin in the department after getting notification of your mandate, and none of them knew how this was going to be implemented, what the process or outcomes would be for those who chose not to comply, etc. It's been two weeks now - and I still don't have an answer to my simple question about my school laptop and access to the departments network. Will my access be locked out when I don't have my first jab by December 17, or will it be when I am initially suspended, or will it not be until I am terminated - no one knows!

The timing is terrible. To put something like this on Principals and staff in the last two weeks of term, when we are doing reports, interviews, staffing for 2022, end of year processes, AIP rollovers, etc is really bad form. Why not bring it out early in Term 4, so we have time to consider our options and actually plan ahead? Now schools won't know who is in or out officially until the

start of the 2022 school year! How is a principal supposed to set up classes for next year when he or she doesn't even know which teachers are going to be available to work? The hiring process takes about a month - assuming you can get any applicants - what happens to the students in those classes that don't have a teacher in the meantime?

The additional workload and pressure on Principals is immense. We have no idea what's going on ourselves, yet we have all of our staff looking to us for guidance, advice and support. You WILL lose Principals over this mandate, not just those who choose not to comply, but also those who cannot or will not carry the burden of trying to make things work, when you have decided to make them unworkable.

The pain and anguish this is causing our students is incalculable. All across our states teachers have had to say good bye to classes and students they love and care deeply about, knowing that they probably won't be back next year. Speaking to a parent and being told "there were tears in our house last night" is absolutely heartbreaking - and the responsibility lies directly at your feet.

I would ask these questions:

- How many teachers, cleaners, aides and admin staff have to leave the department for you to reconsider this mandate?
- How many classes shut down, with students gathered into a common area for supervision because there isn't enough staff to cover the classes?
- How many principals need to quit or go out on stress leave?
- How many schools need to move to fully remote learning, because they can't get staff?
- How many schools need to basically shut down?
- How many students need to move to home schooling or distance ed because parents don't want to be a part of this system that penalises staff for simply wanting to look after their own health, or don't have a class in their local school to put them in?

Here's what I want: remove the mandate on school staff OR release all the data used to support this as an essential step to keep our children safe. Stop asking us to 'believe the science' and actually show us the science.

In conclusion, as an educator, I am constantly reminded by our regional staff that we need to differentiate all that we do, to consider each individual student's needs when making decisions about learning and discipline. Apparently this is a government priority, coming all the way from the minister and the directors. Yet here we have the leader of our state putting out a 'One size fits all' (it doesn't!) mandate that applies to everyone while making no allowances for individual circumstances, needs or priorities. The hypocrisy is astounding.

Educator 287

Hello, my name is K, I'm a 26-year-old female that works full-time as an Educational Interpreter in secondary education, interpreting in the classroom using Auslan to provide inclusion for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. The school I work for in Brisbane has a large Deaf department, which provides access in the classroom for them that most schools cannot. Educational Interpreters are rare, and Queensland does not have enough, which is why hubs like these are so vital. I also have a Bachelor of Business, which has been useful when helping students prepare for future careers, understanding the relevance of what they are learning and how they can apply this.

My employer has told me to contact the regional office concerning the mandates put on those working in education and said that they were just following what they were told. I broke into tears in my boss's office and told them that I did not want to lose my job because I loved it, but I also did not want to be coerced into having a medical procedure, such as this vaccine. They told me that it was out of their hands, and it was my choice, potentially lose my job or have the COVID vaccine. I have never felt so defeated and demeaned in my life.

I've had to listen to my co-worker's rant and go on about how those that are unvaccinated are awful people who don't care about others, that they should be rounded up and put into camps. I had to sit there and listen to people that I have worked with and respected for years speak like that. The amount of bullying, abuse and harassment that happened towards the end of the school year is unspeakable, my boss only encouraged it as they felt the same way.

Coercion is still happening; I get emails and texts asking if I've got the vaccine yet on a weekly basis. I have decided not to have the vaccine due to health and religious reasons (both are not acceptable as grounds for exemptions). This is not a choice of job or no job for me, if I get the vaccine, I have a high risk of getting sick because of health issues and I will lose my whole community, friends, and family, by being shunned/excommunicated. If I don't get it, I will lose my job, my income and then because I won't be able to pay the bills become homeless.

Overall, I am facing losing my job, because I refuse to allow someone else to force me into a medical procedure that I do not want.

My mental health is down the drain, I cry at the drop of a hat due to the stress of possibly losing my job and all the stresses that come with being potentially unemployed. My family all work in Education as well, so they are in the same boat. Stress and anxiety are high, depression is kicking in, we are falling apart and told that we are the problem.

When I started working at schools, the kids gave me a purpose, a reason to get up and do my best. Now without that, my mental health has been terrible, I've contemplated suicide, and I can't go see a psychologist, most only see those that are double vaccinated. I've spoken to my doctor which was a horrific experience, they said that despite my mental health and the potential loss of all support systems I should get the vaccine and be proud to be in the majority.

My family is a wreck, we moved to Australia for a better life, more opportunities, somewhere that we thought we would be safe, now I don't know if we made the right choice.

The students I support at my school are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, at the majority of schools in Queensland they would not get any of this support, as Educational Interpreters are rare. I worry about their education and access in the classroom. They are smart and capable, but because of the barrier they easily fall behind. What will happen to them? The community around them, their families and friends, without access this will create more separation between them.

My concern is that the education system is failing them more than it already has. That their self-confidence/esteem will plummet as barriers are unable to be taken down anymore, that mental health issues will skyrocket and more will drop out.

Educator 288

My name is M. I am an early years trained teacher and I have taught for 15 years.

I am passionate about special education and have always advocated for inclusive classrooms. I have taught half of my career in the X. The other half in my home town X on the Sunshine Coast. I grew up on a strawberry farm near the school, and attended the school I now teach at, as a child for my primary education. It is my home. The principal and deputy have known me since I was five years old. I love my school and community.

My gift is building relationships. I love to build and nurture learning communities. I love to have parents actively involved in our classrooms. My classroom door is always open. I like to showcase the inclusive learning environment we create as a family.

In 2021, our family chose to travel Australia. I have registered to teach in the Northern Territory and Tasmania and have relief taught throughout these states. I also offered my service to remote communities in outback Queensland. I am humbled to say, that at every single school I have had the privilege of teaching at, the principal has offered me long term employment, or asked if I can stay longer. I have been valued and appreciated at every school across three states.

We eventually travelled to Tasmania as it was the last state that hadn't mandated the vaccine for teachers. I was offered multiple full time positions across the state for 2022. My principal in term 4 that I was doing relief teaching for, called me into his office in week 10. He stated how much he valued my professionalism and the way I had built relationships with staff and students in such a short time. He then asked about my vaccination status. When I explained that I was undecided about having the vaccine, he said that I needed to get it to work at the school in 2022. "Please consider getting it", he stated. I am the financial supporter for our family. I went home and cried and cried. If I didn't get the vaccine, I could no longer teach and I could no longer provide for my family. I have three children. After the announcements about mandates for teachers came in, I don't sleep well. I am now irritable with my children, and I am emotional. Simple things cause me to cry. I am tired, and confused about what my future holds. I am to return to my permanent full time position on the Sunshine Coast for 2023. If I am not working full time in 2023, I will not be able to pay for our mortgage.

Three of my best friends are also teachers and are losing their jobs. I fear that schools will not cope with the number of teachers sacked. I know there is already a teacher shortage. I have seen it firsthand. In the Torres Straits, my classes were always overloaded, and if one teacher was away, classes were combined. The loss of potentially hundreds of brilliant teachers due to them not taking an experimental vaccine is crazy. There is already a teacher shortage! Classes will be overloaded, teachers will be under even more stress due to loss of colleagues, and it is the students will suffer! The school community will suffer. When there is no one to run the tuck shops, the uniform shops, help with reading groups, drive the buses. My mother has worked at after school care for 15 years. She has now lost her job. The after school care cannot open next year, as 6 out of 8 staff are unvaccinated. Parents are also removing their children in mass numbers, and enrolling in home schooling to avoid this chaos. I am a parent who has done the same. I am an educator and a parent, and the ripple effect of these mandates is damaging to so many people in our school communities.

I want these mandates removed, and our education system back on track. Vaccinated people can catch Covid and spread it. Then why discriminate against unvaccinated teachers and school staff???

Educator 289

My name is B. I am a secondary school teacher of senior Mathematics and Agricultural Science in X, 1.5 hrs west of Cairns. I transferred up here after graduating with a BA of Arts and Education (Majoring in Mathematics) 3 years ago. In this rural area, there are only a handful of teachers that have undertaken university level math courses and feel I can give students the opportunity to engage with these harder senior subjects.

From the outset of the mandates, there has only been communication from the director general. Our principals and all our deputies (except one) are acting in their positions and this continues into next year. There has been no communication about this from anyone within the region.

The mandates came as a surprise to me and my family as we were always told from the beginning of the pandemic that schools were low risk settings and were one of the only professions to keep working during lockdowns at the beginning of 2020. I had never thought about getting vaccinated, not because I am against vaccines, but because I would like to see the current vaccines complete all testing phases which is usually a requirement of vaccines before being administered to the public. We have also had no local cases near us and the town is good at following hygiene procedures in all settings. These reasons caused concern getting the news that I had to be vaccinated to keep my job. I am a husband and father of 2 children and have moved up north away from all my family and friends on the Gold Coast. Our support circles are very limited up here and I need to keep my job as I am the sole income earner. This made the decision difficult as I do not wish to be vaccinated until there is a vaccine that has passed all phases, although I need my income to support my family. As the decision is to lose our house and livelihood or be vaccinated against my will, I was coerced into getting my first vaccine against mine and my wife's choice.

This has taken a major toll on my mental wellbeing. Starting off with judgmental and segregating comments from staff members, not feeling welcomed in staffrooms caused much anxiety and depression. The week leading up to the 17th of December, I suffered from insomnia and depression which affected my home life with my daughters who do not understand the situation we are in. I suffered more depression once making the decision to be vaccinated instead of lose my job as I broke my own morals in order to support my family. This put me in a position that made me feel less of a father and husband.

I am concerned for my students if I did not return as in our area we have trouble filling teaching positions with quality teachers. I am one of two teachers who have the content knowledge to deliver the high-level mathematics that high achieving students need to succeed in university courses within my school. The community relies on these students bringing these skills to the agriculture and mining sectors of our region to ensure these industries are viable into the future.

I would like to see the mandates lifted allowing quality teachers to return to their jobs regardless of their vaccination status to ensure high quality education is delivered to the students. Rural communities already struggle to provide enough teachers to students, let alone teachers that are highly qualified and love their job. Vaccination is not the only successful way to combat the spread.

Many scientists concur that masks, sanitation and social distancing are effective ways to manage the spread and this was evident during the initial lockdowns in which schools were still open and running. There is also rapid antigen testing that could be used and is used in many other countries for varying reasons. It is also well known in the scientific community that children are both less likely to spread the virus and even less likely to suffer any major complications if infected. In a time of uncertainty in many family situations, the one constant for many students is school and this is just one more disruption to an already difficult past few years for many.

Educator 290

My name is K, I am 56 and I have been a School Administrative Officer for 15 years. I work at a local state primary school on the Gold Coast. I work in the front office and perform a variety of duties. I am also the Enrolment Officer and I have the pleasure of answering all enrolment enquiries, providing information to new families on the enrolment process and welcoming these new families into our wonderful school community.

Like all Qld Education staff, we were advised via email from the Director General of the vaccination mandate. At that time, my Line Manager was unable to provide me with any further information as to the implications. To give myself some time to consider my options, I applied for Long Service Leave, however as at the date of writing this I have still not received a response whether it has been approved or rejected. My Principal has advised me verbally prior to the end of the school year that any LSL requests will be unlikely to be approved.

The mandate has turned my world upside down. The possibility of losing my job because I am uncomfortable taking a new vaccine is something I never thought I would be faced with. This will have an immense impact on my life financially, professionally and personally. My job is my financial security and without it I am not sure how I will be able to manage. I am fortunate that I have a supporting partner, however he faces the prospect of possible mandates in his employment in the future. We have a small amount of savings, but I will need to find another job as soon as possible. I am too young to retire and do not want to have to go onto Centrelink benefits. Like everyone we have bills to pay and financial commitments we must meet. Also, my career goals and ambitions will all be destroyed. I have worked very hard over the past 15 years to acquire my knowledge and experience and will be faced with trying to start a new career all over again.

The pressure, stress and worry over this mandate has been immense for myself, my partner and my extended family. It's the last thing I think about at night before falling asleep and the first thing I think about when I wake up. It feels like I have lost a loved one or suffered a relationship breakdown. I cannot underestimate the impact it has had on my mental health.

I am currently the longest serving Administration Officer at my school. I am very experienced and have a wealth of knowledge gained over years and am often called upon to give advice to my superiors. I have very close connections with the school community which takes years to build up. Parents and community members know me well and trust that I will do all I can for them. I care about the students, the community and our school. It will be a very sad day if that is taken away from me.

I am asking the Queensland Government to reconsider these mandates. It was shown recently that as soon as the Queensland border opened and only vaccinated people allowed to enter the state that Covid immediately spread to other people whether they were vaccinated or not vaccinated. Therefore, vaccinated school employees can and will spread Covid to others. This shows that the mandates are completely unnecessary. Also, statistics have shown that Covid is a mild illness in children which they recover from quickly and gain a robust natural immunity. Now with the emergence and spread of Omicron, the government have told us that everyone will contract it. If this is the case, why do we need these mandates?

Please allow us to return to the jobs we love so we can continue to serve our precious children and our school communities.

Educator 291

I am a mature aged, female teacher in a remote Indigenous Community in Far North Queensland. I have been the year 5/6 teacher at my school for 3 years. My plan has been to complete a minimum of 5 years here before moving to another Indigenous Community. That in itself, is somewhat unique for a classroom teacher in said remote areas. Most complete 2 years to gain permanency, then are gone. My students are from low socio-economic backgrounds, several are, or have been 'in-care' and the majority of their previous generations have experienced negative interactions during their own education – which for many has been minimal.

I build and enjoy great pride in the strong relationships I have with my students and their families, borne, I believe, from my commitment to consistency and high expectations, both academically and behaviourally. My students know that I believe they are as capable as those from 'leafy, green suburbs'. This has seen improvements in my student's engagement, scholastic outcomes, behavioural choices, self-worth/belief and has created positive experiences within the school system. In the last weeks of term 4, 2021, I had students happily telling me how many school days left until they moved up to my class. I cannot describe the empowerment I feel, knowing students and their families, including those who are 'labelled' disengaged/with behavioural issues, or who are 'in-care', KNOW I have faith in them and will do all I can for them to achieve.

My students must leave the security of their homeland, their Country, to attend high school on completion of year 6, as there is no secondary option here. I spend countless hours incorporating this concept into our lessons and hold meaningful class discussions around the concept, to prepare them for the 'unknown' that is to become their reality. To me, this learning is vital as many travel to a regional coastal city once, maybe twice a year for a few days, so their new reality and homesickness is in addition to the social/emotional challenges of high school. The responses I have received from my Principal regarding my requests about mandated vaccinations for teachers have been to direct my queries elsewhere within Education Qld. 'Elsewhere' does not know my input and value to my student's lives.

I am deeply concerned for my students reaction of I am not to return to our classroom. I believe the impact will see social/emotional/behavioural and academic decline, not to mention a group who experience long lasting negative experiences within education contexts.

When Covid-19 saw the lock down of Far North QLD in 2020, I did not leave my location during the Easter break, so did see my husband/family for 6 months in an effort to protect my Community. School was low-risk and I cannot understand what has altered to see us now a high risk environment, particularly for one so isolated. During the last 3 years, I have taken ZERO sick days. I have never had a flu shot, have not had a cold/flu in 28 years and have not required antibiotics in 32 years. I believe I have a strong immune system, as during this time, many around me have been ill. My Community has a high vaccination rate.

Should my students be denied the opportunities I have successfully provided previously? Should I be denied the opportunity to contribute, whole-heartedly, towards 'closing the gap'? I physically lose sleep over these matters. These little lives matter. I have worked hard to successfully create pathways for two-way trust between my students/families, and am ready, willing and able to continue to do so. I fear that mandated vaccination will see the return of broken trust for many. That is simply not fair, nor reinforces the government's call for reconciliation or closing the gap, quite the opposite. I am not alone. It is my right to implore a rethink of mandated vaccinations. It is your responsibility to rethink.

Educator 292

I'm a Male High school teacher in Brisbane. I have given 4 years of service to education. I have a bachelor's degree in music and a Graduate Diploma in Secondary Music Education. My students love me because I really see them for who they are, and they feel that I understand them. I love making abstract concepts understandable by finding them in the real world.

The vaccine mandates for QLD teachers have divided my school and my family. I've lost relationships with family members, colleagues, and students. I've had to leave my guardian class of 4 years and am devastated that I will not be able to see these students graduate year 12. I have been coerced into taking the vaccine, or else I will lose my job. This is called consent under economic duress and is not informed consent free of coercion.

I have experienced sadness, depression, anxiety, and stress as a result of these vaccine mandates for QLD teachers.

I am concerned that my student's educational experience will be negatively impacted as less experienced teachers need to fill my role. There is a national shortage of teachers, and especially male teachers. So as a male high school teacher I am very rare. I am also concerned for my guardian class who will be losing the one person at the school who has known and taught them from class 6 onwards (they're now in class 10). I have a unique and irreplaceable relationship with these students and their families.

I am asking for the vaccine mandates for QLD teachers, and Australian teachers to be revoked.

99.7% of Covid cases survive, schools are not high-risk settings, vaccines do not stop transmission or infection, children are much less likely to contract Covid and adults should have the right to choose how to treat Covid. Being forced to choose the vaccine or unemployment is consent by economic duress.

Educator 293

My name is S and I have been working as a full time music teacher in both private and public schools all over the Gold Coast for 25 years. I have both a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Education. I am currently an “Experienced Senior Teacher” with EQ at present specialising in instrumental music. I absolutely love my job and think my greatest asset is building relationships with students and their families. I get to teach the same children starting in year 3 right through to year 12 so I am invested in the long term outcomes for these children.

Unfortunately, my medical team of doctors and specialists have advised me not to get inoculated with the current vaccinations available in Australia as they will cause more damage to my immune system. I asked my employer to use my long service leave next year and was denied with the reason being “it will leave too many schools short of a teacher.” I then asked for leave without pay, also denied. This was to give me time to wait for Covax to be released. I have sent applications for risk assessments which were met with hostility and have been told she will not respond to any further communication on the matter. After 15 years in this particular school, this has broken me.

I will be losing my dream job in January because I am not prepared to risk my fragile health and go against my doctor’s advice. Unfortunately my doctor has been gagged by Aphra so is unable to write me an exemption or she will be investigated and possibly re-registered. I feel I have no choice – either I get the vaccination and have a high risk of further complications due to my ongoing health issues, or I face unemployment.

As a result of the stress, my fiancé and I (of 9 years) have broken up and now I face being a single parent with 3 children and also unemployed. I have been told I am no longer welcome to play in the local community orchestra. My parents have called me selfish and an idiot and I have actually contemplated suicide for the first time in my life. I have got a mental health plan but cannot get in to see a psychologist until May 30 2022. I have a mortgage and am salary sacrificing my car through my wages. I am not sure what I am going to do. I am not sleeping, often vomiting and have lost weight from the stress. I am unsure how to care for my 3 children (one of whom is suffering from severe depression atm). I have never felt so low.

I am so worried that our freedom is slipping away. Discrimination is discrimination and you can’t sugar coat it. Not being able to take my children to see a movie or visit a theme park makes me feel like scum and not worthy to be in society. I have never discriminated in my classroom – all are welcome and the wider the diversity – the richer our experiences. Being a music teacher is great to demonstrate this – I have a world globe in my class and teach the history, geography and culture behind all the pieces of music I teach. Isn’t this the most important thing of all to teach our children – to be inclusive and respectful to all? This is what we should all be aiming for.

Educator 294

My name is T and I am 29 years old. My teaching journey began in Brisbane in 2014. Since then, I have lived and taught in primary schools across Gympie, Mackay, X, X and X. A few weeks before the December 17th mandate was announced, I put in my resignation from my permanent position in a state school to take up a position in a college in X as a Year 5 teacher. I am now facing termination for refusing one of the currently available vaccines.

The reason I became a teacher was to inspire children to love learning and to do something valuable with their lives. I left my students this year with one message: You can do anything you set your mind to. If I could do it, you can too.

I was born in the midst of an Eastern European civil war in 1993. My family fled to Australia: the land of freedom and equality. After a lifetime of battling discrimination and fighting for privilege, I dedicated 7 years of hard work to establish a fulfilling, well-paying career. I now find myself living in the spare room of my brother in law's house with my also unemployed husband. Two professional, hardworking, former government employees, now jobless for refusing a vaccine.

Since the mandates, I have been excluded, isolated and discriminated against in the workplace. I have been called a selfish conspiracy theorist. I was told I needed to think of my students instead of myself. I was told that if I just do what I'm told, it would make life easier for my principal because she wouldn't have to try to replace me. I was told that I was overreacting. Despite being concerned about experiencing an adverse reaction due to my medical history, I was told that that my reasons for refusing the currently available vaccines were unreasonable and that I could face disciplinary action. Me? A dedicated rule-follower who strives to be an exemplary employee will now face termination? These mandates have made it acceptable for people to berate those who disagree with them. Now my work ethic, integrity and expertise no longer matter. Now I am simply: unvaccinated.

These mandates have affected me in ways I never thought possible. I have been shunned and made fun of by friends and family who don't understand my stance. By 30, my husband and I planned to own a home and be starting a family. My husband has been a police officer for 6 years. We sacrificed so much for his job. Despite the traumas of his work he was the calmest, happiest, most positive person I've ever known. Since being stood down he has been diagnosed with severe depression and adjustment disorder. He now spends his days wandering around the house, hiding from the gossiping townsfolk, doubting everything he's ever worked for and questioning whether he will ever be able to provide for his family again. I have experienced constant panic and even suicidal thoughts. I have found myself wondering things like: what is the point of living in a world like this? Why can't they see how badly people are suffering from these mandates? When will this end? How much more can we take? Where should we draw the line - am I willing to live in a tent? Will I ever have children?

I am concerned for my students and for my future children. Parents should be able to send their children to school without having to worry that their child will be given medical treatment without parent permission. Parents should also trust that the people teaching their children are those of the highest caliber and merit, and not just replacements for teachers who were terminated for their medical beliefs and choices. I am afraid that forced jabs are just the beginning of removing Australians' bodily rights and freedoms. And our children will suffer the most from this.

What I want is very simple - I want my bodily rights and choices to be respected. I want to choose what medical treatment I accept and decline, without the threat of losing a career I worked so hard to create. I want independent medical and scientific professionals to tell me my options and the government to allow me to make my choice without coercion, intimidation or threat of segregation. I just want the rights and freedoms which I have always had since the day I set foot in this beautiful country.

Our country cannot function without the honorable, ethical workers who are being pushed out of their careers. Please don't allow this to continue. Stand with us. Stand on the right side of history.

Educator 295

My name is K and I am an inclusive education teacher at a primary school in South East Queensland, working with, supporting and celebrating students with disabilities and learning difficulties to be the best they can be. I work with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Hearing Impairments, Intellectual Impairments, Down Syndrome, AD/HD, Dyslexia and many more diverse needs.

To my students, I am a fierce advocate. I work hard every day to make sure they can be whoever they want to be. I am their cheerleader who supports them in everything they do. I celebrate the achievements, big and little, and I am someone who will be there for them no matter what.

To my students' parents, I am a carer. I am the person that they entrust to look after their most precious little person every day, helping them be a friend, be a class member and achieve their goals.

To my colleagues, I am a friend and support network. I provide the support to collaboratively create an inclusive environment for all students. I am there for everything - from reading groups, to maths lessons, to individual social skills, to show and tell, to music lessons, to Christmas concerts and playground duties – making sure every child can access these equitably.

To you, I am unvaccinated.

Since the vaccination mandate was announced, I have had severe anxiety that has impacted my mental and physical health. This looks like –

Not sleeping. Not eating. Migraines. Hair falling out. Not coping.

You see, I have trypanophobia – a fear of needles and have had since I was 9. If you asked any of my children at school, they would tell you that their teacher is brave at everything except needles and they would be correct. A typical visit to the doctors takes months for me to book in, sleepless nights and nausea so severe I cannot eat. This isn't a secret at school. I believe transparency is the key in creating safe and supportive environments for children to confidently and authentically develop their identity. My colleagues, students and admin are aware of my trypanophobia.

Every day since the mandate was announced, I have had countless attempts from colleagues trying to 'convince me' to get the jab. I have had colleagues poke me in the arms where needles go, make rude comments "just get over it", "put your big girl pants on" and "don't be ridiculous" / call me names "sook", "anti-vaxxer" and "the reason we are still in lockdown". I never in a million years thought I would see or hear this disgusting commentary from people I considered friends who've adopted the coercion endorsed and reinforced continuously in the media and EQ's communication on this matter. When speaking to my admin team about this, I was told "be firm with yourself and just do it [get the vaccination]" and to "take someone with me who will make me do it [get the vaccination]". I was completely and utterly heartbroken. I am terrified of the impact this will have on my students at school. How do you expect that I teach them: to be individuals with critical thinking skills, have autonomy over their choices and bodies and to have the ability and capacity to say no - when I am unable to demonstrate this for them?

I firmly believe that this mandate is a disgusting violation of the inclusive education practices, legislation and environment that the government prides itself of fostering in the education system.

I am an inclusive educator and this goes against everything I stand for.

Educator 296

My name is D and I have been a teacher since I graduated in 2001. For the last 10 years I have undertaken contract and supply teaching work primarily as a Maths teacher in the public sector. I have worked in both the private and public sector. My preferred school was X State High School in which I have been on a Maths contract for the last 4 years.

I have a Bachelor of Science (Biology), Bachelor of Education and a Cert II in IT – that is 8 years of qualifications. Next year, I won't be teaching. My skills, experience and passion will be gone from the education industry, and I am already seeking employment elsewhere relying on my science skills and previous work history. Why?

Simply because of the vaccine mandates. The risk to my personal health is far too extreme as my family has a history of blood cots, strokes and heart issues.

Since the mandates were announced, my employers have been absent from any discussion. All matters are simply being referred to head office and the school has admitted they have no say in this process.

During the last month we have been absolutely bullied and harassed by constant emails and texting about the vaccine survey from the Education Department, even after we responded. If this was a work colleague, we would be able to file complaints.

We have not received any mRNA vaccine and will refuse to do so despite the constant threats, coercion and punishment (giving vaccinated people "freedom" is really punishing those who have chosen not to have an mRNA vaccine). This action by our state government is disgraceful. My wife and I both spent 2 weeks recovering after the news as we both will lose our jobs next year. We have suffered anxiety and insomnia over concerns about how we will look after our 2 teenage boys next year. However, due to personal health concerns, we will not give in and take the mRNA vaccine – we have to stand strong with our own beliefs and find a way to survive.

We have concerns that next year all students will not be getting a valued education – strong teachers with morals are leaving the Education Department. Personally, I can name about 10 staff. All we ask is that all mandates get reconsidered and revoked as there is no need for them in a democratic society. We should be able to make our personal health choices and when you consider the fact that Covid has a 99% chance of recovery for people under 80 – many people can see that the mandates are simply not about health. We can see that. We know that.

Queensland politicians have had 2 years to understand what Australians want. Freedom. We have looked in horror at how Australian citizens were treated in Victoria and thought it would never be allowed to happen here in QLD – but we were wrong, and it is happening. Hence I have no option but to look after my own interests and leave the Education Department to look for employment in other industries that will not discriminate.

Educator 297

My name is D. I am a Business Manager in a Sunshine Coast High School. I have worked in Education Queensland for 17 years and I have worked diligently for the department, often working a great many hours without claiming for, such was my dedication to the job.

I am really good at my job with outstanding references from several Principals I have worked under. I have lodged a religious exemption but to date I have not been given any communication from my employer. No direct answers to any of my questions, just a generic response that goes to everyone.

As such, I have been left with grave uncertainty in whether I will be able to return after the holidays or my ability to pay my mortgage and bills come 17th January. I have been forced by this lack of communication from my employer to take all my long service leave until May 2022.

The impact this is all having on my mental health is terrible. Nonstop worry and stress has impacted my family. The distress is unbearable as it's clear my employer has no regards to my mental health through their callous and inhumane treatment of me.

I have been disregarded like a piece of dirt, nor do they have any respect for my rights under the Equal Opportunity Act, which guarantees my right to my deeply held religious convictions.

I want my employer to stop infringing on my rights or of the right of my colleagues who do not want to take this vaccine. I would also like then to follow the science, both the vaccinated and unvaccinated contract and pass on Covid.

The unvaccinated pose no danger to the vaccinated community. Stop this mandate!

Educator 298

I am a 40 year old female. You can call me A. I worked hard to be the first in my family to go to university and received a bachelor's degree in Primary Education. I found a placement in the Logan district and have been blessed to be working at the same school for the past 18 years initially as full time then more recently as a part time permanent. As a primary school teacher, I have taught mostly with the younger children ranging from year 3 down to year 1. My gift as an educator is that I have passion for my career, I love having the ability to be creative and have fun with my lessons. Every kid that walks through my door feels safe, supported and noticed. With me its not just about the education and curriculum it is about guiding these little people to be brave to take on a challenge, resilient to never give up and to motivate them to be the best versions of themselves they can be.

When these vaccination mandates came in my boss spoke with me about my decision and choice. She seemed to also be struggling with the morality of these mandates and repeatedly told me that she had no choice and that these were coming down from higher ups and there was nothing she could do but follow them. She informed me that if I was not vaccinated, I would not be allowed on site as of the 23rd of January. She respectfully listened to my concerns and in the end allowed me to take some long service leave for the first term so that I can sort out my next step.

It has been a most confusing time as no one really knows what to do and what assistance there is for those who are not vaccinated. Due to my decision to not be vaccinated at this time, I have been left with no other options. Although I am grateful for the long service leave that has at least given my family a small window of financial security into the new year the threat of not being allowed onsite and the possible losing of my 18 year long dream career has had impacts on my health and family. I am scared of how the loss of my income is going to impact my ability to support my family in the near future. With bills to pay, a mortgage, school fees and food to buy we are going to have to make some severe cuts and pray that we have the ability to survive on my husband's pay for the time being. I am concerned that when they do officially fire me that I will struggle to make ends meet and find other ways to financially contribute to my family, especially when other employers are threatening the same No jab, No job mentality.

After another very challenging year teaching through this pandemic it has been quite a blow to then be dealing with a loss of my career especially at a time of year we should be celebrating. With the onslaught of emails demanding us to fill in a survey to declare our status, the threatening tone of each email and not knowing where I stand or if I will have a job next year has been contributing severely to my anxiety levels. It honestly feels like I am grieving, 18 years of hard work and dedication, going above and beyond for each of my kids that pass through my classroom, for the friendships I have made with an amazing team, now ripped from me has caused my depression to flare. There are days where all I feel like doing is crying as I watch all I have worked so hard for go down the drain. It may not have mattered to you but it was my whole life.

I have deep concerns for the future of my students. I know the teacher they are getting in to replace me does not have the same passion, dedication, experience or skill that I have when dealing with a range of complex little people. I fear their education is going to have massive disruptions as teacher shortages take effect. My goal was to always make my room a safe place where my students could escape the reality of the pandemic and find a place to take their minds off the constant bombardment of trauma they have had to endure over the last 2 years.

All I am asking for is the ability to do my job. To have the ability to choose to go in a different medical direction rather than be coerced into being vaccinated. The decision should be mine to make. Let me do what I am very good at, that I'm passionate about, just let me teach!

Educator 299

My name is M and I have been employed in both the primary & secondary school sectors in Bundaberg. I spent 4 years working as an Administration Assistant and Library Assistant at X State School before moving to Accounts Receivable Officer at Bundaberg State High School for the past 6 years. My knowledge and experience gained from the completion of a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) will be lost. This knowledge has been invaluable to my current Business Manager as I have been able to reduce her stress and interruptions due to my underlying understanding and ability to reduce errors while decreasing inefficiency and costs to the school. I have often been told that she would not be able to run the Finance office without me.

When the vaccination mandates were introduced I spoke with the Principal and the Business Manager about my concerns of the mRNA vaccine and my current health situation. I was told by the Business Manager not to worry and that she would have to close the Finance section without me. She also advised that surely the school could do a Risk Assessment on an individual basis to allow me to use other PPE and she would speak to the Principal. I formally requested a Risk Assessment for my workspace on three occasions and was informed that my request was forwarded up the chain to Regional Office. I have not heard anything else individually from the Principal or Business Manager.

The constant bombardment of emails and text messages from the Department have been bullying and harassing. The threatening language regarding disciplinary action leading to termination of employment if the vaccination is not taken literally drained the blood from my face. I experience a feeling of dread each time an email or text is received. These communications continue even after the survey was completed. The vaccination mandates do not take into consideration my current health concerns and are using my fear of losing my job to coerce me into having a medical procedure that is not in the best interest for my health.

The threat of losing my job due to the vaccine mandates has had a negative impact on my mental health. Both my husband and I working in the public education system. Unless we bow to the pressure of coercion and have the Covid19 vaccination we lose all of our income in one swoop. We have two teenage boys to support and our ability to do so is being taken away without consultation or looking at the individual risk/benefit analysis for my personal situation. I haven't been able to sleep, have trouble getting out of bed each day and am withdrawing from family and friends. I question my own intelligence and ability to know what is best for myself and my family. This is self-deprecating and leads to further anxiety.

I am afraid. I no longer feel safe in my community, Qld or Australia. I fear for my general safety and that of my children. I always believed that we lived in the lucky country but not anymore. We are not "one and free". I never imagined that mandated vaccination would be tolerated and discrimination encouraged. Students are losing learning opportunities and life experiences as they are unable to attend excursions unless they are vaccinated.

I would like to see the abandonment of the vaccination mandates and the discrimination based on the vaccine passport. I would like to be respected to make my own health decisions and conduct my own risk/benefit analysis to keep myself safe against Covid-19. I would like to feel safe in my freedom to make choices for myself and my family. I would like to be able to earn a living and provide for my children's future.

Educator 300

My name is D and I'm a male senior maths teacher working in the state school system on the Sunshine Coast. I am 52 years old, have a bachelor degree in education (majoring in mathematics) and have been working for Education Queensland for 28 years. I love teaching the higher levels of mathematics, in particular Math Methods and Specialist Mathematics. I also love seeing the look on my students' faces when they "get it", those ah-ha moments.

My employer/principal has been both encouraging and neutral in his responses to this situation, I realise how difficult this has been for him and the administration team. I have only been able to email him and haven't had the opportunity to talk to him face to face as yet.

I have a kidney disease and, as a result of this and the stress of the job, high blood pressure, which I'm taking medication for. Despite this medication and due to the stress of the mandates, my blood pressure has increased and I've needed to take sick leave from the start of next year.

I feel extremely coerced into getting the vaccinations, and having researched the dangers of these vaccinations extensively am very reluctant to taking them. I feel it is against all human rights to being forced to have the vaccines. Where there is risk, and these are widely known, there must be a choice. My concerns with the vaccines include the widely reported occurrences of myocarditis and pericarditis, I have a family history of cardiovascular disease.

These mandates have caused an enormous amount of stress, I have been sick and run down ever since I heard about the mandates and the consequences of not taking the vaccines. Some days I struggle to get out of bed or off the couch. My usual active and healthy lifestyle has come to a stop and this has caused me to gain weight, which in turn has affected my mental health.

During 2021, I had a year 11 Specialist Maths class that I was taking into year 12 in 2022. As this subject is very difficult to teach there won't be another teacher who will be able to take this class. These students are the pride and joy of the school and state. They are the brightest minds we have and now they won't get the guidance required to realise their potential.

I would like the government to realise the virus isn't as harmful as they are trying to portray (7 deaths out of 5 033 cases = 99.86% survival rate - <https://www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/case-numbers-and-statistics>) and lift not only the mandates but the other restrictions placed on the people of Queensland. The government also needs to know these mandates and restrictions are affecting the population more than the actual virus, and we the people have rights which are being taken from us and we would like them back.

Educator 301

I have been teaching in the independent education sector for 2.5 years since completing my Master of Primary Teaching. The decision to return to university to study teaching at age 31 was the best career decision I had ever made. I was made permanent at my school as soon as my first 2 years of service was complete. Teaching is not just a job for me. Every day I know I am making a difference in the lives of the little people I teach. My specialty area is working with children with disabilities.

I am now 35 years old and 12 weeks pregnant with my first baby. Although my doctor is very sympathetic to my situation and makes no attempt to coerce me into getting vaccinated, she is simply not permitted to issue me a temporary medical exemption. Out of respect for my employer and my students, during the last week of school for 2021 I told my principal of my decision not to vaccinate whilst pregnant to allow her ample time to find another teacher for my 2022 class. Thankfully my principal was respectful and compassionate towards my situation, but ultimately her hands were tied.

In an effort to still receive the maternity leave I am entitled to, my principal granted me 4 weeks of Leave Without Pay commencing term 1 2022 followed by very early maternity leave. Even though my principal has done all she can to help me receive the maternity leave I am entitled to, I will still earn \$16,000 less than I would if I could work until I am 34 weeks pregnant.

I took 2 days of sick leave when the pending mandates were announced due to extreme anxiety. I was afraid of judgment and criticism from my colleagues, plus being stood down and losing my maternity leave entitlements. This has been an immensely testing time for myself and my partner considering we are also expecting our first baby.

I am very concerned for the innocent students that will suffer because of these mandates. The inevitable teacher shortage will be devastating not only for their learning but their general wellbeing. They need stability. They need the teachers they know and trust. They need leaders that are open-minded, kind and non-discriminatory.

Temporary medical exemptions should be available for pregnant women nationwide, not just in South Australia. The double standards are confusing and inequitable. Pregnant women are generally exempt from mandatory participation in medical trials due to ethical considerations. These vaccinations should be no different.

Educator 302

I'm a female primary teacher, known in this context by the initial M. I was a casual relief teacher working at local schools in the Redlands, Queensland. I'm 39 years old and have 13 years of service. I have a degree, a graduate diploma and a Masters. My gift as an Educator is my work adaptability and flexibility, being able to step into a classroom and adapt lesson plans as needed and understand the need to be flexible in my teaching approach to meet different styles.

As I am a casual relief teacher I have dealt directly with Queensland Education, Human Resources. Following my third request for a risk assessment I received the following response "I note that you are requesting specific information from the Department relating to the COVID-19 vaccination which is outside the remit of the Department...I remain hopeful that you will be able to meet the criteria necessary for a Department of Education employee to satisfy their employment obligations".

These mandates have impacted the well-being of both my family and I in so many ways. I have suffered from increased anxiety, sleep disturbance, depression, headaches, isolation and segregation. I would go as far as saying the mandates are a form of coercive control. The emails sent by Queensland Teachers Union and Queensland Education have used the following coercive language: "If you have not received your second dose...the CHO has placed a prohibition on you continuing to work in an education setting...the need to comply with the CHO direction...All people who are delivering a service on these sites will need to have had their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination by 17 December 2021...my key message to you is to get vaccinated...I strongly encourage you...arrange your vaccination as soon as possible".

The impact all of this is having on my mental health is both psychologically and emotional. I have been unable to cope as well as I did prior to this. I feel trapped, limited freedoms, fear of the unknown, losing my income and my career. Being unable to go places as a family due to segregation, I feel like my whole sense of self has been lost.

My concerns for my students/community is definitely the loss of continuity of teaching staff. School has been the one thing in all this chaos where there is some form of predictability.

I want the mandates to end, stop the fear, and stop the segregation.

Covid 19 has never scared me; I want to make that very clear. I am more scared of the long-term impact the vaccines and mandates will have on everyone's health and well-being. I am scared of the loss of Freedoms, Human Rights, Human Compassion and Common sense.

Educator 303

With great sadness and disturbing emotional distress here I am. Sitting in front of my computer, on my annual school holidays, typing a letter about my personal stance on the vaccination mandate enforced by Education Queensland as at 10am on Tuesday 30th November, 2021.

For over 6.5 years I have been employed as a teacher aide in the public, primary school sector. Currently I am at X State School at the Sunshine Coast holding a permanent 5 day position. My job description is comprehensive and ever evolving, given the small nature of our school. I am based in prep with numerous roster variations which see me happily integrate into grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. I have been a sought after commodity, particularly in the formative year of prep and have always gone above and beyond to ensure my student's needs are met and that I am a beacon of shining light and support for our school community.

Never before in any career, have I been faced with a health mandate that has been bullying and coercive in nature. Particularly one that has an unrealistic timeframe attached i.e. "will need to have had their first dose of the Covid 19 vaccination by 17 December 2021 and the second completed by 23 January 2022". This mandate has not seen any fulfillment from Education Queensland for my request for a risk assessment, provision of MSDS information on the contents of the vaccination and quite frankly, is a request for a medical procedure against my will.

The mandate request has had and will have significant impact on myself and family. My husband and I have 4 children, a property to run, financial obligations and more importantly the potential health risks to a healthy, living being, ME. Anxiety levels are a daily challenge. Not only am I attempting to ensure my own sanity but my immediate family, students, parents and school community members. The enormity of the exercise is above and beyond my counselling, psychotherapy, psychology training yet we are in a work environment where more than ever we are offering support to so many individuals. It has affected my health and I have sought medical and alternative therapies in an attempt to cope with all the stresses. I sought the services of Lifeworks counselling service (Education Queensland funded) on 14th December 2021. Here I was told by a counsellor in no uncertain terms that, "Essentially you need to weigh up your decision. Is it easier to go and receive the vaccination or put yourself through more stress with resisting? I would also advise you go and see a Doctor and get him to prescribe you an anti-depressant!!!!" Really!!

My Principal has been extremely supportive of my decision to undertake further medical and legal undertakings with respect to the mandate. Both he and I know our hands are tied and it is a directive from Queensland Education. I have grave fears for the wellbeing of my past, present and future students. Many of whom rely on my caring, supportive nature to assist them overcome many health, mental, educational and personal challenges in their lives.

I urgently require a stop to the mandates. I am ready, willing and able to return to my teacher aide role on January 23, 2022. From my spirit to yours, I seek your willingness to investigate and support known alternatives to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of individuals with regards to Covid 19 without all the "unknowns" not being truthfully researched and scientifically presented.

Educator 304

My name is S. I am 52 years old and I have been a teacher since 1995. I have worked across the primary and secondary sectors in both mainstream (Qld and NSW) and Steiner education. I have worked in schools, Regional Office and Central Office in QLD. I have worked in Brisbane, Ipswich and Cairns and I am now based in Central Queensland, where I have worked on the coast and in the centre of the state. I have been a teacher, Head of Curriculum, Literacy Coach, Pedagogy Coach, Regional Literacy Specialist, Communications Officer (Central Office), Education Manager and a small school (Band 5) Principal. My experience is both extensive and diverse. I am in demand for my knowledge and skills, particularly around curriculum organisation and development, curriculum delivery and as a literacy specialist in primary and secondary schooling.

At the end of 2021, I withdrew my applications for promotional positions, both of which I had been asked to interview for, to return to a teaching role 3 days a week so I could be closer to home. In my new role, I have been partnered with a first-year teacher who I was to mentor and support in a class that has a fair share of learning diversities. I'm not able to do this now. I haven't had the heart to disclose this to my teaching partner, choosing instead to support her from outside the school setting over the holidays by planning with her as if I was going to be able to show up. She is so keen and enthusiastic, she wanted to come and watch me teach the first three days of school, just to see how I worked with the class, my pedagogy and student support and my delivery of the curriculum. I also know that there are positions I could fill in outback Qld where the impact of vaccine mandates will be felt much more harshly than on the coast where there are enough teachers to (hopefully) ease the pressures faced by those who are left in schools. I am now, due to a change in personal circumstances, willing and able to return out west into a remote small school setting. Children out there are as entitled to access quality curriculum and pedagogy as those in more populated areas, however it is much harder to find people willing to spend time out in these places. When I rang my old boss, she was very disappointed to hear that I could not return to school and that I was not medically exempt from the vaccine.

The vaccine mandate as it stands currently means that I cannot go to work next year. I'm not even allowed to walk onto a school site. I am not medically exempt from being given the vaccine, but I am very reluctant to get it as I am concerned for my (currently excellent) health if I do. I refuse to bow to pressures from a government that has no right to dictate what I put into my body, especially when I am so concerned about the side effects that could come from the Covid vaccination. I would ask you to please lift the vaccine mandate for teachers, as it is discriminatory and unfair, and it puts the state's schools into a very difficult position. Children will lose much loved teachers, schools will lose much needed staff, and teachers will lose much needed and very much valued jobs. Covid has been with us for 2 years now, and we have coped up until now without these mandates.

Teaching has been my career and my passion for 27 years. I have had the most interesting and varied career, and I bring a lot to the table with me when it comes to my knowledge base and skillset. I absolutely love my job. A job I'm not allowed to return to now. I do have other skills that will enable me to earn some income, and it may even be enough to support myself without dipping into my savings. I am selling my house and downsizing into an apartment to free myself of debt. I am 100% aware of the fact that I am one of the very lucky ones to have this option available to me.

Not being able to teach won't break me, however it will rob me of an ending to a career that has given me so much joy, laughter and such a feeling of connection and accomplishment. It will rob me of a classroom filled with laughter, of children who don't want to take days off because they don't want to miss school, and the fulfillment that can only come from watching young minds learn and grow day by day and year by year.

Educator 305

Hi, my name is K. I'm a 50-year-old female, a wife and a mother of 4 children (2 Deaf, 2 Hearing). I work as an Educational Interpreter (EI) in the State High Schools in Brisbane/Ipswich for the last 6 years. At the start of this year (2021) I was given permanency, I was so excited for this opportunity as it hasn't been given to any EI's in our region before. During this time, I have achieved my qualifications as a NAATI interpreter (3 years ago). Most interpreters leave the schools after they become qualified, but I didn't.

The schools in Queensland are screaming for interpreters. Not just any interpreter, but interpreters that are fluent in Auslan. As a result of staying, I have built such a rapport and respect among the Deaf students (that is rare). As my skills have developed, I have been a mentor to other educational interpreters who are new on the job. Also in 2021, I have had a beautiful opportunity to work with a Teacher of Deaf (TOD) to help a school to set up a new Deaf & Hard of Hearing hub/dept. Working as an Educational Interpreter is such a joy and a heavy load all at the same time. To be able to interpret into another language simultaneously. To unpack concepts, sometimes to the simplest language for some of our students to understand the curriculum.

Teachers/ Hoses could count on me to put my hand up for assisting on excursions, interpreting school musicals, interpreting manual art classes (as other interpreters find them boring and too loud). Creating access/opportunities for inclusion at school. Making resources for teachers to help with teaching Deaf/Hard of Hearing students. Helping staff to make things "Deaf friendly" so everyone feels included (Teacher of Deaf, Auslan Language Model and Students). To support our Hard of Hearing students we would set up "Interactive Streamer" in the classroom to record the teachers' lessons before I would have to run across the school yard to get to another class to interpret. Then sprint back to the classroom after and pick up the laptop before that teacher leaves the room and locks all the equipment inside.

Before the mandate was announced for teachers, my principal was already standing up in assembly and announcing his views on the vaccine. Him and his whole family has been vaccinated. At one of our assemblies, I just happened to be the only interpreter there that day. I normally like to interpret for our principal because he can be funny or quirky. But on this day, he was not. He got up and started talking about the vaccine and his family. He started to belittle the "conspiracy theory" people. He went on about that he had read all the facts and everything and there is nothing wrong with it. He even went to the extent of stating that if their parents are against the vaccine then they haven't read the right information and they have it all wrong. Then he proceeds with asking the students if they have gotten their Covid vaccine with a show of hands. He asked them if they have had one dose or two. His next statement was "Well, I can't ask my staff that question". Now, I had to stand in front of the junior assembly and interpret this. As a professional interpreter, you have to keep a straight face and match the speaker's enthusiasm. My inners were screaming! I wanted to run away, but I couldn't. Since that day I have avoided the principal and stayed quiet at lunch times. My co-workers are all vaccinated. I have not been bullied in the staffroom, but there has been a lot of tension as I haven't announced, "I got my first jab!"

This mandate has impacted our family really hard. Three of us work for the education department. We are all facing to possibly lose our jobs. My eldest daughter and I both suffer from panic attacks. We have had to uphold each other at different times during this mandate, also working out how to support ourselves. With the mandate impacting the younger generations, I am concerned how this is going to impact them physically. It's a shame how some people look down their noses at those who don't choose the vaccine and visa versa. It should be a choice! All the government is trying to do is destroy humanity! It should be a choice! Mandating the vaccine is just dividing people/ even harming them, mentally and physically! Will I continue work in the education? I would love to! The hard part will be, how will people treat me in the workplace?

Educator 306

I am 57. I am a high school teacher in the Moreton Bay area. Teaching is my third career and I have been part of the profession for 15 years. My previous occupations were carpentry (apprentice and tradesman) and advertising. This means I have studied three times for three different qualifications, which have all neatly rolled into one. This is due to the fact that after teaching the four core subjects in my first 10 years of teaching the last five have seen me move into teaching Senior School Construction and Design - two subjects closely aligned to my previous two careers.

I believe coming into teaching at a mature age has allowed me a rapport with my senior students who are not only at an age where they are about to step out into the world but also following pathways similar to my own.

The mandate for me to be vaccinated is a shock. It is disappointing. The fact that all my years of working as an Australian tax-paying, law-abiding citizen have all come down to this. I began in the Australian workforce at the age of 16. A young skinny, carpentry apprentice. On a building site with men, learning the trade, developing skills and maturing to a tradesman. And at the same time, shaping my values which include, at the forefront, an attitude of hard work. This was handed down from my parents who both worked 5- 6 days per week and modelled the ideal that you earned the money to pay for what you needed. In all my time, I have never been on the 'dole.' I have changed careers twice and supported myself and my family during the times of studying and earning each new qualification.

So, to now be informed that for all my years of working for this country, paying my taxes, paying my way, supporting government projects and initiatives, and now guiding and encouraging my learners, that it is all for nothing - because at the end of the day, the fact I do not take an experimental injection for a virus which has a fatality rate of less than the yearly flu far outweighs anything I now do, or may do in the future. It outweighs it to the point where I may well be sacked if I am not injected. And this mandate is pushed whilst my colleagues who have chosen to take the medical procedure will retain their jobs. Even though they can, and will, still catch the virus and spread it - as we all do each year with the flu. Therefore, the message to me over the Christmas break is my efforts, my skills, my encouragement and motivation of my students is all outweighed by this mandate. That message is powerful. For all the wrong reasons.

My wife is a deputy principal. 33 years in the occupation. The years and years of experience and skills developed. Her knowledge of the curriculum, the systems of education and its many facets, the behaviour managements processes and her communication skills with each and every level of the stakeholders list.....all gone. Lost to the occupation - and who's the loser here? Well, everyone.

I know students the state over will be impacted. I certainly don't need to explain the many ways, mental, physical and spiritual here, because anyone reading this who is not aware of these impacts is the wrong person to be reading this. But personally, I know I make a difference in the lives of my learners. I know this because they tell me and their parents tell me. Plus I see the skills and knowledge they develop over the course of a year of learning in my class. The demographic at my high school is low socio-economic. Very low. We offer a Certificate 2 in Construction for our kids to enable as many as we can an opportunity to break in to the practical workforce with entry level qualifications. There are two teachers at my school. I am a qualified teacher with a VET trainer qualification as well, and the other is a VET trainer with experience in the construction industry. We are both unvaccinated. We have been told that if we do not return next year the school cannot staff, nor run the senior construction program. They have nobody else in the school, nor have they been able to recruit replacement teachers from a very limited pool of qualified personnel. The school has actually begun to do up new

timetables as they have made the decision that if we do not return, the program will have to be dropped. That is three Year 10 classes, three Year 11 classes and two Year 12 classes impacted - for a total of over 200 students.

I am not an anti-vaxxer. I am not left-wing nor right-wing, nor an anti-establishment tin-foil hatter, nor an idiot. I am not a label. I am educated, smart and informed. I understand the plight of this virus and I know the choice I am currently making in regard to this virus is the right one for myself and my family at this time. I have seen the numbers of deaths and the adverse effects from the vaccines and I know it is not safe for myself nor my family at this time. I also know the statistics and numbers of people who have been vaccinated and continue to catch the virus and the ensuing hospitalisation numbers. I know the answer is not a straight black and white one such as the problems and dangers within a school comes down to those who are not vaccinated. For anyone to think the best solution at this time is to NOT allow me onto the school grounds is wrong. To think I am a danger to anyone else at school is wrong. But I believe people know that, and this is not the platform to enter a healthy debate for such. Because, I believe the people who may read this are already aware of these facts.

Finally, my career is in the hands of those who would make these decisions. The choice for vaccination is mine. As it should be. It is my body and the world, the Nuremburg code, the many Human Rights Acts and the Australian Constitution all agree with me by stating they believe choice is mine and mine alone in regard to what medical procedures I will undertake. Just as it should be, for all citizens. And just as it should be for all politicians. And just as it IS - for my politicians. Your choice.

I hope the decision makers make this decision based on fact and law, and not only fact and law, but that the future of Australia is also considered. And that future is a living, breathing one that yearns to learn in the classrooms across the state - but one that will find it increasingly difficult to do so if our education system loses the rich, vast well of knowledge and experience of its educators.

I also hope the people who make the decisions aren't naïve enough to think they can end the careers of thousands of experienced teachers only to have them all run back at some time in the future full of thanksgiving and appreciation if their jobs were to return - or for those that may return to ever have the same motivation, appreciation or willingness to this occupation.

This decision not only affects the learners of the here and now, but it has a bearing on the state of education in the years to come in Queensland.

Educator 307

My name is K (female) and I am 53 years old. I am a part-time Lifestyle Technology Teacher Aide in a secondary school working with middle year students. This is my dream place of work; I have been in this position for just 1 year. My role is one where I have many years of experience, and one that I am very passionate about. I have been blessed with God given abilities in sewing and cooking and I have always wanted to use these abilities by sharing them with students in relatable ways as well as being a positive influence in their lives.

My employer has mandated through the state government that I be vaccinated to hold my position. I advised my employer that I choose to remain vaccine free, however, I have signed a contract at the end of the school year before the state government imposed the mandate that all educating staff be vaccinated. I have been deeply upset by this mandate as it is likely that the school will not hold my position as I am not vaccinated, and they are under obligation to the government to only employ vaccinated staff.

The thought of losing this job has impacted me as it is not easy gaining employment in a role that ticks all the criteria. It disturbs me that my choice has been taken away, as I mentioned this is my dream job in a role that I thrive in. Furthermore, the school is in very close proximity to my home, and I have the choice of walking, or I ride my bike to work which is something I really enjoy.

I am concerned about the Teachers and other staff that I work alongside as I have come to be an integral staff member working well in the team. I have played a vital role implementing new systems for the textiles and cooking departments. Furthermore, I have also worked hard to see current workplace health and safety documents put in place into the departments. I don't want to see someone else take my position, for there to be further change imposed on the staff and students. Ideally, I would like to keep my teacher aide role (vaccine free) where I am the one making a positive difference each day in a student's life.

Educator 308

After beginning my teaching career in 2018 on the Sunshine Coast I have built this remarkable connection to students at my school. As a male teacher in a low socioeconomic area, I feel I have been a significant role model for young men in particular - modelling how to speak to one another and how a male should interact with the world in a positive way. My passion is teaching mathematics and year after year students begin to change their attitude towards it, in some cases, even finding a love for it.

Education Queensland's response to mandatory vaccinations has been unacceptable. I don't believe that my college or Education Queensland have appropriately assessed the risk of COVID-19 in schools to be able to enforce mandatory vaccinations. The timing of the announcement has left much to be desired as many people who have required medical advice were unable to see their GP until 2022, myself included. This has left dedicated teachers making medical decisions without the proper guidance under the forceful instruction of Education Queensland.

Immediately from the announcement of mandatory vaccinations my mental and emotional health declined significantly. At a stressful time of finishing off the year marking and finalising reporting I spent evenings wiping away tears and unable to get myself off the couch. As a person I am known as someone who is always up and moving and looking for the next adventure but despite being forced and coerced into receiving my first vaccination, my mental health has not improved. I still struggle to get out of bed, have dark thoughts and my physical health is deteriorating. Since the vaccination I have had constant headaches and adverse reactions such as dizziness and bursitis at the injection site – only to be dismissed by a random GP that I could find with an available appointment because my regular GP is unavailable until 2022. The possibility of losing my home is a thought that has been very hard to grapple with.

The relationships I build with students surpasses anything I ever expected as an educator. In the past few weeks of school in 2021 my teaching partner gave students time to write letters about their experience in my classroom. This is proven time and time again and it breaks my heart knowing this could be ripped away from me and these students.

This includes young vulnerable boys and men in Year 7-10 that have gone from truanting classes and racking up 50+ behaviour records to having positive outcomes both academically and socially. When I started University there were scholarships for male teachers and STEM teachers, I am both of those and incredibly passionate and will be a loss to the X community.

Teachers should be able to make medical decisions without duress and force with sufficient time to discuss with their GP. I would expect a proper assessment of risk in high schools as both vaccinated and unvaccinated staff pose the same risk of transmission. If schools wanted to best manage infection then all staff, students and visitors to the campus should be tested on entry. Most of all, mandates need to be scrapped. I worry everyday about some of my colleague's mental health.

Educator 309

My name is J. I am a female Teacher Aide 58 yrs young and I work in a Public school on the Sunshine Coast. I have 30 yrs of experience behind me, 13 of those permanent full time. My main area of work is Prep but have worked across the Primary School with Learning support, but my passion is Prep. In the 12 yrs I've been in prep I have made some beautiful connections with both children and parents and felt very blessed to watch them grow throughout their school years.

To have this strong connection with the students I believe gives them trust in me with the comfort of knowing I am a familiar and consistent part of their lives. My principal was very supportive of my decision to not be Vaccinated, however he has been transferred to another school. I have not met the new one as yet. For a long time I thought the Premier wouldn't mandate having observed other states and the impact it had on them but unfortunately she did. I was in tears not knowing what to do.

After some advice I chose to take some leave with the hope my job will still be safe. My thoughts on the Vaccination is that I don't feel comfortable putting something into my arm that has had minimal testing with no long term data available, it's as simple as that.

I have a cry most days as I'm not sure what the future holds. My heart breaks when I think of the students and how much I will miss them. I will miss my beautiful TA colleagues as we were very much a family unit. I feel like a second class citizen when I go out which I don't do very often these days so I'm becoming quite reclusive which cannot be good for Mental Health. I am also quite angry which is very untrue of my character.

I am very concerned for the students being pushed into getting the Vaccination. These little people have enough fears in their lives to not have to worry about an Injection on top of it and I am also concerned the school will lose some capable volunteers , ones that have been a familiar face to these students.

My wish for the world is for the government's to look around and see what is happening. To question. Is this Right, moral and ethical? In the beginning we would don our capes along with all the other frontline workers and we were told we were ok. Now all of a sudden the staff and students are full of virus germs! What has changed?

Educator 310

My name is B and I work part time as a teacher aide in learning support at a local High School in X Bay, QLD. I love my job; the teachers I work with and the kids I support. These kids are low literacy and need extra support in the classroom. I try my best to bring the care into the class environment and work with them to boost confidence and sense of well-being which flows into their learning.

These introduced discriminatory mandates have changed my workplace dramatically. I have seen staff, confused and worried and feeling pressured to follow through with a medical procedure they do not want or lose their jobs and livelihood. The hard earned trust has been broken between employer and employee with constant texts and emails requiring a response to vaccination status way before the survey response due date. This has resulted in unnecessary stress amongst a percentage of school staff before finishing Term 4.

These Government Mandates have impacted myself and my family greatly. I have been increasingly stressed at work resulting in lack of sleep and a feeling of despair deep down every time I walk into the grounds. I am a single mother of 3 school aged children and I need my job to pay my mortgage and put food on the table but I make a stand against coercion and the segregation these mandates have caused. Why are we still singing the Australian Anthem when it speaks of being "one and free"?

This vaccination mandate have impacted greatly on my mental health I try to uphold a strong figure in our household but have recently visited my Doctor to discuss how I have been feeling and it has been a direct result from workplace stress with the enforcement of these mandates. I am greatly concerned for our students and community as I already have observed high school students upset, discriminating and showing a general imbalance and confusion about the current events. This is not just the students but also the staff. I have friends that have had terrible life changing adverse effects after the vaccine. This does not install great confidence and seems to be the riskier option.

I would like to see freedom of choice brought back to the people. Stop this mandate rubbish as it is destroying us and driving our country down the drain.

Destroying the Mental Health of young and old.

Destroying the unity in our community.

Destroying our faith in our Government and the 'so called' leaders of Australia.

Bring back our Freedoms!

Educator 311

My name is L and I am an Early Childhood trained teacher, currently teaching in a P-6 rural school in the Gold Coast hinterland for Queensland Education. I have been teaching for 3 years in a permanent fulltime role. I hold a Bachelor of Education and won an Academic Medal for my efforts and grades throughout university. I have been told by my colleagues that I am gifted in making learning fun, interesting and as hands on as possible so as to engage learners of any age.

I am extremely disappointed with the response from the department. I believe they reacted impulsively and without any consultation with us as staff. They emailed us to inform us of the need to comply before the Chief Medical Officer had even written the directive, which would become available almost 2 weeks later! I have had no personal communication from anyone in the department, apart from repetitive emails and text messages asking for my vaccination status, and badgering texts from my principal asking if I have been jabbed or does she need to replace me – all whilst I am on holidays.

The timing of the announcement was awful too, right as we were supposed to be finalizing student assessments and reporting, along with all of the end of year activities going on and of course - our holidays. It was and remains very stressful to say the least. My principal has said very little, other than to ask me what else can I do for work. She was not approachable or available for support, and we are basically teaching partners in a 2-teacher school, so I feel alienated. I no longer trust my employer or my principal and feel like I am experiencing workplace bullying to the extreme with nowhere to turn.

These mandates have impacted me in many ways. I feel betrayed by my employer. I feel like they have overstepped their boundaries and responsibilities as an employer and are now interfering with my private, personal life, not to mention the privacy laws being broken by just asking for my vaccination status and storing this information somewhere. I don't remember there ever being a clause in my employment agreement that opened me up to mandated vaccines. They are threatening to terminate my employment and put me through disciplinary procedures even when I have done nothing at all wrong. This is blatant coercion. The department justified the mandate because we are supposedly a 'high risk' setting, yet throughout the previous 2 years of a pandemic we were reassured that we were in a 'low risk' setting – what changed? Another justification was that children from 5-11 are vulnerable and unable to be vaccinated so we need to protect them, yet they ARE able to be vaccinated before school resumes in 2022 for any parent who is concerned. I do not see any real justification for these mandates. My husband does not agree with the mandate but also doesn't want me to lose my job. He has threatened me with divorce and losing my home if I do not comply, so I am experiencing coercion at home too.

My mental health is suffering, I feel unable to relax or enjoy my break, I am anxious and depressed. My husband is angry, depressed, anxious and scared. There have been constant arguments and unrest at my home. My 11-year-old son is worried and listening to all these arguments, despite my efforts to protect him.

I am concerned that my students will not receive quality teaching due to the lack of staff. My school has 5 teaching staff (2 teachers and 3 aides). 3 of us are refusing the mandate. That leaves a teaching principal and 1 aide to teach all 7 year levels. The 3 of us have developed strong relationships with these children as there are only 26 students in total and we teach them all. We will miss them greatly and they will miss us too.

I want to see these mandates stopped. It is becoming more and more evident that vaccination does not stop transmission. The viral load in the nose is the same for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people. There is no evidence or peer-reviewed studies that prove unvaccinated people are a threat. How can I teach my students bodily autonomy when my employer does not respect bodily autonomy? This is a draconian, immoral, unethical, 'one size fits all' approach. There are other viable options available – such as rapid antigen testing and temperature taking. The measures in place already at schools were sufficient for 2 years of a pandemic without a vaccine!

Educator 312

My name is C and I'm a female, 32-year-old permanent teacher of 4 years with a Bachelor of Education – Primary. I taught for three years in a remote central Qld primary school and this year I completed my first year in a regional P-12 school where my focus was English and HASS years 7-12. My gift as a teacher is building relationships, specifically with students displaying 'tier 3' behaviour, or those more challenging students. By creating strong connections with individual students, I have successfully guided them to value their education and want to meet curriculum standards to better their lives.

Never have I felt like more of a number. My employer has been abrupt, emotionless and patronising. She very sternly announced that if we did not comply with the 'law' of the mandates, we would not be welcome nor allowed on site next year. With no compassion she created an atmosphere so tense I suffered a breakdown and had to leave. During the next week of school, my line manager sought me out and had lengthy discussions trying to get me to change my mind. Then of course, our holidays have been filled with harassing emails and texts in regards to our vaccination status.

The vaccine mandate has also caused tension within my family. There is a lack of understanding resulting in conflict between myself and my mother, and a relationship break down between my brother and his girlfriend as she could not accept my decision. This mandate is tearing families apart.

These tensions, the pressure to conform and the ultimatum from the department has obviously has a massive impact on my mental health. Since the announcement I've been treated like a number on the wrong side of the ledger. Been told that if found on site collecting my own resources, I would be escorted off the grounds by police. I have had to question my identity- if I'm not a teacher, who am I? Can I still contribute to society or will I forever be shunned? Should I go against my beliefs so I can keep my job? If I do, will I resent my job? Myself? Will my students suffer? I have been reduced to a number that is not worth counting. I'm isolated from even my own family. Of course my mental health is suffering. When I should be organising a family Christmas, I'm breaking down, trying to fight for a position that I'm passionate about, that makes me who I am, but that I'm about to lose – when I've done nothing wrong.

Next year, students are going to be looking for those that are no longer there. The role models in their lives. If there is a shortage of teachers, they will be crammed into already full classes. In a trauma informed school any changes can have a catastrophic impact on our students. I worry that people taking our positions will not be as passionate or be able to understand the reasons for misbehaviour. I worry that my students will be punished because they are suffering a loss and no one is listening. I worry that my year 12's will be left without an English teacher at the beginning of their most important year of schooling. I worry about the graduate teacher of whom I have been assigned a mentor for her first year of teaching. I worry about the university student of whom I've been assigned her internship teacher. I should be guiding, moulding and encouraging her to be her best. Instead, I leave her without a placement. I worry about my reputation in the community. A small community I just bought my first home in. Will they still greet me in the street, or do I need to leave this beautiful place too?

All I am asking for is to let me do the thing I've trained for, that I'm passionate about. Let me continue to be a role model to my students that need one so badly. Let me continue to teach the next generation. I would be willing to wear all the PPE you deem necessary. To sanitise regularly, to clean my own room between classes. To provide negative Covid tests at the beginning of each day. Just please, let me do my thing.

There are decisions people make that need to be punished. There is misconduct that needs to be disciplined. Don't make this mandate one of them. Stop the segregation and division this is causing and let us get on with our jobs.

Educator 313

Hi, my name is K. I'm a female Primary school teacher with almost 15 years experience. I have a Bachelor of Education and can teach from Prep to Year 8. I currently live in North Brisbane Queensland, but I have teaching experience working in Melbourne and Brisbane Australia, as well as London, England where I have worked doing contracts and relief teaching in both public and private schools. I have worked with children who have English as a second language, as well as children with special education needs. I also have a TESOL qualification and spent a year working in Japan on the JET Programme, helping to teach English in West Tokyo and promoted international exchange between Australia and Japan. With all this experience, I have shown that I'm a very adaptable teacher and have gained much insight into different sectors of teaching, where I've learned from other teachers, schools and cultures. This has helped me become a teacher who has an extensive amount of experience, that I share with my students and other educators. It has helped me to be a confident teacher who can easily gain the respect of others within the school environment. I love working with children and feel a special connection with them. As a relief teacher, it can be tough at times, but I love to take on the challenge of helping students to feel comfortable and adapt to different learning styles. I try to show kindness and fairness and feel that children learn from my example. I have other skills I also like to share with students at times, such as extensive travel (and cultural) experience, photography skills, mindfulness and yoga skills.

As a relief teacher, since being mandated I received an email from Tracer saying my account will become inactive to prevent me from work bookings if I do not receive the vaccine. This of course have been very disappointing to hear and quite stressful, because as a single person I support myself and without my job, I cannot make any money and this will impact me greatly. I spent four years studying to become a teacher and for this to be taken away because I do not wish to receive an experimental vaccine is just beyond comprehension. I have investigated this situation greatly and feel that I have made the right decision for myself. We do not know the long-term effects of this vaccine on our health or fertility. As a female, I still wish to have children and I do not wish to have a vaccine that could limit this possibility. As such, I have chosen to listen to my own instinct and not be forced into making a decision that could be detrimental to my own health, or my future children. I'm so disappointed that our government has allowed this to happen, as I feel they have taken away people's rights to chose for themselves what happens to their own bodies. I will therefore seek to find other employment (or even create my own business, which is a very daunting prospect) but feel very stressed by the idea that it may be hard for me to find such work with this ever-increasing demand on industries to mandate their employees. I face the prospect of no income and therefore becoming homeless. All of this has created some sleepless nights and daily stress, when I should be enjoying a well-earned break, but instead I'm unsure what the future holds.

I am also concerned about what this will do for our students. They face going back to school and finding that many teachers have not come back. They will likely face hardships because there will be a severe lack of teaching staff, in an already stressed, underfunded and short-staffed workforce. They are also learning that our government and many people, including the media, think segregation is okay. These are not lessons our children should be learning.

What I would like to see happen is that teachers, as well as everyone else, not be mandated to have an experimental vaccine with no long-term data to prove its safety. We should be given all the relevant and truthful data, without being coerced in any way, as our laws state, to make a decision that is right for ourselves and our families, without fear of losing our jobs or our freedoms. Our bodies are our sanctuaries and belong to no one else, therefore what we do to them should be up to us and no one else. So please consider fighting with us to protect our jobs and remove these mandates.

My story is just one amongst many thousands and I have been much more fortunate than some. I try my best to look on the bright side, but this whole situation has been saddening. To be removed from our jobs and our livelihoods taken away should never be a situation any of us should be put in. Please look inside your own hearts and ask yourself, 'Is this fair? Is this just? Is your conscience clear?'

Educator 314

My name is R and this is my story. I am a 58-year-old female teacher who teaches at an independent boys' school. I have been at the school since the middle of 2008 and I have been teaching for 35 years across schools in the independent education sector both in Johannesburg, South Africa and in Brisbane, where I have lived and worked for the past 14 years. Throughout my teaching career, I have been employed in a full-time capacity. I have taught students from Year 3 through to Year 7 during my time of teaching, so my skill set is shown through teaching in the middle primary years.

It makes me extremely sad that these mandates have been imposed on me as a teacher. My employer has been gracious enough to me to grant me last minute Long Service leave for the duration of term 1 2022 but I am unsure as to what will happen after that. I know that if I do not take the vaccine, I will lose my job and even if the government rescinds the mandates, the school body has now embedded them, and I am sure these will stay for the unforeseeable future. My partner has also been impacted by the mandates and we are at risk of both losing our jobs. Come April 2022, when I am due to start back in Term 2, either I will have to give in and have the vaccine or leave my role as a teacher. Who will then employ a 58-year-old teacher(even one who is young in spirit?) Teaching has been me and makes me who I am, so it is a very difficult decision to make. Do you give in and carry on, knowing that intrinsically you have gone against your moral beliefs and core feelings, or do you not give in and lose your livelihood, your career, your essence of being?

My mental health has taken a huge knock. I have had some help from a psychologist through the workplace, but this has just allowed me to have someone to talk to – no solutions have been given, especially as they have also been mandated and feel the same way. I wake up in the early hours of the morning most nights, have lost touch with many friends, feel desolate and extremely lonely most days. When faced with a future without being able to teach – I feel fearful as to what that would look like. It feels like the loss of a loved one, like a death to be mourned. That is the best way of describing it.

I feel concerned for the students who I was meant to teach this year. Many parents have requested me as their son's teacher, and we had a day when we met our students for next year and they seem like a really sweet group of students. I teach Year 3 so they will miss out on many things that I do. I start them with a computer instead of an iPad and also work with them on OneNote. That aspect will not be done as well, that I know, as I am miles ahead with IT integration at my school compared to other teachers. I will also miss the relationships that could have been built. The Year 3 NAPLAN results were outstanding last year...they may not be so again.

I only ask that we are allowed to make choices for ourselves. I am not an antivaxxer and have had all my other vaccines throughout my life as have my children. I just don't want this one. I am happy to undergo rapid antigen testing if that would be allowed. It would be great if the mandates would be lifted once Queensland reaches 90% double vaccinated – but even then – would the school council allow me back?

I am passionate about empowering Junior School children and helping them to develop their full potential. My firm but fair approach often brings out the best in the students in my care and I am renowned at my current school for encouraging children to flourish and become the best that they can be. Part of this process includes close interaction with parents to encourage communication, participation and reinforce learning in the home while building the child's self-esteem and confidence. A student who is confident is always willing to try things they have not experienced before. Building confidence is a critical component for any student's self-belief. Initially, usually at the start of the year, I take the time to build a classroom climate of mutual respect, a sense of responsibility with learning, as well as encouraging the character traits of striving and being brave when things are tougher than they would expect them to be. My students are inspired to be independent and adaptable, as sometimes life is not always a straight and even road. They are supported to make good choices and decisions about their learning and about how this learning is presented.

How can I teach this way yet myself be coerced into taking something I do not wish to have? How can I advocate against bullying and standing up for yourself when I have had to cave? If I do go back forced to have the vaccine, I know that I will be a very different teacher to the one I am now. I know I will be a very different wife as well as a very different mother to my two grown up sons...will they still think of me the same? My father emigrated from the Czech Republic with me in 1968 when the communist tanks invaded the country to give me a better life. I myself have left South Africa to come to Australia to give my sons a better life. Currently, I live with the huge guilt of imposing this extreme controlling governance on my family. It sits very heavily on my soul.

Educator 315

I am a 42 year old female, Primary Teacher and Year Level Coordinator with 12 years of service, 3 in the northern suburbs of Brisbane in a private Christian School. I have a BSc (HONS) degree in Biological Sciences and a Post Graduate Certificate of Education. I have been developing myself professionally through online webinars and reading, especially in the areas of the future of schooling and leadership. I have been able to bring a new team of 8 staff together this year after they had a difficult time relationally in 2020. I bring humour to the campus and deliver my lessons to ensure maximum engagement from my students. I care deeply for them and strive to make meaningful connections with their families as well. The well-being of my team and my colleagues has always been a priority for me, and I am willing and available to listen and walk with others through their pain.

During this time, where my contract has been threatened to be 'frustrated', my employer has used different tactics to elicit and pressure me into giving information pertaining to my vaccination status so they can prepare for 2022. I understand the difficult situation and pressure they have been under but feel like a number who is replaceable, not a person who is about to lose the very thing that gets her up every day and fills her with life. I have been communicating with the school, and the union, ever since the term ended on 3rd December. I have not had a holiday and do not feel like this is Christmas time.

After making the difficult decision to abstain from the vaccination program, my husband and I have been struggling to come to terms with the loss of my job. He is self-employed and our children are trying to comprehend their future if the schools mandate the vaccination for children as well. My eldest is about to start high school and we are trying to be upbeat and excited for her going through this milestone, but there is a heaviness we carry. I will now be home schooling my six year old.

Personally, I have been battling with the despair of the situation and have been putting positive things in place to help alleviate the stress and anxiety I feel. I have interrupted sleep and occasionally need to control my breathing when I think about the situation for us, and as a collective humanity. The prospect of segregation within a society disturbs myself and my husband greatly and we are grateful for our faith and trust in God.

Looking forward to the beginning of Term 1 in 2022, I am concerned for the community of the school and the stress that the staff shortage will put on an already burdened administration team. Parents will worry that their children will not be receiving the quality of care and education because of the huge staffing gaps. Existing staff will be pressured to carry the loads on an already stretched working environment. The beginning of the year is usually happy and upbeat with optimistic views of something new and exciting about to be birthed but in January 2022 it will be a solemn weighted and worrisome time for many.

The desirable outcome would be for teachers to be invited back to their posts and not 'othered' by society. That the language used to describe those that have chosen not to get the vaccine does not incite anger and division. That there is clarity around the issue of transmission between hosts and how we are all equal in this country.

Educator 316

I am R, a 52 year old male holding degrees in Science and Education with 24 years of teaching experience, currently enjoying teaching primary schools as a Relief teacher in the North Brisbane area.

TRACER, a part of DoE QLD, is the organisation that calls out for relief teachers jobs has finally sent an email saying that my account will be inactive if I do not comply with the directive of CHO.

I have not taken the job yet. I have seen my own family members and relatives who have had serious adverse effects to the COVID vaccination.

I am feeling depressed on losing the job I have loved all my life for no fault of mine; overwhelmed thinking about how I will support my family at this age when the new job opportunities are so limited for me; disappointed to see the stand QLD Education has taken on mandating the job which is totally in contradiction to the policy of inquiry based learning ACARA has adopted to develop the critical thinking in Australian students, and disappointed in the QLD govt who is not looking on the other side of the coin to take care of the public in the current virus situation.

Education sector is the base of any successful and flourishing nation. The sector develops wonderful, strong, life altering relations which helps to stop at risk, disengaged and vulnerable students falling through the cracks.

Online learning is being promoted as the alternate to shortage of teachers in QLD schools which this mandate will cause. Nevertheless, studies and experiences of teachers have shown that online teaching cannot replace the face to face teaching. Online teaching only gives information, and doesn't develop the overall personality of students.

The only thing I am asking for is that we have survived the year of 2020 by doing all the right things, and that was the time when the information on the Corona virus was limited. Now in 2021, the picture is clear. The current mandates are not for safety of health. Tons of scientists and medical professionals have testified that vaccine doesn't stop the spread of virus. Secondly with the mandates how could the govt. be so brutal? "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy."

Please ask the policymakers to think rationally look at science in its entirety and not only their favourite section, hence, govern the general public with a balanced mind to flourish life and health in Queensland.

Educator 317

My name is V, and I am a single Mum who teaches secondary school. I have been a teacher now for five years. I teach Media, Digital and Design Technology and Certificate II IDMT at a distance education school. I also have a code club class before school that has over 20 students who regularly attend.

I started University at 40. I have worked in many different occupations throughout my life but wanted something more; I wanted to make a difference. At university, after completing the enabling program, I completed a Bachelor of Digital Media degree (Graduated with Distinction), and then I completed a Graduate Diploma of Learning and Teaching (Graduated with Distinction), to become a teacher.

When I received the email from the Department of Education, I went to my principal and asked what my options were. She said I could take time without pay if I needed time to think about things. I haven't been a teacher long enough to access Long Service Leave (LSL). My head of department {HOD}, who was my friend, has removed me from all social media and wants nothing to do with me because of my views. I feel now that even if I do go back to my place of employment, it will not be the same.

In the past I have been very ill after taking Flu vaccines, so I did not want to take this vaccine until there was further study. Then when I received the email to say that it would cost me my dream job if I didn't get it, I became very scared. Why mandate this? If we were already at 80% vaccinated, why is it so important, to the point of stripping people of their livelihoods? It just didn't make any sense. I work at a Distance Education school. We don't have students on site, yet this rule still applied? Because of this I knew it had nothing to do with children and this made me even more concerned. I am autistic and things need to make sense to me. None of this makes sense. Everyone can walk in a shopping centre, but can't eat at a café, socially distanced by tables?

My daughter who started university this year does not understand my view. Her and I have had a few arguments and life at home is very strained. Once we were so close, but this mandate has divided us. I barely sleep anymore and I don't leave the house. I don't get out of my pyjamas for days on end and don't even want to have Christmas with my children and grandchildren. I can't stop crying long enough to even bother wrapping presents.

Is this the future? Are we now in a world where our lives are not our own? Do this or lose that? This is not the world I want to live in. Being threatened into submission? What is happening? I want to see communities united. I want to see us raising money to research a vaccine that actually works to keep us from harm, and keep us from spreading the virus. What we have now is turmoil, uncertainty, division between loved ones and for what? A band aid that must be replaced every few months?

Please, stop spending money on a drug that is hurting us and work with us to fund researchers to find an actual vaccine.

Educator 318

I am Miss X and I am female primary school teacher in my 30s working full time in remote North West Queensland. I am a 7th year teacher, and have worked all of these years teaching in the public sector, all in remote and rural locations (North West QLD). My gift as an educator is to be able to form caring, growth nurturing, authentic relationships with not only my students but their families and wider community. I truly believe this is my gift as it allows students to access learning in a safe and supported learning environment where there feel more than just a number in a school, they feel like a human being who is being listened to. My gift as an educator is that I care deeply.

The response my my employer about the vaccine mandates has been extremely disheartening. I feel as though anyone who wasn't vaccinated at the time the mandate was announced was immediately on the outer with absolutely no support and no information pertaining to the situation we were put in. Since then, whatever little support I felt by those in leadership at my workplace has been dwindled down to what feels like nothing. I find this completely heart wrenching as I have given my heart and soul to this job for 6+ years and to feel so unsupported and disregarded is like a slap in the face.

These mandates have impacted my family significantly. While we are respectful of our opinions, I feel a divide between vaccinated and unvaccinated members of my family that wasn't there before, and that saddens me to my core. My friendships with coworkers who are vaccinated have been affected, again feeling that there is a line between us now which makes me want to withdraw myself from my social circles as it's easier to be alone than continually having to justify what my choices for my own body to not receive the vaccination. I'm distraught about this divide as I am someone who loves to be social and loves to connect with and for people. These mandates have put a stop to that. I have not succumbed into getting the vaccine, but each day I feel it wearing down on me. I'm not sure how much longer I can take the pressure. I face losing my home also as I am living in a remote location in departmental housing as a result of the vaccine mandate.

The vaccine mandate has had a significantly negative impact on my mental health - I feel as though I am in shatters. I am experiencing high levels of anxiety daily, it is difficult for me to imagine a future that is not doom and gloom, I am angry, I am Sad, I am scared. Without tuning into breathing exercises and using the strength of my mind to keep calm, I feel on edge for most of the day, and my sleep has also been effected as I have been waking up gasping for air in the middle of the night. I have difficulty concentrating and often have to fight off feelings of panic. I am someone who is quite self aware, and what I am experiencing now as a result of the vaccine mandate is mental hardship unlike I have experienced before.

The concern I have for my students and community as a result of these mandates is overwhelming. Coming from a remote and rural location and working in distance education, I know first hand how difficult it is to find quality staff. I am willing and able to work, yet these mandates are stopping me from servicing my communities. These isolated students are already at a disadvantage, why are we disadvantaging them more by taking away willing teachers. I fear for the education community I am being excluded from.

I am asking for the mandates to be dropped, allow teachers to do the jobs they love and support the students they care so much about. Risk assess and consider other options for protection other than a vaccine mandate.

While perusing Facebook I saw a fellow teacher posted this on their page:

'I know it's holidays because my mind is clear, my heart is soft and I can breath'

For me this holidays have been the exact opposite. My mind is full, my heart is strained and I feel like I can't breathe. It is this vaccine mandate that has done this to me. Please drop the mandates so that I, and others, can continue to be the best version of myself and serve the communities we love.

Educator 319

My name is L & I've worked at a large rural High School for 2021 & part of 2020 in administration but mainly as a casual Teacher Aide in mainstream & special education.

Having been employed in a variety of industries for the past 30 years, I felt a change was needed & began volunteering at my son's primary school. This turned into a weekly garden & art club and also a homework club for students who were struggling with homework & didn't have anyone at home who could help them.

I discovered I'd found my passion & decided to study part time for my Certificate 3 in Education Support to completely change my career path.

I haven't discussed my medical choices with my employer or other staff at school, because I felt in was alone on the path I had chosen. Most of the employees in my staffroom & staff block went along with the vaccination without question. A lot of the talk at lunchtime centred around people being vaccinated & anger at those who didn't. I felt very uncomfortable & often went for a walk to avoid being there.

The mandates have had & are continuing to have a huge impact on my family as my husband, who was also employed at the same school as a cleaner, had to give up his job due to health issues, leaving me as the main income earner for my family, which includes our teenage son.

Because of a medical choice I have made, I will be losing my job, which leaves our family without any income. We have a mortgage and bills like most other families & are now left wondering how things will be paid.

The impact on the mental health on myself & my family has been huge.

There have been many sleepless nights, anxiety about how we are going to pay for things, depression about what is being done not just to me, but to so many others around us. My husband already suffers from depression & I have been through depression myself, so I am well aware on the affects it has on families.

The feeling of being in a dark hole & unable to see a way out is devastating.

But I have a very supportive family & are so happy & proud to see the positive things that are happening amongst the doom & gloom.

I am extremely concerned about how school is going to look & function next year. My son will be in a senior year at high school & I worry about the quantity and quality of teachers left in his school. As if working in schools is not already stressful enough, what will they be like with reduced numbers & temporary and inexperienced teachers & staff? We live in a rural area that is several hours from a city and it is extremely hard to get teachers to come to this area as it is.

My heart goes out to all of the students who I have worked with to build up a trusting relationship. It is not easy for a lot of students in special education to do this.

I hope they know that I am someone who truly cares for them.

I have been a voice and there for students who have been bullied, who are having problems at home, who come to school feeling hungry, who do not have anyone at home they can talk to, feel like no one cares for them and have trouble communicating with the teacher.

Educator 320

My name is J and I have been a primary school teacher in the independent schools system my entire 28 year teaching career. After having my children I went back to full time teaching at the same time as studying, in order to upgrade my Diploma of Education to a Bachelor of Education. I believe at 59 years of age my teaching gift has always been in the early years of schooling and as such became a pivotal member of staff in setting up the Prep program when Prep was introduced to our school in 2005.

When the mandate was imposed, my employer could not answer some of the serious questions and concerns I had regarding the impacts of the vaccine and merely fobbed me off to the Dept of Education. My employer said if I could not comply with revealing my vaccination status or have the vaccinations, I would need to take leave without pay. The hypocrisy in all this was I was unable to meet in person on school grounds due to being unvaccinated, but it was all right to come in the next day to collect my personal belongings.

These mandates are impacting both my mental health as well as my physical health. Having a cancer diagnosis last year already had a major impact on myself and my family, and so after consultation with my medical team (some of whom said I should go ahead and others who said it was totally my decision) created a such a sense of anxiety I became extremely emotional and depressed, unable to sleep properly and wanted to withdraw from everyone. After much consideration and in all good conscience could not agree to partake in the Covid 19 vaccine program due to all the unknown repercussions this could create with my existing health condition.

The depression and withdrawal became exacerbated from bullying by other members of staff saying I was selfish and becoming a laughing point in their overtly loud conversations in the staffroom.

My concerns are for my students who have already met me and know that I am their teacher. Some of these children have high needs and that is why interacting and becoming familiar with them prior to school starting has been so essential for their own mental health and social needs. I now worry how they will settle and start school with an unfamiliar person.

The other concern I have for my students is that they will be next. Will they too suffer discrimination and segregation if a vaccine is required for school enrolment?

I am asking that all these mandates be done away with and no one is discriminated against because of a medical procedure. As a society we don't tolerate it for skin colour, age, gender, religion etc so why now for a vaccine?

I would like to see those in authority and leadership supporting these mandates to be held to account for the discrimination and segregation this is causing to so many.

For those bullying staff members I would like to see them attend some type of anti-bullying program.

Educator 321

My name is M. I am a 37 year old, female primary school teacher, who was scheduled to return to teaching part-time on class (2 days a week) at X State School and part time as a relief teacher (3 days a week) at state schools in my area in January 2022. I have been a teacher since 2011. I absolutely adore children and their zest for life.

During a planning session on the 30th of November 2021 (to plan for my class next year), I was notified by my school Principal that Education Queensland now required all staff to be vaccinated for COVID. My 23 year old daughter almost died getting her first Covid vaccine, as such I do not feel safe getting it. I told my principal this, she took me off planning, and immediately put another teacher into the planning session. Now I keep getting text messages and emails asking for my vaccination status and advising me that if I am not fully vaccinated by January 23, I can no longer teach.

This mandate and others, such as certain places being inaccessible to vaccine free people, are having a significantly negative effect on me and my family's mental health. I feel afraid to leave the house, for fear of being persecuted based on my vaccine free status. I am scared to venture out to shops and other places of business for fear of being declined entry due to my vaccine free status. My 23 year old daughter was coerced into getting it in order to maintain her job, she almost died from it! Though she survived, she now worries what her future holds as a result of having this vaccine. She wonders if she will be able to have children and if she will have health problems related to having had it. While I am extremely grateful that doctors and nurses were able to revive her, the experience was terribly traumatic, for her and for us, as are the unknown implications for her future health.

I have trouble sleeping for fear of what is going to happen next. I am so stressed that I grind my teeth to the point that they are now breaking!! My teenage daughter is fearful of the future. She fears that she won't be able to study at university, and experiences terrible anxiety about going places with her friends for fear of being turned away when she gets there because she is vaccine free.

We feel devastated that our freedoms have been taken away, we fear that we are going to continue to be persecuted for a choice that is rightfully ours to make. We fear that our fundamental human rights are but a thing of the past. We feel distressed, isolated, and despondent.

I am now also extremely concerned for children as well. This vaccine has no long-term safety data, yet everyone is being coerced into getting it, children now too. What are the future problems that we are going to face as a result? Are children who have had the vaccine going to develop cancers at a much greater rate than they do now? Are vaccinated children going to be unable to have children when they grow up? Are they going to have severe organ failure in the future? Are they going to be more susceptible to heart attacks in the future? We just don't know. So why are you coercing people to take these experimental vaccines?

I am terribly concerned that those who have had the vaccine are going to get very sick and possibly die in the near future. I fear for our future, if this vaccine is to continue to be pushed onto the people of Australia, and indeed the world.

I am asking for you to STOP coercing people into getting the vaccine. STOP linking vaccination status with the ability to be employed. STOP discriminating against the vaccine free.

Please DO reinstate our basic human rights. Do allow us to work and move about freely. Do allow us freedom of choice regarding medical procedures. Do allow us to go back to work, to make money so we can support our family.

Educator 322

My name is K, I am a 34 year old female Design and Technology Teacher (not many of us around) in a secondary school in regional Queensland (even fewer of us up here). I have been teaching for 11 Years and have a Masters in Education, a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and achieve a BA (Hons) in Design. I have a wealth of experience globally having trained in the UK, taught across Europe and 3 schools in Queensland. I am passionate about Design and Technology and educating our young minds to think critically and creatively to solve global problems. I am a committee member of Design and Technology Teachers Association (DATTA) Queensland where our aim is to impassion our colleagues and our students in all things Design so that we can prepare young Queenslanders for jobs that don't yet exist. We do this through the organisation of an annual conference, regional professional development sessions, student awards, teacher awards, design and technology week and many more initiatives...we do this because we love our subject and want to shape the design and technologists of Australia's future.

My employer; Catholic Education Rockhampton, has asked for my vaccination status, so that they can safely plan for the return to work in January. I find this interesting since mine or the students safety, wasn't a concern during the 2020 lockdown. I was expected at work every single day, during a period where much of the country was in lockdown.

As the 2021 school year came to a close, I should have been entering the school holidays ready to relax with my family after a tiring end of year, yet these mandates have caused undue stress and anxiety wondering how I will pay my mortgage in 2022. As a British person who has recently been granted citizenship, I feel immense sadness that the country we all dream of visiting as children and look to as the land of opportunity, is stripping hard-working, passionate professionals of their livelihoods.

Over the last few Years, I have worked as an employee for the Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority in the implementation of the new Design syllabus. The school I am currently employed at were struggling to get the subject up and running. I have worked hard this year to get the subject off the ground, writing exciting programmes that incorporate emerging technologies such as Virtual Reality. My students have chosen the subject on the understanding that I, as the only teacher who knows this syllabus inside out, will be teaching them. My heart aches that I will not be there for them. I deliver region PD's for teachers in our region, I am the state wide coordinator for Design and Technology week and introduced this initiative at my school to excite students about all things DT. I held sessions for parents and implemented the state-wide competition 'so you think you can design'. My approach to learning also enabled me to deliver tutorial sessions to trainee teachers at the local CQ University.

Last year, throughout COVID, I did not have one day off. Despite home learning, I was at school every day and as a teacher I was never considered a risk to my students nor them to me. However, this year I am now considered a risk. I don't believe lock downs, mask mandates or vaccine mandates are effective. I want to be able to go to work without feeling that I have done something wrong for wanting to make my own health decisions.

Initially I felt fear that I might not be able to stand up in a classroom and inspire our young people again. However I realise, you want me to feel fear. I am resilient and resourceful, that's what makes me a good teacher and I will not let you scare or bully me into doing something I don't want to do. Geez, we spend a considerable amount of time telling our students that bullying is not OK and they must stand up for what is right, because I would rather have questions that can't be answered than answers that can't be questioned.

Educator 323

Hi, my name is G and I am a 45yr old woman who works as a School Secretary in a new Prep-12 College in X. I am permanent term-time employee of Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) and I have worked in this capacity for six years now. I love my job – I get to interact with the kids every day and the variety is endless: first aid, student reception, parent reception, social media, designing, collating and publishing the yearbook, printing student awards, permission slips, invitations, enrolments, booking excursions and buses, organising events, catering, fielding enquiries, supporting teachers and leadership – you never really know what the day will bring.

When the mandate on vaccination in education settings was announced, I was horrified but too busy to think about it. I buried my head in the sand and ignored the email from BCE telling me to update my vaccination status in their system and to contact my principal if I had any concerns. It was not easy to ignore, everyone was talking about it but we were frantically busy. However, once the dust had settled and I had received another two emails telling me to update my status, I finally had to think about it.

My principal was already on holidays so I emailed him and my line manager with my decision not to reveal my vaccination status as I don't agree with the mandate or the segregation of our community based on a medical decision which should be personal and private. I believe that it is a major overreach by our State government and contradicts Federal law.

My principal took a couple of days to reply – he noted that this was not his nor BCE's decision, he also noted that I had not stated whether or not I have been vaccinated. He encouraged me to rethink my position and to make sure I was vaccinated by the dates specified in the mandate so that I could return to work in the new year. He told me that he was currently away but would be back by December 20 and he would be happy to chat to me about it then. I have not replied as I have made my position clear and he has not contacted me thus far to discuss it further.

The mandate has consumed my time since I realised that I could not ignore it any longer. If I'm not thinking about it, I'm talking about it. I have allowed it to interfere in my relationship with my children as I cannot stop worrying about it. I find I cannot give them the attention I normally would (especially at this family centred time of year). We are all concerned about money. We have been looking to buy a house for the last 6 months – this will not now be happening as I won't have a job and we will need to use the deposit saved to fund our living expenses. Thank goodness we didn't buy a home – then I really would have had to abandon my principles in order to pay the mortgage. That is not the lesson I wish to teach my children!

All of this worrying has had a huge effect on my mental health – I have been living with depression for many years and being medicated has helped hugely, but this has thrown me for a loop. I have found myself drinking too much, not being able to get out of bed some days, full of manic, anxious energy on other days but mostly I find myself stuck in an over-thinking loop where I cannot focus on any of the things that normally bring me joy. Not on my children, my husband, my dog, reading books, rowing with my club and coffee with friends (which is out because I'm not allowed into a café without showing my tick).

I have been excluded from Christmas lunch with my extended family because they chose a venue which I can't enter and they don't understand why I am doing this. It is tearing my relationships apart.

Many of my colleagues have been happy to comply but not all. There are staff who will not return to their students and it is tearing them up inside. There are staff who have complied because they cannot afford to lose their jobs – they feel coerced and bullied by the government, BCE, college leadership and even other staff members. They are not returning to the jobs they love in the same way as previous years. Our students will be greeted next year

by worried and distracted teachers, and teachers that are no longer on the same team – if they are greeted by teachers at all. I'm not confident that there will be enough staff to cover the losses and the ultimate losers are the children.

Our community is being torn asunder – and things will never again be the same. Mandating a medical procedure in order to keep your job; is that really a freely made choice? I never thought that Australia would coerce its citizens in this way, or in any way for that matter. It breaks my heart that we have come to this. I should not be denied choice or privacy because you are afraid.

I would like to see the government actually look at the science instead of reacting to the fear and craziness which has spread across the world in Covid's wake. The vaccine does not work in the way that understand vaccines to work – it does not stop you from either getting or transmitting Covid. It only reduces the symptoms. There will be NO herd immunity. Percentages in this case do not matter – except in relation to the number of hospital/ICU beds. This is about lack of funding/preparedness of our hospitals even though Qld Health has had over 18 months warning. We have gone from two weeks of mask wearing to “*flatten the curve*” to this???

So, because our hospitals are unprepared, people's right to privacy and to provide for their families has been compromised. ***That's not science – it's passing the buck.***

Educator 324

My initial to my name is D I am a female who works as a teacher aide part time in the private sector in Gladstone Region Queensland. I am 46 years of age and I have 5 years' experience as an aide. I have a certificate 111 in Education Support but also a degree and post graduate degree in Psychology.

When these mandates came in, I have not had the support of my choice which is to be prochoice without repercussions (loss of job) in my work place. I have had union papers shown to me in regards the mandate stating it is law and also have had people discussing my personal choice outside my place within the community. Even though I have not verbally stated this to anyone within my work place, all I have said is I need more information to make an informed decision. I have been asked why I would not get this mandated vaccine to keep my job as we really want you to work here, don't you? I have sent my employer letters to request a risk assessment for my job but have not had a response to this matter.

The mandates have caused a lot of stress and anxiety within myself which has affected my 3 young children and also my husband. I have been subjected to coercion and also have the risk to losing my job next year. This is emotionally and financial crippling. Some days I do not want to leave the house and have had to try and focus a day at a time to move forward for my children. The simple tasks of the day at times have been overwhelming as my head is filled with fear and worry that the simple task of keeping my house clean and organising the day or even shopping at times has been difficult.

I also worry about my professional relationships with my colleagues which I feel have been manipulated against me. This concerns me if I ever return back to this space of employment as I feel this relationship of trust and fellowship will be destroyed.

My concerns are not just for myself and my future employment but also for the children next year. I work at a kindergarten and I take pride in establishing the children initial connection to their school life. I feel this first year is important in establishing social friendships and connections, development of one self, developing well-being and emotional growth. My role is to support and guide the children to be the best they can be and to assist them in feeling safe and to create enjoyment with what kinder has to offer them.

I will not be able to do this. I will not be able to have a positive impact on their lives and their journey into formal school. For the children next year who have already met me through transition days and have already established a relationship may not have me next year if I lose my job to these mandates. I feel I have let these children down and their families and I wonder what will be said to them as to why I am not there. The community will then be aware of my lack of presence at the kinder which will put me in an awkward position in my community. Many families are excited I have their children next years and are happy as it will help them, the guilt I feel hurts me and I know will affect them next year.

All I ask is to be able to at work at my employment respectfully regardless of my choice and that there to be no judgement and repercussion on my choices. I want my place of work to look at alternatives to help me stay and make me feel valued as an employer, as I do not feel this at present. I just want to work and be a part of many children's initial schooling to make that positive impact for them to help them transition smoother to formal school. I do not want to let the families and children down next year.

Educator 325

My name is S. I am a Teacher-Aide, located in the Far North regional area of Queensland. I have been in my role for almost 3 years and love every minute of our extraordinary school and community of students & families. I have a Diploma in Community Services qualification and I have many skills which I use in my role. My particular Teacher-Aide role is like no other. Our school is a distance education school whereby our students are distributed to the outer regions of Queensland living in very isolated locations. We use Blackboard Ultra & Microsoft OneNote as our technology platform to connect with each other. We nurture our relationships over time, building trust, teaching, learning and shared connectedness. I am the key figure who runs and maintains our Library and also participates in the Learning Support Reading program for students.

As we all know, our employer (QED) and school Principal emailed a vaccination mandate warning, three days before we were due to finish Term 4. With next to no time to prepare or understand the enormity of what is about to transpire, we have been left between a rock and a hard place and NO choice in the matter of getting the vaccine in order to keep our jobs. This has caused untold stress!! I have felt much anxiety deliberating on the vax mandates and it's blanket rule. My family have been impacted by seeing me stressed out by this deadline - feeling so pressured to do something about it - it's now completely encroached into my personal and very special family time with family who have flown in from Melbourne - not to mention my very sick 86 year old mother's needs and hospitalisation impacting us all. I have anxiety, waking up in the middle of the night trying to solve this problem. It is a PROBLEM where I am being FORCED to make a decision to take part in a medical experiment in order to keep my job.

I have emailed our Principal and to date have not yet received a reply. I did however read her emails and believe she is trying to sort out a contingency plan A, B, C, D, etc. depending on how many numbers of teachers and staff return to work on 23 January. I cannot imagine the impact on the teachers, students, families and staff when school resumes. Absolute chaos. This is what the government doesn't care about. They want the CHAOS so long as we keep to their agenda and get the vax. The needs of students far outweighs the need for a vax status in a school run remotely for vulnerable Queensland families.

I live and breathe this space and I have invested my heart and soul into our community of people and value being reciprocally embraced. Building trust in this role takes time and care, and I am not expendable. I would like to keep my position as TA extraordinaire at X School.

Educator 326

My name is J and I am a 34 year old female fulltime Prep Teacher at an independent school in Far North Queensland. I graduated with a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) in 2021 after studying online whilst also working as a teacher assistant. I have been at X College for 6 years but I have been in Early Childhood as a childcare assistant, group leader, director and then teacher assistant for 12 years and a Prep Teacher for 18 months. I believe my gift as a teacher lies in my passion for early childhood and building relationships with students and their families.

When the mandate was announced, my employer was initially supportive indicating they wouldn't enforce the vaccination requirement unless it was a lawful directive. Once this directive was announced they have asked for definitive information about our vaccination status and offered long service leave but haven't individually addressed staff so at this point many of us are waiting to be stood down.

These mandates are having a very detrimental impact on my family. My husband has chosen to be vaccinated and doesn't understand why I don't want to be. I am facing losing my job and feel like I am being coerced to have the injection in order to keep my job. We argue about the financial impact this will have on us and we may have to withdraw our children from their current school, as we won't be able to afford the fees. At this stage they may not even have teachers at their school, as there have been insufficient applicants prior to the mandate and none now that the directive has been put in place. My family can't go to dinner or out for coffee without me being excluded like a leper because I have chosen not to be vaccinated. My children are being confronted with segregation in what used to be a free country.

I wake every morning and go to sleep every night, worrying about losing my job, worrying about what will happen to my family if I lose my job, feeling the burden of my children worrying about my job, wearing masks, and whether or not be vaccinated. I avoid conversations with people because so many have strong views on both sides and somehow all conversations now lead to COVID.

I am immensely concerned that my school may not have enough staff to open and that the town's state school will have significantly less teachers and staff as well. This may drive families to leave the area for their children's education and in the interim is likely to mean parents can't go to work or children will be left at home by themselves. For vulnerable children particularly this is a very scary reality. I am also really worried about the social divide that is occurring as people, fueled by fear, judge each other for being vaccinated or not vaccinated. Judgment, discrimination and segregation of people is a dangerous and toxic thing, particularly in a small community where everyone is connected to each other.

Being a teacher isn't just an income to me, it is a passion and a calling. I have cried so much in this past month in the fear of losing my job. I ask for the mandating of vaccinations to be abolished so that all Australians have the freedom to choose for themselves.

Educator 327

My name is S, I am a 57-year-old Senior Mathematics and Science teacher currently working in a medium-sized Christian school north of Brisbane. My association with this school began over 28 years ago when a small group of non-educators gathered in my mother-in-law's sewing room to discuss starting a school. We commenced by fund raising. The small church congregation did everything from folding bags for Lifeline to delivering telephone books. We held garage sales and fashion parades, had coffee and desert evenings, and ran trivia nights among other things. We spent roughly ten years working to raise money to establish *X School* on what was then the outskirts of north Brisbane.

I was on the Management Committee of the school organization and later became a member of the board. When our daughter started school in 2002, I commenced volunteer work in the Senior Learning Centre (High school). I worked in that capacity until my employment in 2004 as a monitor (the equivalent of a TA) until 2010 when I went to university to complete my teaching degree. During my time at university, I was employed as a cleaner by the now called Australian Christian College Moreton. I graduated from university in 2014, at the age of 50. Upon completion of my degree (B.Sc / B.Ed) I was employed at the school as a senior Mathematics/Science teacher. A position held for the last 7 ½ years.

My first assignment at university was a reflection on my Philosophy of Teaching. I wrote about relationships. Students need to feel a connection with their teacher. The teen years are difficult ones, particularly with the current challenges of social media, technology overload and, sadly, very often broken homes and families. After running a youth group with my husband for 15 years I knew I had a gift that enabled me to relate to teenagers. This has played out in my years at the school, and in the relationships I have built during that time as a Form teacher.

Just before Christmas I received an email from my employer stating I was no longer allowed on campus. The place that has been my home for well over 20 years. I have been told on the one hand that it is my choice whether or not I receive the Covid-19 vaccine and in the same letter told my employment will be terminated on Jan 10th if I do not. How is this a choice? My husband and I were planning on retiring in four years. This is now highly unlikely. I need to find work in an industry that does not require me to be mandated. A career change at 57.

My concerns are threefold. Firstly, for the students. The class of 2022 will have immense turmoil with the loss of teachers, and support staff. There are at least 20 teachers from our school alone that will lose their jobs and not be there for the students. These students have already had to navigate two years of lockdowns, remote learning and mask wearing. Secondly, I feel for the teachers 'left behind'. Those who have been vaccinated, quite a number of whom did so only because they felt coerced. Some cannot afford to lose their job or find other work. Some received the vaccine to save their marriage and keep their family together. Lastly, I am concerned for my family and our ongoing financial situation. It is not easy to attempt another career change at this age and I am not confident that any job I do obtain may not at some stage also be mandated.

For the last two years teachers were told we were low risk and continued to do our jobs. Now we are being told we are high risk and can't work without the vaccine. Please, consider the impact this is having on individuals, families, students, education, the economy and mental health. Stop the mandates and allow people bodily autonomy to make health choices for themselves and their unique circumstances. Please remove the vaccine mandates.

Educator 328

My name is J and I am a female , full time primary school teacher in the Gold Coast region. I am 46 years old and have been teaching for 6 years. I went back to University as a mature aged student and completed my Bachelor of Education -Primary, because of my love of working with children.

My gift as an educator is the relationships I am able to form with my students. I have high expectations for my class in both; the curriculum and socially and emotionally and work tirelessly helping every student in my class, reach those high expectations. I guide my student to achieve results to the best of their ability by using their individual strengths to achieve goals. Everyone of my student's leaves my classroom with improved results and the confidence and resilience to chase their dreams, as over our year together they have learnt that they are capable of amazing things.

Before the end of the school year, I had a brief and friendly discussion with my principal. I wanted her to know that I love my job and I love my school, but I had concerns about the new government mandate. My principal informed me that she was only doing what was instructed by the department and she valued me as a teacher and hoped I wouldn't leave.

The mandates have hugely impacted both myself and my family. Unfortunately, I personally know five family and friends that have had documented severe side effects from the covid 19 vaccinations. It has caused me huge amounts of stress and heartache seeing firsthand the potentially devastating side effects from the vaccines. At this time, I am unable to risk being vaccinated which leaves me unemployed and not able to do the thing I love. Being unemployed puts huge financial stress on my family. My children will no longer be able to play sports, I can no longer attend fitness classes, we won't be able to pay phone bills, run two cars, pay the mortgage and to be honest, I am unsure of how we will put food on the table. Remaining unvaccinated is not a decision I have taken lightly.

The vaccination mandates have had a significant effect on my mental health and the mental health of my family. I had never in my life suffered from anxiety or depression and now I am being treated for both. My doctor had to spend 50 minutes trying to calm me down, he has put me on a mental health plan and I am seeking help to try and make sense of this situation. Currently, I am medicated and being taught coping strategies to reduce my anxiety and depression, but I still can't sleep or function properly while trying to make sense of how I lose my job as a teacher, if I don't get a vaccination that has a risk of severe side effects. My 17-year-old daughter has also been put on a mental health plan to help her deal with anxiety and depression, which started at the same time as the mandates. The bullying, segregation, stress and restrictions placed on her being unvaccinated is having a detrimental effect on her.

I have grave concerns for what the future of education looks like. My student's miss out on having a brilliant teacher with an invested interest in them. My own children miss out on having brilliant teachers that teach for the right reasons. They may never know what it's like to feel safe and know that their teacher will always have their best interests at heart. Teaching is not a job, it is a passion and good teachers cannot be replaced by those who are not passionate about what or why they do it. I am concerned about the amazing teachers that are being turned away because of a vaccination mandate.

For almost two years schools were not classed as a high-risk setting. I would like to see the vaccination mandate on Queensland Education dropped and the reinforcement of personal protective equipment, washing hands regularly, socially distancing and the introduction of Rapid Antigen Testing to be used to keep our schools safe and as free from covid 19 as possible.

Please reconsider the vaccine mandates on Queensland Education staff as it is Un-Australian and goes against everything our ancestors fought so hard for. Everyone should have a choice without the fear of losing their job or more importantly their passion to work with children.

Educator 329

When the announcement of the vaccine mandate in the education department was announced on Monday 29th November, I automatically felt nauseous and anxious. I instantly contacted my union to ask where they stood in regards to this mandate, and the response was that they supported it, and that if I did not get vaccinated, they would give me no support, and I will eventually be out of a job. I immediately cancelled my membership.

I kept my vaccination status to myself, and just kept telling myself to keep going until we break up for the holidays, and then I will try and think about how I will proceed into the new year with the looming – “I will not have a job if I don’t get vaccinated”.

My husband is on a disability pension, so I am the main wage earner in our household. My husband fully supports me with my decision of not being bullied into getting an experimental vaccination.

Since starting my so-called holiday, I have the constant emails and texts coming from Queensland Education asking me to do the survey on my vaccination status every two days. I am unable to fully relax and enjoy my time off with the constant pressure.

I am not going to reply until the 7th of January. I have booked in, along with my husband for support, an appointment with our doctor for the 4th of January. This consultation will be about my mental health about how the demands from the government and my future employment status will be for me in 2022.

This will be a Christmas holiday period that I will never forget – and for all the horrible reasons.

What I am asking for is to be able to go back to work without having to be forced and bullied into taking an experimental vaccination.

My final message is this. Since the beginning of all this madness, I have been on the “front line” – keeping everything clean and safe for students and staff.

Now I am a danger to everyone because I have decided not to be vaccinated!

Educator 330

My name is K I am employed by the State School Parents & Citizens Association as the School Tuckshop and Uniform Convenor in Far North QLD, a position I have held as a casual for the last 8 years. I love my job as a Convenor, I am always looking at new menu items and new ideas for the kids, teaching them Healthy Food options and working with money. I love interacting with the Children each day, including my own children who love that I work at their school.

My employer informed me of these new mandates "NO JAB NO JOB" on the last weeks of school and informed me that she DOES NOT agree with the mandates! They are a P&C and are volunteers, they have given me very little information on what to do because they don't know, they are volunteers. They have told me to get in contact with the School Principal who told me to do a survey, without a registered QLD Government Education Department employee number this survey cannot be done, I am employed by the P&C not the school. The principal's opinion is that "You can easily be replaced" she is retiring this year and I feel she does not care.

These mandates to be vaccinated to work are unjust and unlawful. These mandates have caused me and my family great stress as we will lose our jobs, jobs that we love!! How will we be able to pay our bills, put food on the table?? We will not get injected with an experimental gene therapy drug. A poison that is causing many people we know lifelong side effects. I suffer from lack of sleep due stress, possible loss of income. Our children question why they can't do everyday stuff with their friends, this upsets them, and they ask why there are mandates, I thought it is a choice. Why are they taking away our freedom unjustifiably in what seems to be not about my health?

Introducing such ridiculous mandates means I could lose my job; I will also lose a lot of my volunteers who help with the running of the Tuckshop. I have built our Tuckshop up and we are making a good profit for our little school but without volunteers I will have to reduce our menu, our service or possibly close. Our P&C members are volunteers, they too could lose their position, without them we will not have the fundraiser events organised to raise money for our school. This will impact the students, school, parents, and our school community.

STOP THE MANDATES!!! STOP THE VACCINES!!! LEAVE MY CHILDREN ALONE!!! GIVE BACK OUR FREEDOMS AND OUR JOBS!! LET US REUNITE AS AUSTRALIANS!! We are NOT your slaves, you work for us, the people of Queensland and Australia. The mandates are causing segregation of people for no reason. The Jabs are causing fear in the people.

I believe these mandates and Jabs are NOT for the good of our health. You have created a divide between friends, co-workers, and families. This is not the Australian way! You have lied and lied and continue to lie to the people of Queensland and Australia. You have lost my trust and I will NOT vote for you again!!!! Let us have our freedoms, LET US HAVE OUR JOBS!!

Educator 331

For 19 years I have been an upper primary school teacher and I have the ability to motivate students, make students believe in themselves when they never thought they could, build strong character in students moving towards high school and guiding children to become kind and confident young adults.

My name is K and I am 40 years old, have spent 19 years in the the Department of Education and I have a Bachelor of Primary Education degree. I have had the opportunity to work in leadership within my school, but have turned down that opportunity multiple times as my heart is the classroom where I can make an impact everyday. I have been working in my current school for 12 years and am an integral part of their community in Brisbane's South East. My school's community has a high refugee and migrant population and I have had to form relationships with these families, to gain trust and be seen as a member of their community. It has taken 12 years for me to build those relationships and gain their trust. I have taught multiple siblings within the same family and have seen their children grow up, get their licence, get married and even have their own babies. I have been there for those families milestones as their children continue to grow up.

It saddens me that due to this mandate that I will not be able to continue to be a part of the families lives within my school as I am no longer allowed to work. The impact this will have on the community will be significant as there is a high level of trust from the parents within my school. Many of the parents at my school are illiterate and have English as a second language and are unable to support their children at home. They rely on me as their child's teacher to help their children navigate this world and they use my expertise to help inform them of how to support their child. From what high school to send them to, helping their daughters with puberty issues, to monitoring sleep, guidance, almost being a second parent to these children to name a few. When the relationship and trust is gone, who will help these parents guide their children in this world? Who will these parents trust? It is so difficult to form new relationships with parents quickly and be valued and trusted within a tight school, family and religious community.

As a parent, of a primary aged child, I am worried about what kind of education my child will have this year, if my child loses great teachers due to this mandate, who will motivate my child to want to learn? How will my child continue to thrive? Who will foster my child's love of learning? What impact will there be on the continuity of my child's learning if there isn't consistent teachers through out the year or days where my child may have no teacher? What size classes will my child have? Will my child have teacher aides to support the teacher? Losing these teachers, teacher aides and support staff is going to have a detrimental impact on my child's education also.

For my family me not working is not sustainable. I have had to draw up a new budget, we have had to reduce our mortgage repayments, my partner will be working more hours to compensate for the loss of my income. How is that fair to him? To have to work more? To see our child less - just so he can put food on the table and roof over our head because I have been forced out of a job. One that I don't actually want to be forced out of, one that I had hoped I would be doing for another 30 years.

The concerns raised above is causing significant impact on myself and my family. The worry for my students, who now will not have an amazing year 6 teacher to guide them through their final year of primary school before high school. The worry for my child and what type of quality education and teacher my child will have and the concern and worry for myself.

Being a Teacher is who I am. It shapes so much of my identity and I am terrified of who and what I will become without it. I don't know who I am when I can't do this job that I love so much, I am passionate about teaching and education and feel that it is my life's calling. I am not sleeping well, have been to the doctor for stress. I have also had my very first panic attack while hosting the year 6 graduation that I coordinated. While watching my students year 6 photo movie, that captures the highlights and events of their year, I realised... How can I not do this again? How do I walk away from this? How do I not give the gift that I have and share it with another group of students? These have been taken away from me. A panic attack took over. I was unable to breathe, I thought I was having a heart attack, I was crying hysterically all because I am choosing not to be vaccinated to keep my job. I am now suffering insomnia, night terrors, stress and panic attacks. 4 things that I have NEVER ever had before this vaccination mandate. Every time I think about what I am losing and what my next class is missing out on... it brings me to tears. These thoughts roll through my mind over and over and over each day.

My Principal told me, right before he left on Graduation night, that whatever I need, to let him know. As he is losing the most passionate and dedicated teacher on staff. Even he knows what the school is losing due to this mandate.

Can't there be another alternative? I want another alternative other than just having to be vaccinated. I would do a Rapid Antigen Test before each work day, I will wear a mask or PPE if need be, I will happily take on a new role away from children for a period of time until we see where the country ends up ie. revising or rewriting curriculum or being a consultant to new graduate teachers. I just don't want to be terminated!!! This is not an option for me. This will crush me and I am terrified of mentally where this may lead me if it comes to this. Offer me an alternative position until we see what happens, so that another group of students get the opportunity to have me as their teacher.

I urge you to please read, and think about my story and how you can help me. It is ultimately the children who are going to suffer. Our children, our grandchildren, the future generation, the people who will be working alongside us in years to come. Our families. How is this fair? Would you want your children/ grandchildren educated in this system where the most passionate, dedicated and loyal teachers are no longer? I know I don't.

Educator 332

My name is ..., a 51year year old mother of 5 daughters. I have been employed by Education Queensland at State school for the past 10 ½ years. I find it a privilege and honour to be part of the education team at this school. I love to help children mature in this holistic environment, watching them grow, reaching their full potential.

For the past 4 years I have worked in the room. I am involved in the day-to-day school logistics, ordering and sourcing resources for both teachers and students. I also account for and order furniture for the school. I liaise with the leadership team and support teachers with what they need to the best of my ability. The beginning and ending of each term is a very stressful time. The demand and expectations required on myself with resources coming in, resource accountability, repairs, sourcing, forecasting and dealing with the seasonal aspects are an absolute challenge which takes a personal and emotional toll on myself. The build up this year with end of year celebrations, moving furniture ready for next year, class resource requirements and making sure we have all resources ordered for next year, ready to start fresh seemed daunting and larger than ever. With the pressure that I was under I felt as though I was drowning with no let up or relief. Feeling distraught and anxious I approached my line manager and let her know of the pressure that I was under. She was supportive and supplied more help with extra staff to assist.

At the same time dealing with my current employment stress situation, the mandate from Education Queensland stating for all staff to be vaccinated was pushed upon me. With only a couple of weeks of receiving the mandate and the end of year timing, half way through the second last week of school, to which I was already beyond myself. I was busy and stressed and given little to no time to make a very important decision. I felt pressured and pushed to make a quick uninformed decision. I have found this the most stressful time of my career, indeed my whole life. My husband and two daughters had recently lost their jobs. One daughter felt she had no choice but to have the vaccination, even though she did not want to, she needed to keep her job to pay for her study. I booked myself into the doctor to talk over my medical options, but in attending the appointment the doctor saw how stressed I was and that I had lost so much weight with the stress that I was under. She diagnosed me with anxiety and would not discuss the other matters until I could make a sound informed decision. I am now on medication to try and calm my anxiety. Getting constant emails and texts from education Queensland about my vaccination status is not helping me to calm down, to make an informed decision.

Prior to seeing the doctor, trying to be informed and seeking advice, I contacted my Union in relation to this matter. With one and a half weeks to go I sent a letter from the union, questioning and asking for a risk assessment. Things changed immediately, I felt like I was out on an island by myself. I would walk down the corridor and everyone would disappear into their offices. The support I once had, felt like it was gone. My Line Manager informed me to contact the staff vaccination hub. They did not want to deal with the matter or discuss it. I asked my Principal if I could have a talk with her, which at first she was hesitant about. We met Tuesday afternoon at school. She could tell how stressed I was and said she would support me in whatever decision I made, but I did need to go and see a doctor, as I was not my normal self. I had not been sleeping, I felt anxious all the time and was quick to anger and I was beyond rational in thought.

What I can not understand the most, is during the height of the pandemic of 2020, Education staff were considered low risk areas and it did not matter what was going on. We continued to work and dug deep, to make sure the children had a stable, normal environment to attend. We trusted the advice and complied. But, now the advice has changed and we are now losing our medical choice/freedom. The trust has gone, our livelihoods have been threatened and we are now losing our careers.

I now feel so concerned for all communities, nationwide. The great loss of passionate, experienced teaching staff and support staff, and hard-earned careers gone. The impact that will be laid on the children and remaining staff. Years of experience and expertise will be lost. The stress and anguish it has caused many of us, trying to understand this sudden push, with little time to decide. Please STOP the mandate, give us other options, masks, tests whatever is deemed safe and let us do what we love and have worked hard for. We are here to serve our communities and the children who we love to teach, grow and protect.

Educator 333

My name is J and I am a female relief teacher working for Education Queensland. My work is centred in primary schools in classes from prep to grade six. I have given 29 years of service to Education Queensland after 5 years of early childhood teaching in private educational settings. I have a Bachelor of Teaching in Early Childhood Education . My gift as an educator is to love all the students in my care and make learning exciting and enjoyable.

My employers response to the mandate has been reminders to fill out my vaccination status. This government mandate has impacted my family because I cannot take the Cov-19 injection so consequently am faced with losing my job. Our family income will be halved by this mandate. The impact of this is increased pressure on my husband to provide our basic needs.

Mentally , the loss of a job I love and losing the ability to help provide for the needs of our family has caused mental anguish and ongoing anxiety.

Each school has a preferred list of supply teachers and seven schools have my name on that list as one of their preferred teachers. Because I frequent a pool of schools I have developed trust and respect from their teachers, students and parents. If I am not permitted to return I know I will be missed for my experience and compassion in the school environment.

I have learnt skills that enable me to handle trauma children with serious behaviour issues. There is an increasing need for staff with these abilities. The Covid medical procedure does not stop people getting Covid or transferring Covid.

My request is that all teachers not be discriminated because of their vaccination status. I want this mandate to be revoked so that we may continue doing the job we are trained for and love to do , to educate our Queensland students in a democratic society where freedom of choice is maintained.

Educator 334

My name is D, and I am secondary school teacher working in the private sector at a Gold Coast school. I have been working full time at the same school for 11 years, and I have 25 years of teaching experience. I have a Master of Special Education, and a Bachelor of Education with a specialisation in teaching English. As an English teacher, ESL teacher, Learning Support teacher, and Special Education teacher, I have been blessed to work with a wide range of students with varying learning needs.

Now, due to vaccine mandates for teachers, this is all about to end. I have not been able meet the deadline for the first vaccine, and have been stood down. My principal has been very supportive and understanding, but unfortunately his hands are tied because of the school's obligation to comply with the health directive.

I now face losing my job, which will have a huge impact on my family's financial security. My children are feeling insecure, and I'm having to reassure them that they'll always have a roof over their head and food on the table. To protect them, I must hide my financial and emotional stress.

This vaccine mandate is impacting on my mental and physical health. I can't sleep. I feel physically sick from stress. I'm getting heart palpitations and have made multiple visits to the doctor from fear that I may be at risk of a heart attack (I have a strong family history of heart disease, so this is a genuine concern). The anxiety I feel over choosing between a vaccine I don't want and keeping the job I love is overwhelming.

I am heartbroken about not being there for my students at the start of 2022. These are kids with varying disabilities who rely on me and trust me to help them get through their days at school. My role as case manager and support teacher of 60+ students is going to be challenging to fill as it requires ongoing relationship building and collaboration with students, parents, teachers and specialists. I've been working closely with my current students for the last 2 years. Amongst these are autistic students who don't adapt well to change and will not adjust to losing me. Furthermore, this year I have been supporting the high school transition process for students with disabilities. Since I am the person who has been meeting with the students and their families, and visiting them at their primary schools, these students with vision impairment, autism, intellectual impairment, and anxiety are all relying on me for their smooth transition to high school. Because my role is so specialised, I don't believe the school will be able to manage without me.

I ask that you take whatever measures are within your power to stop vaccine mandates for teachers. It is not worth losing highly experienced and qualified teachers to reach a vaccine benchmark. The resulting teacher shortage and impact on school communities will be too great.

Educator 334

I'm H, female and I'm 41. I've been a primary school teacher for 12 years mostly teaching Year 3 to 7. I currently live in Brisbane. I have taught in both state (10 years) and Steiner schools (2 years) as both a permanent employee, relief and contract teacher. I have a Bachelor of Learning Management with Distinction, graduating in the top four of my graduating class, and completed post graduate Diploma in early childhood and currently completing my post graduate qualifications in trauma in education. I have a gift of being able to work with the really difficult boys in the classroom. I always seem to get the boys who cause the most trouble in the school and turn them around. I have a gift of connecting with them, supporting them and helping them see their own potential and gifts they have. I have a strong well-being aspect to my curriculum which permeates my entire pedagogical practice.

The mandates and directives that were released on 30th November devastated me even though I knew they were coming at some point. In the middle of class I burst into tears. In the months leading up to the mandates, colleagues would sit in the staffroom and make fun of those who weren't getting the vaccine, calling them terrible names. In the end, I stopped going feeling very lonely. I didn't dare step into the staffroom after the mandate as I knew what they would be saying. Without a word being said to me, the school I was meant to continue on with next year just simply didn't present a contract like promised. We've been bombarded with text messages and emails. For the last 2 years my home has been my place away from the constant messaging and now that isn't even safe from this. Receiving these text messages from the Department of Education, whilst at home, in my little sanctuary away from this, has been like physical hits. This harassment has had a very big impact on me and how I feel in my own home.

The mandates have devastated me. I love my job. We now have lost one entire wage from our household, just like that. It feels similar to when my husband was diagnosed from cancer. A rug has been pulled out from underneath me and it's nothing I've done. Teaching has been a big part of my life and I'm heartbroken that I'm not going to be there with a class next year.

Since July 2021 I have been suffering with anxiety and panic attacks. The panic attacks were occurring at least twice a week. I haven't slept properly since July. At times I am so tired I snap at my family. I went through a stage of genuinely not wanting to be here anymore in a world like this. It took a lot for me to find my strength again. My husband and I are on auto pilot trying to survive. We often look at each other and joke "who are you again?" I'm looking forward to spending some 1:1 time with him again one day. My 7 year old son has gone from being Mr Independent to having separation anxiety. He now needs to sleep with me at night and won't go anywhere without me. It's breaking my heart watching him suffer through this. We've decided to home school him next year to keep him safe as I just don't trust what is coming to schools next year. He knows he will be home schooled is very upset he will not be with his friends.

I love working with children and making a real difference. My number one goal is for my students to want to come to school. I make sure I "see" each and every one of them every day and connect in with them. I'm very worried about what is going to happen to schools next year. It seems that overseas workers will be brought in, teacher aides are going to be asked to step up and undergraduates will be offered teaching positions. I'm concerned about what will happen to behaviour, the well-being of students and the curriculum. The behaviours we deal with on a daily basis shock most people. I'm concerned that foreign workers will not be able to teach phonics or correct annunciation to our younger grades. I'm concerned that the cultural differences mean they aren't equipped to deal with the behavioural issues Queensland schools face. Mostly, I'm concerned for my colleagues who have had no choice but to get the vaccination and now are going back to work for an employer they no longer trust. I've worked in schools where there are Year 1 students who cannot participate in the class at all, who tell you to f off when you speak to them and throw staplers and scissors at you. The government is putting our children at risk in so many ways.

Educator 335

~My name is L, I reside on the Gold Coast, I'm a 57 yr old female and after a messy divorce and our business folding and walking away with nothing. I began working with the Education Department 13 yrs ago as a cleaner. Thankful that I had a job and could keep a roof over my head.

~I have been transitioning over the past two years, from Cleaner to Teacher Aide working with kids with "Special Needs" and also as an "Out of Home Care" Support Person. (Which was to lead into my T/A hours becoming permanent in 2022) and this was leading me back into a roll that I had worked in prior with "Family Support Group" for 12 years.

~The only response I have received from my Boss was that the Email I sent him regarding my concerns and the Mandatory Vaccine had been forwarded onto HR. As they are the "ones" that will be responding to "all" Emails. ...This made me feel "very alone"... But it's not the first time I have felt this way... I was diagnosed 4 years ago with PTSD due to a work related experience that went on for a few months in which I never really felt supported in, at that time.

~The Department of Education making this "Vaccine mandatory" has had an enormous effect on my Mental Health. I've gone backwards and I'm on medication again . As now I am no longer in a job I thought I would have until I retired and the uncertainty of what the future holds re finding another job at my age. This has heightened my anxiety, depression, panic attacks again, a "Hole" I had been trying to crawl out of.

~I feel emotional that I will be letting the children down. I have formed such a bond and a trust with some of them, only to be now leaving them with a feeling of being abandoned yet again and someone has once again let them down. This breaks my heart as it took so long to form that trust.

~ I feel I have a right to be heard and be able to continue to offer my support to the children and the Education Department. It should not be based on my vaccine status. Where is my right as an unvaccinated person not to be able to continue to do what I love.

Educator 336

My name is K. I am a 43 year old, female, Primary School Teacher in the Caboolture area. I completed a Bachelor of Education – Primary at QUT and have been employed by Education Queensland on a permanent basis directly after finishing university. I have been proudly teaching young minds for 21 years in the districts of Ipswich, Bundaberg and Caboolture. In each of these communities I have used my gifts of patience, resilience and understanding to encourage, nurture and excite children about the possibilities their future can hold. On day one every year, I have sat my new class down in-front of me and told them that we are now a *family*. I am their school “mum”, the classroom is our “house”, their desk is their “bedroom” (keep it tidy!), and the school is our community. We need to stick together and look after one another. Be kind and considerate of our family’s needs and feelings and if you have absolutely any worries or concerns, I am always here to listen and help. All of these children know they could come to me about anything and as most of them being from disadvantaged backgrounds it was necessary, if I am to have any success with them in the classroom.

Since the vaccination mandates have been announced for the Education Sector I have been completely overwhelmed with emotion. When I expressed these concerns with my principal that I wasn’t comfortable with being forced to get the vaccine, he was completely understanding, sympathetic and supportive. However, he said that he had very little information at the time and could not give me any advice. I have a wonderful relationship with my principal and am concerned that not only will I lose my job, but will leave him with a problem at the beginning of the year. Because of my experience and skills, I had been specifically asked to be the main full-time Learning Support Teacher for next year, as our school has doubled its enrolments of children with special needs and disabilities. I am so looking forward to doing this role.

The impact on my mental health and my family has been enormous. My 15 and 13 year old daughters have seen their mother break down and cry during dinner, car rides and other random times. My eldest is a promising ballerina and is set to perform with the Brisbane City Youth Ballet at QPAC in January. With these mandates and my husband and I making the personal choice of being vaccine free, means that we had to tell her that we weren’t allowed to volunteer to help out backstage or watch her performances – this is devastating! My youngest will be able to go in with her Grandmother while we wait outside. The financial impact on our family will be equally enormous. 18 months ago my husband was diagnosed with Silicosis in his lungs. He had to close his custom spray-painting business. He has been on WorkCover as he can no longer work in his field, however, these payments have now stopped. As I am the full-time worker and main provider of income for our family at this time, we are going to struggle to pay our mortgage never the less give our children the opportunities to follow their dreams.

My personal mental health has always been great. However, since the announcements of mandates for the unvaccinated and on top of that, being threatened to lose my career if I don’t comply, I have been an absolute mess! I am unable to sleep; have a heavy sensation in my stomach; am distant and distracted with my family; constantly feeling worried and anxious. I have never experienced these feelings before in my life.

My concerns for my students are just as strong as the concerns for my family because they are my family! There is not a week that goes by at school when I mistakenly get called “Mum” and we all laugh about it. Who will be their “school mum” now? Who will keep an eye on those vulnerable ones who come to school with bruises, no lunch, filthy clothes. Who give them some tuckshop and a hug and boost them back up? Will I get to say goodbye? What about all my ASD children who are excited that I will be working with “just them” next year?

What I am asking for is options rather than forced vaccination. Can I wear a mask and have rapid-antigen testing? Can I work outdoors and keep appropriate distances? Can I be transferred into another role? It takes a special person to be an educator, especially in a low socio-economic area. I am an educator through and through. Please don’t force me out of a job that I love.

Educator 337

My name is R, I'm a Casual Teacher Aide in a Brisbane Special School and have been for just over 1 year as I've recently changed career paths and absolutely love it! I Have 1 more unit to go before I receive my Education Support Cert 3. My background is mainly the Fitness Industry but I started looking at working in Special Education when my daughter was diagnosed with Global Development Delay almost 3 years ago. After working closely with her Speech Therapists and Occupational Therapist I realised I would like to pursue a career in this Industry and started to Volunteer at the Special School where she attended ECDP (Early Childhood Development Program).

My employer has encouraged everyone to get the vaccine since the mandate was announced, there are many staff that were pressured into getting the vaccine due to fear of losing their job and not being able to pay their mortgage and weekly household bills. I have not had the vaccine but I want to keep my job as I find it so fulfilling giving our special needs students voices, inclusiveness and equal opportunities.

It has already impacted me with arguments with my co-workers, family and friends as this vaccine should be a choice and we should not be coerced. Every day since the announcement I feel sick to my stomach in wondering how will I keep a roof over my head and my 5 children (1 being special needs). The daily pressure from DoE emails and text messages keeps me in a constant state of worry.

In Term 1 I was supposed to go permanent and by the end of the year I was planning to buy my first home as a single parent who only separated 18 months ago.

I am gravely concerned for our students in Mainstream and Special Education, loosing so many kind hearted teachers with so much experience, and let's face it Special Education staff are another level of compassion.

What I would like to see is the Mandates removed for employees in Education and anyone working with Disabilities. Also, all industries that have been mandated because no one should be pressured into taking an experimental drug that has so many adverse reactions, to keep their job.

Its time to listen to the people, or the future of our student's education is going to be impacted not only in 2022 but for years to come.

Educator 338

I have worked towards the position I am in today for the past 6 years – completing my first year as a Health and Physical Education Teacher in a youth detention facility. I began my career on January 27th, 2021. This specific job is why I started my education degree – to work with and assist some of the most disadvantaged children in the state of Queensland.

I hold a great deal of passion working in this area and alongside these children, whose lives have been significantly affected by unfortunate circumstances.

There is no single word that describes how I feel knowing that I could lose all I have worked for – all due to my personal and private medical choices.

I believe each person has the right to choose what medical procedure they wish to undergo and should not be forced, coerced, or be made to choose between their job or a medical procedure. Facing the possibility of having my job and my freedoms stripped away, leaves me in a very negative space. Have the past 6 years been all to waste? I am sad, I am frustrated, I am anxious, I am angry. I am suffering from mental health illness brought on by these drastic changes.

I do **not** agree with mandatory vaccinations (for adults or children).

Educator 339

My name is V and I have been a valued full-time, permanent employee of Education Queensland for 24 years; with over 18 of those years as a Teaching Principal in small, rural primary school settings. I hold a Bachelor of Education: Early Childhood and a Masters of Education: Special Needs & Learning Difficulties. My current school is X mins outside of Rockhampton. My gift to education is that I don't leave anyone behind; I make sure every child succeeds and progresses and enjoys coming to school.

THIS IS WHAT YOU ARE TAKING AWAY FROM ME AND MY STUDENTS, STAFF AND FAMILIES!

I have been informed by numerous emails by Education Queensland, that I will no longer be able to work in my chosen field without the mandated COVID19 vaccination. I have been personally phoned by my employer, requesting that I fill in my survey link so they can replace me. I have already been informed of who will be replacing me in an Acting Principal capacity when I have been terminated from my role as Principal of my school. My request for leave has been declined.

These mandates have negatively impacted on myself and my family, with the imposed threat of losing my job and our family's livelihood. The real threat of losing my car, as it is salary sacrificed through Education Queensland; and my home if I'm not able to make the repayments. Our two high school children will have to go without many things should I not be able to continue working at my school. I am already moved schools for my daughter as I will not be able to pay the fees.

I choose not to comply with this vaccine mandate for my health and the health of my family. This is a constant struggle between doing what's right. When has it ever been mandatory to choose between a job and your health? I cannot sleep for I am constantly thinking about the imposed consequences of defying the Education Queensland mandate. A stress-related skin condition is exacerbated by the threat being imposed on me come 10th January. My family's Christmas and holiday season was squashed by the thought that I only have 1-2 pays left and how am I going to survive. Although, my husband is supportive of my decision making, he too is stressed beyond a doubt as we share this disastrous decision.

My deepest concern other than my own career, is that of my students, their families and the wider school community. As Principal in a small town, you are the centre point of the community; I have provided stability for my families over the past three years as prior to that there were endless years of acting and below standard leadership. With one-third of my families currently in crisis, this will inflict further pain and hardship on them, as their respect for me in my role is paramount. With several students already living with trauma, even more will be inflicted due to this senseless mandate. Five out of fifteen staff at my school will be losing their jobs.

I am asking that Education Queensland and the Queensland Government reconsider their mandate on allowing non-vaccinated employees in their schools. Being vaccinated or non-vaccinated does not make me a better or a worse teacher, nor does it stop me from being able to do my job. Reconsider the 'high-risk' status that has been labelled on schools, when throughout the pandemic we remained 'low-risk'; please reconsider PPE and RAT to be utilised instead. All I ask is that I can continue teaching and sharing my love and passion for education with my students.

Let this be about education! This mandate is not about our Health or what's best!

RECONSIDER THIS IMPOSED MANDATE!

Educator 340

My name is C. I'm a proud 57-year-old Indigenous woman, living in the Gympie region, who is also a mother, grandmother, auntie, sister, friend and for the past 10 years a dedicated Teacher Aide. This career has been such a rewarding time because I have been blessed to have spent the majority of this time working in the Special Needs Department. This has allowed me to foster an insight and understanding into the thinking and actions of these highly creative, specifically focused and majorly misjudged children.

These mandates have me extremely stressed. My principal quite adamantly responds that it's not him that's directing teaching staff to be vaccinated, though he's in no way fostering a solution, he simply responds saying it's above him and he has to follow orders. What sort of citizens is this person raising for tomorrow?

I've spent so many hours crying, stressing and then just numb. What will become of me? With a father whom died of a heart attack, my mother of blood clots, my compromised liver and weak lungs, and mandates that are unforgiving, the foreseeable future is appearing very bleak. And where will this leave the students? I feel concerned that an advocate for their concerns may soon be expelled from their lives, leaving them vulnerable and perhaps manipulated into decisions that are questionable.

I would like all the mandates to be eradicated now and a ceasing of locking up healthy people never to be enforced. Health authorities need to give advice on foods, medicines and exercise that will not only repair but build a healthy functioning immune system. Citizens both young and old need be educated on being responsible for their own health and what that means and looks like (fresh air, non-genetically modified food, backyard food grown (if possible) and a promotion of healthy relationships.

Please try to understand the plight of the people at these extremely bizarre times.

Educator 341

In a busy Prep classroom in North Queensland I'm known as Miss R. I am a full-time Teacher Aide and this will be my 11th year of employment with Education Queensland. I have a certificate III in Children Services and certificate IV in Education Support. I work with all students in the classroom including children with special needs.

On the last day of term 4, 10th December 2021 the principal of the school I am employed at verbally told myself and others that we will be stood down without pay and possibly our employment terminated if we don't comply with mandates. I had applied to take long service leave for term one of 2022 as I had accumulated 226 hours. I felt I needed a bit more time to weigh up my options as a concerned mother of three with an autoimmune disease. The principal then told me I was denied my long service leave and an emailed followed on Monday confirming this.

Community is everything in our small town and the proof is in the support I have been shown by parents/carers of students and staff. On the last day of school I had never experienced more tears, hugs and conversations relating to the unknown of the future. I was inundated with questions and concerns and not only did I not have the answers, I was also fearful myself.

On the 24th January 2022, 30 Prep students will start their education journey in the classroom. I want to be there to comfort them and wipe away their tears when their parents or carers leave on their first day. I want to see them achieve their very best. I want to support them in their learning adventures. I want to help them create and imagine.

I have spent the first 2 weeks of my holidays sending emails, joining a union and making phone calls, fighting to keep my job. Why??? Because I truly love my job!

Educator 342

My name is E and I'm 58 years old. I worked as a Guidance Counsellor in the Catholic system, at the same secondary College, for the last 15 years and I absolutely loved my job. My qualifications are Bachelor of Education, Master's of Education (Career guidance and Counselling), Grad Cert in Criminology/Criminal Justice and numerous certifications in Psychotherapy, trauma counselling and Adult Literacy and Numeracy.

My childhood was riddled with much trauma and neglect and although I went to over 10 high schools I was unable to complete anything more than a year 10 level, and only after repeating that year. The most pivotal person in my world was my Guidance Officer who, literally, saved my life. She was the one person who cared about me and met with me in her office at school weekly. I was so traumatized by many events that I was unable to learn or focus and consequently I did not achieve anything at school. I left in year 11 and spent the next 8 years travelling, working as a professional singer and dancer and model. I went back to school as a mature aged student (aged 25) and achieved the above qualifications, with incredible struggle and difficulty. I also had my son in my last year of university at age 31 and we were both abandoned by his father.

For the next 26 years I have worked hard as a Learning Support Teacher, AVT Communications, Primary school teacher (1-7), contract and supply teacher for years 1-7, Special Educator, ATSI Tutor University Tutor and finally- a Guidance Counsellor- a role that I consider to be the apex of all of my combined experiences. Whilst I graduated from my Masters in 1999 I did not apply for any GC roles as I knew that I needed to acquire more experience in a wider variety of areas to justly do this incredibly important role. In 2006 the first job I applied for as a GC I was successful.

Over the past 15 years I can confidently attest to literally being the life changing influence in hundreds of young lives, even being the at the critical end of being first responder to suicide attempts. Unfortunately, this is more common than you would like. My role as a student protection contact has seen my direct intervention in numerous cases of domestic and family violence, giving witness/evidence in court cases and working alongside students in witness protection, mental health facilities, Dept of Child Safety and police. No day is the same.

I am the voice for the weak, the shoulder for the grief stricken and the arms for the unloved....

Over the last 2 years I have watched my students becoming more riddled with anxiety, have a greater sense of hopelessness for the future, sadness over milestones robbed from them and experiences and opportunities missed out on. The suicide and mental health of our population is exploding and the silent real pandemic is not being acknowledged. I have watched my colleagues also stricken with anxiety, fear and despair as this senseless nonsense is inexplicably relentlessly rolled out....I have seen marriages falter and fail, families being torn apart, relationships and friendships forever altered-and people taking their lives through financial ruin. This is the true cost.

None of this is about health or even science. It is bullying on the highest level, coercion, industrial criminal behaviour, ignorance and breathtaking stupidity. And our children will pay the highest price.

In my situation, I will be terminated from a very successful and happy career that I fully intended to continue in until retirement age and then beyond. I have some superannuation, but clearly, 10 years short of the original plan. I imagine that our illustrious leaders haven't quite thought through the financial burden they are now putting on the current and future taxpayers- a group that is now significantly smaller than previous. I am resigned to probably being one of the recipients of our numerous categories of welfare that our governments so generously dispense. It seems ironic that I would come full circle -fighting my way out of poverty to finance my education and start my career to end up back in poverty due to the criminal, remorseless and cavalier attitude of the politicians. Please step up, as you have been elected to do, and put an end to this horrendous and senseless rule of tyranny- STOP THESE MANDATES!

Educator 343

My name is M and I have worked in the public system for 35 years. I teach English and Humanities to high school students and am a Senior Experienced Teacher Level 2. I have been in the one school for 33 years. My gift is working with the students who struggle, the Special Needs students who are integrated with the mainstream classes. I work with the lowest of the mainstream students. My Y10 Essential English class had 100% pass rate. Not really amazing until you realise they all failed Y9 English. I have completed three Kokoda challenges with students, walking 48ks as a team. I give it all for my students.

My employer has been supportive of my position. I am a valued member of their team, however they are bound by the mandate. The mandate. I have not taken the vaccinations being offered. I have a medical history that, in my opinion, magnifies the risk of serious, perhaps even life-threatening reactions to the vaccination. So I will be terminated. I am the breadwinner in our family. I will be unemployed for the first time ever. We will have no income. How we will manage, I have no idea. It is so scary. My 12 yr old asked if they should get a job to bring in some money. That is just sad.

My mental health is not good. My children can no longer do their music lessons. My son will not get his driving lessons, his license, his formal, his first car, all because of the mandate. How do you think I feel, knowing my children are suffering? I am frightened. I have no skills other than teaching. I taught through lock-downs, the 1.5 metre policy a joke, How can you teach a frightened child from that distance? How can you hear a child through a mask? How can a child hear you through a mask? How can you comfort a child from 1.5 m away? You can't. The last day of the year, I taught my class. At 2:45 I was a great teacher. At 2:51 I was a danger to them. Today, I have no future. No books to purchase, no highlighters, pens, diaries, none of the things I usually take back to school in the new year. I am lost. I am hurting and I am lost.

My students. Where do I start? The girl who relies on me to report the abuse she suffers at home. The boy who is now confident enough to look me in the eye when he speaks to me, he will even joke with me now. That only took two years to happen. The other boy who has given me two smiles over the last semester. Such a big thing for him, he who trembles when adults come near him. My Y10 Essential class this year. My 11s I was to take into Grade 12. My 7's going into Y8. My Y8s. They have lost their champion. Someone who will fight for their rights. Someone who genuinely cares for them. Gone.

I want the right to return to school in my capacity as a teacher. I want the right to be heard, and to be a part of the team I have been part of for 33 years. I have 550 sick hours up. I do not get sick. Yet I am deemed a risk to healthy children.

I want the segregation to stop. I want the divide to be closed. It is almost history repeating itself, a history we said we would never let happen again.

The segregation, the division, the intolerance. Everything we preach to our students. We teach them about acceptance. Ironic, isn't it, when so many of us are no longer accepted.

Educator 344

My name is Miss F and I have been a secondary drama and English teacher for the last four years. I completed my Bachelors Degree while raising 4 children predominantly on my own and most of that time just scraping to keep us above the poverty line. Teaching has never been just a job to me. I feel that my gift as an educator is being able to connect with teenagers at a core level and I am very much the teacher that students come to when they need advice or help. I teach at a school that has a very high percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, a high percentage of students who live in low socio-economic households, and an alarming percentage of students who come from complex and/or chronic trauma backgrounds. These students need teachers like me who understand their complex needs and are able to see past their challenging behaviours and see the child within. Since the mandate came into effect, my employer at an onsite level has not communicated with staff the possible implications and consequences with the choice we were faces with. There has been no communication whatsoever from admin in terms of an open dialogue that facilitates communication and available options for staff. Instead this has been left to only receiving email at an all state level and having to interpret them on a broad scale.

The amount of undue stress this has caused not only myself but also my family is the amount of stress one feels when dealing with a life changing circumstance as well as being similar to a grieving process. I have been coerced into having to get the vaccination in order to keep my job as without my income, I am unable to put food in my children's mouths. I have also been coerced into getting the Covid19 vaccination in order to continue maintaining the solid relationship I have built with many students who, without me, may have no one. I can't do that to them and I'm saddened that it has come to this. The toll this has taken on mine and my children's mental health is immense. I have been having nightmares, I have trouble sleeping, I am unsure who I can talk to and who I can't about my decision. I have tried to see a doctor about getting some help but there is no help available for someone struggling to deal with having to get the Covid19 vaccination as it is not yet acknowledged.

The concerns that I have for my students and my community for the near future centred around the loss of education as they know it. Whilst some of us are being coerced in order to return to school, others are not willing to and that will leave a gaping hole in an already overworked and understaffed education system. Those of us that have been coerced will now go back to work with a great distrust of our employer, of the system we work under as well as uncertainty of our job security. This may result in teachers and education staff leaving the profession in droves. What will happen to the students and their communities then?

I am also concerned about the effect a two-tiered society will have on student's mental health and wellbeing. Young people already have enough on their plates just being teenagers and navigating this is not something that a lot of them are able to add to their burden.

I would like to see the mandates reversed effective immediately. There are other ways we can keep our schools safe and by mandating vaccinations, I don't feel the education system will cope and will effectively crumble under the pressure. I don't want to see that happen to my students.

Let's rethink how we are putting our school needs at the forefront of the education system, as mandating vaccinations are not the answer.

Educator 345

My name is H and I am an experienced teacher with degrees in primary and special education. I have been teaching for 19 years. My passion is early intervention and I have been teaching children ages 0-5 with disabilities for the past 13 years. I have been working in the Early Childhood Development Programs in X, Gladstone and Noosa. I have helped hundreds of young children to develop essential skills to help them successfully transition to Prep. I have had hundreds of parents and families tell me what a difference my team and I have made to their child and families. Many parents who we support are going through a grieving process as they come to terms with their child's disability. We not only support the child, but we provide advice and support to their families.

I had emailed Grace Grace explaining my position about mandating vaccinations for staff and my concerns about vaccinations that have not been adequately researched. Grace Grace's office then responded to my email and they cc'ed my Principal in, so then she was made aware of my position. My Principal seemed genuinely concerned about the stress I was under when she was made aware of my hesitancy to have the vaccinations.

The mandates have definitely impacted me and my family. We have recently purchased our dream property and being faced with the very real possibility of losing my income means that we would have to sell our property. I do feel coerced to have the vaccinations, and it goes against every one of my values. It is a forced choice, not a free choice.

My mental health has definitely been impacted by these mandates and coercive tactics. I deal with a lot of stress at work, both physically and mentally, as I work with very young children with autism and other behaviour issues. I deal with that every single day and I have never experienced any feelings like I have in the last month. Since hearing that my job is on the line, I have been stressing, losing sleep, crying and generally feeling overwhelmed and powerless. This has impacted my family – my partner and our three teenagers have all noticed the impact on my general demeanour.

My concerns are not only for myself and my family. I am devastated for the children and families I support. I am very experienced and have a wealth of knowledge regarding young children with disabilities. I form strong bonds with my staff, children and families. I have also made many connections within the community, including paediatricians, Allied Health staff, NDIS providers, other specialists, kindergartens and childcare centres. Without my extensive knowledge and connections, our children will miss out on crucial early intervention. I provide Outreach services to local Kindergartens and Childcare centres to ensure the staff have the resources, skills and strategies to successfully support children with disabilities and to ensure they are providing the child with an inclusive environment. We work with families from low socio-economic areas who often have no support systems in place. We welcome and support every person who is referred to us.

I am asking for every adult to be able to make the choice to be vaccinated. We worked all through last year as essential workers and we kept everybody safe. I want to see every passionate teacher be able to walk in to their workplace in 2022 regardless of their vaccination status.

Please, please support QLD teachers and staff and get rid of the mandates. We are frontline workers who are educated and experienced. Our vaccination status should have NOTHING to do with our employment status. Every person should have the right to choose what they put in their bodies.