

## **Aims of the *Teachers for a fair go* project**

There are four central aims of the study and these coincide with the four phases of the research. The first is to research and develop criteria to identify teachers who are making a positive impact on the social and academic outcomes of students from low socio-economic status backgrounds across the early (K-Year 4), middle (Years 5-8) and later (Years 10-12) stages of schooling, and in a variety of rural and urban contexts.

The second aim is to use these commonly agreed on criteria to select 30 teachers (15 rural and 15 urban) who are considered to be exemplary within their specific school context. They themselves will become co-researchers with the project's academic research team. There will be 10 teachers in each of the three stages of schooling. The selection of these 30 teachers will acknowledge that there are different ways towards equitable social and academic outcomes and these are highly dependent on context. The aim is to capture both the fine distinctions between, and the commonalities among, these exemplary teachers. The project will aim to identify "exemplary" teachers, rather than claiming these will be the 30 "best" teachers in NSW Priority Schools.

The third aim is to undertake intensive case study research into the classroom pedagogies of these 30 teachers, exploring the causal impact of their work on the social and academic outcomes of their students. The study recognises that these teachers do not work in isolation, and results gained in their classrooms are impacted by other factors that may include school effects, the work of other teachers (preceding and concurrent) and family and peer influences. Nevertheless, this phase of the research sees the importance of studying in detail the critical pedagogical work along the length (stages and critical milestones) and breadth (specific contexts and geographical locations) of schooling. This will aid (through within and cross-case analysis) a clearer picture of how teachers might help students from low socio-economic status backgrounds negotiate pathways towards educational success.

The fourth aim is to explore, with the co-researching teachers, the personal and professional journey that has brought each of them to their current pedagogical position. This aim seeks to inform the system, consultants, school leaders and other teachers about the different ways to encourage and support teachers to improve their classroom practices for students who may be educationally disadvantaged due to their particular circumstances.