

Short staffed?  
Don't be short changed

Page 7

Why we love it:  
teachers on teaching

Page 11

Rallies all over  
the countryside

Page 12/13

Grand Sale! A deal  
done with DOSCEL

Page 14

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VOLUME 12 NO 3 TERM THREE 2022

# The Point



The Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania acknowledges the Indigenous people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.

The Point is published by the Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania.



## Anti-Poverty Week 2022

16-22 October

Anti-Poverty Week is run by a national network of organisations that engage with the Australian community to increase our understanding of poverty and act collectively to end it. This year the event celebrates its twentieth anniversary by calling on Australian governments to set a goal to halve child poverty by 2030.

Head to the APW website at: [antipovertyweek.org.au](http://antipovertyweek.org.au) for extensive teaching resources, the latest news and upcoming events.



## Our Members Be Unlimited

Don't miss out on Sam Wallman's bestselling union read of the decade, the acclaimed book-length comic *Our Members Be Unlimited: A Comic about Workers and their Unions*. It's 256 magnificent colour pages of history, narrative, distinctive art, and thoughtful writing asking: 'How did the idea of unionism arise? Where has it flourished? And what are its challenges in the 21st century?' A great primer for newcomers to unionism, and a great read for anyone interested in social justice and collective action.

Available in all major bookstores and through Scribe Publications:  
[scribepublications.com.au](http://scribepublications.com.au)

## Footy Colours Day

It's a fun day for staff and students to celebrate their favourite team, but it's really about fundraising to help kids with cancer keep up with school. Education can be a crucial anchor of normalcy for kids diagnosed with serious illnesses, and this charity supports that with suggestions for events, lesson plans, video testimonials, and tips and tools.

All the information you need is at  
[footycoloursday.com.au](http://footycoloursday.com.au)

## Learning to recognise words: Research into Practice

Sunday 23 October, 9:00am to 4:00pm  
The Capitol, 113 Swanston St, Melbourne

This Learning Difficulties Australia conference features orthographic expert Professor Linnea Ehri discussing how children develop proficient word recognition skills. Other speakers will consider how to ensure all students are given the best possible chance to become readers and writers. The conference ends with a Q&A panel allowing participants and presenters to interact and share ideas.

Go to [ldaustrial-ia.org/events/](http://ldaustrial-ia.org/events/) to book your slot.

## What's in The Point

### Victorian Catholic bargaining

James Goold House rally culminates first of actions Page 4

### Tasmanian Catholic bargaining

From the ridiculous to the unconscionable Page 7

### OH&S spotlight

Why your school needs a Health and Safety Rep Page 8

### Four explorations of being a teacher

Teaching is an art and a skill Page 12

### Labour History

Immortalising the incredible feats of Zelda D'Aprano Page 16

### Social justice in schools

The documentary revealing *Love In Full Colour* Page 17

### Ending gendered violence

WorkSafe and the IEU tackle pervasive prejudice Page 18

### Aboriginal Change Makers

The course that showcases Indigenous heroes Page 19

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## Another win for the IEU over Peninsula Grammar

Regular readers will be aware of the long series of victories recorded by the IEU standing up against Peninsula Grammar on behalf of members.

In July, the union scored another emphatic legal win for a member at Peninsula Grammar by forcing the school to honour its fee discount for staff with children at the school. The school (represented by the Principal, Stuart Johnston), found guilty of unconscionable conduct last November, now has to pay the union's legal costs – amounting to \$150,000.

The Federal Circuit Court found against the school, which had cut fee discounts for the children of teachers working at the school when remote schooling started during the pandemic. It said the blanket imposition of the lower discount 'was grossly unfair' to teachers who had secured higher discounts.

At that time, IEU General Secretary Deb James told the *Herald Sun* Peninsula Grammar had engaged in 'multiple attempts to pass the costs of lockdowns on to staff, from standing down employees without pay to dishonouring negotiated fee discounts'.

'It's a real shame to see a wealthy institution like Peninsula Grammar display such little loyalty, regard or care for hard-working staff,' she said.

Deb said the only financial impact of the pandemic on the school had been 'the huge legal bills they've amassed trying unsuccessfully to squeeze their own employee out of their legitimate entitlements'.

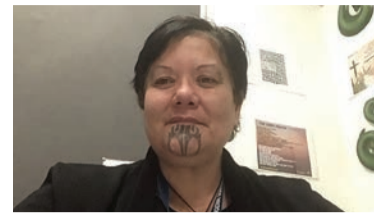
Earlier this year, in a separate matter, Peninsula Grammar agreed to pay IEU

non-teaching staff for the period they were stood down during the first COVID lockdown in 2020. The matter was due for a five-day hearing in the Federal Court after two years of litigation, but settlement was reached outside court.

At the time of the court's fee decision, the *Herald Sun* reported the finding was 'expected to have implications for many other colleges'. They were right.

The result sent the message that the IEU would protect the legal rights of its members and doggedly pursue any school which used the pandemic to cut costs by accessing staff wages.

Every other school which attempted to stand down workers without pay reconsidered their position in the face of successful legal action from the IEU. Peninsula Grammar were offered the same settlement but chose to fight to the end. After years of fighting, our members have won back everything the school tried to take from them, the IEU has won its legal costs back and the school has spent a fortune fighting only to lose the lot.



## Why I Love it: Kim Joyce, Student Support Officer

In this issue, as we continue to push hard for a deal in Catholic education, we wanted to honour the reason the negotiations are so important – educating our students is vital work, which should be personally and professionally rewarding.

### What attracted me to my job:

Nine years ago, I saw a position working in Youth Justice for a Maori & Pasifika Liaison Officer. At that time, I didn't know how to write a resume, so I enrolled in an Education Support Certificate IV course run at a local Community Centre, hoping to upskill myself enough to apply for the position and to fill out the application professionally. At the completion of this course, I was offered a role as Student Support Officer at CRC Melton. I never looked back. I have just been appointed as the CRC Melton Pasifika Engagement Project Officer. God truly does work in mysterious ways.

### What is the one thing you love about education?

The one thing I love about being an ESO are the connections we make with the students and families we support. We are in the unique position to really get to know the young people we work with. Many years after they graduate, students and their parents still acknowledge me when out in the community. So humbling.

### Can you tell us about one time your role was especially rewarding?

I was supporting a Year 8 Humanities class, and the topic was Indigenous Studies. I had recently returned from New Zealand after receiving the ancient cultural markings of my ancestors – Moko Kauae. It was so timely, here was a living breathing primary source. The schools and the teachers encouraged and supported me to facilitate the many conversations around 'being Indigenous' during these lessons. So powerful, so rewarding.

For our Why We Love It feature, see page 11.



GENERAL SECRETARY  
DEBRA JAMES

## Standing up for a fair go – again!

IEU members shouldn't need to be rallying in the streets standing up for a fair go while employers drag the chain on what ought to be a pretty straightforward deal – but here we are!

We need an Agreement for Victorian Catholic schools that keeps pace with government sector outcomes and addresses the workload crisis facing staff in schools.

The current Agreement expired back in April 2021 and the last pay rise was received in October 2020! The deal for Victorian government schools was done back in February, and we reached agreement with the Diocese of Sale on a deal which at time of publication has been strongly endorsed by staff. It is anticipated that long-overdue money will flow to members

in those schools over the next few weeks. The government and Sale Agreements significantly improve scheduled class time, give greater autonomy to teachers, lift up rates for the lowest levels of Education Support staff, and finally introduce a right to time-in-lieu which recognises the significant out-of-hours contribution required of staff who supervise extra- and co-curricular activities.

Employers cannot keep taking the labour of their staff without recognising it – and paying for it. Staff are stretched, exhausted, and overwhelmed, and their

goodwill is drying up. Even before the stretch of remote learning through COVID, workload was a critical issue in schools, with the majority of teachers and principals reporting, through an independent study conducted by the NOUS group, that they were working well in excess of 50 hours per week. We can't go on like this.

Teacher burnout is a significant factor in the looming teacher shortage. Too many young teachers are leaving in the first five years of their careers, and education systems are not doing enough to support and retain them. They're also certainly not

doing enough to attract new entrants to the profession.

### Employers cannot keep taking the labour of their staff without recognising it – and paying for it.

This is a 'line in the sand' moment for employers. We know that students value the commitment of their teachers

and support staff, and that parents want their kids to have the best education possible. We also need education communities where students thrive. For this to happen we must ensure that teachers are respected, trusted, supported, given enough time to do the job effectively, and most importantly, not taken for granted. They deserve a fair go.



## ‘Enough is enough!’: James Goold House rally, 11 August

The afternoon of Thursday 11 August went from cyclonic to balmy in an instant, as if to accommodate teachers and education staff commuting to Victoria Parade in East Melbourne for a rally at the offices of MACS.

But members labouring under the MACS group of employers came to raise their voices and state their case – a monsoon wouldn’t have kept them from attending.

In some cases, however, extra workload requirements did. A mannequin adorned with IEU gear held a sign from the members at Marian College: ‘The members from Marian College are absent due to working for free until 8pm’.

It spoke for many others – IEU Deputy Secretary and the afternoon’s MC David Brear opened proceedings by noting the irony of asking overworked members to do something extra by attending the rally.

David made it clear that MACS employers were in denial. They had postponed that morning’s bargaining talks, and not for the first time.

He said that the employers knew what a toll workload intensification had taken on staff – their own research had proved it, and most education staff are working at least 50 hours per week just to get their work done.

‘It’s been too long!’ he said, setting the tone for other speakers following.

General Secretary Deb James said teachers were exhausted, and employers were using up their goodwill.

‘You’ve carried schools during the pandemic... you need an Agreement to respect what you do.

‘You are not free labour, you are professionals – you should be respected!’

Deb said the offer coming from MACS ‘better be a good one’ and ‘they’d better not be stuffing us around’.

‘If others can get it done, they can!’

Other speakers echoed these sentiments: ‘They don’t care; we need to make them care. If we have to go further, we will!’

‘Let’s make sure we get what we deserve.’

After handing over thousands of member ‘report cards’ (and many pointed words) to MACS negotiators, IEU Reps Rebecca Long and Maree Shields addressed the rally with raw emotion.

Rebecca said it was ‘awesome’ to be protesting amongst comrades, but ‘sad’ it was necessary. She said that staff in Catholic education were being treated as ‘cannon fodder’. The bosses had ‘lost touch with reality’ and work creep was now affecting their physical and mental health.

Maree agreed that ‘we shouldn’t have to be here.’ Her powerful speech had a strong impact - you can read it in full on this page.

The crowd, which had gathered in front of a prominent IEU mobile billboard, was in good voice when called upon ‘to shake the chandeliers’ in James Goold House with some chanting.

*What do we want?*

**A FAIR DEAL!**

*When do we want it?*

**NOW!!!**

Deb concluded: ‘They cannot be left with a clearer picture of the depth of feeling of members. It’s a really good thing for these negotiators to see. No more! Enough is enough!’

‘If the offered deal is not good enough... This is the line in the sand!’

**‘NO MORE!!!’**



### Rally speaker:

## Maree Shields, Christ the Priest School, Caroline Springs

I’ve been a teacher for 20 years. I got into Catholic education because that’s part of who I am.

I was raised a Catholic, I went to Catholic schools myself. And we churn out some of the best people. But we are falling over; we are SOOO tired!

And they (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools) just don’t seem to get it.

**So often I feel that if I am doing my job well as a teacher, then I’m being a crap mum or a crap wife or a crap daughter.**

And they’re not helping by extending these negotiations beyond what has to happen. They’re putting more and more pressure on us. They just don’t get it. Over my 20 years we’ve

constantly been asked to do more and more and more.

None of the things we’re being asked to do are unreasonable, but we’re not getting anything taken off our plates. And we’re not getting compensated for the extra that we’re always putting in. We have that calling to Catholic education and to raising the best possible kids that we can.

I go home and I put my kids to bed, and I have nothing left in my tank to give them. I put them to bed, and I do more work. I don’t get compensated for that. I don’t get anything taken out of my workload to compensate for that. I spend hours on the weekend doing more planning and preparation for the next week, because that’s what good teachers do.

But we need to be recognised for that. Something needs to happen or we’re going to lose the good teaching staff from Catholic schools.

So often I feel that if I am doing

my job well as a teacher, then I’m being a crap mum or a crap wife or a crap daughter. Because I just don’t have the energy to put in any more. I’m running on empty.

Consultative Committees were formed to try to alleviate this type of pressure. We need to put something into our Agreement to make sure that Consultative Committees have some sort of accountability. They’ve got accountability fail-safes built into the government sector... Why can’t we have that in Catholic schools?

We realise we’re not going to get the best pay rise; we can’t control inflation; we can’t control interest rates.

So put something into our Agreement that recognises the hard work we do put in.

We shouldn’t be here tonight. This is just another stress added to our already overloaded workloads.

Do something! Get the job done!



### Rally attendee:

## Karen Bailey, Catholic Regional College, Caroline Springs

It’s not easy for a teacher who works in Melbourne’s deep west and lives in Bacchus Marsh to attend a rally in the Melbourne CBD.

Karen had to organise care for her kids and finish work early. But she wasn’t going to miss the chance to lend her voice to the campaign.

Karen’s dual roles as a teacher and wellbeing expert give her a unique insight into the toll workload intensification and the pandemic have taken on students and staff.

‘Teachers are fed up with not being treated fairly. We get paid for 7.5 hours a day, but we average between 10 and 14 hours per day working... There’s so much extra admin we have to do.

‘Kids’ mental health is suffering, especially after COVID, there’s so behind the scenes work that people don’t see.

‘We just want to be paid for what we’re worth.’

Karen says her staff are well aware that their Agreement expired over 400 days ago, and they resent COVID being used as an excuse not

to bargain when they turned up for work throughout the pandemic. In fact, it meant they worked even more hours.

It infuriates her that MACS are not negotiating when staff go the extra mile to organise extras like camps, excursions, school musicals, science week, and maths week.

‘There’s so much extra work put in for the benefit of the students and we do this for the love of the job - but at the same time we need to be appreciated a little for all the work we do.’

Karen loves her job for the ‘light-bulb moments’ in the classroom when a student grasps something they’d previously not understood, but also for the challenge of ‘being there’ for students, including those struggling with domestic violence.

‘Things like (campaigning) can pale in comparison to what they’re going through but at the same time employers need to recognise that these

are the hard things that we go through daily, and our job is not just grading papers, it is liaising with families and external agencies and all the things that go on behind the scenes.’

She says there’s been ‘more take-up in union membership for sure’ since the negotiations became a marathon.

‘COVID has really pushed people to that point that they realise they need an extra bit of support because the union does recognise our needs. A lot of the union are ex-teachers who understand what we’re going through.’

# Super guarantee rises again, on its 30th birthday

Your employer is now obliged to contribute at least 10.5% of your total earnings to your super fund, up from 10%, as the Superannuation Guarantee continues its gradual increase to 12% by 1 July 2025.

Compulsory employer contributions had stalled at 9% but unions continued to argue that figure was nowhere near enough. Finally, after years of campaigning, legislation was enacted to ensure the rate again increased. The recent change of government ensured the increase went ahead as planned.

There was another significant reform after the Liberal government departed – the \$450 threshold for superannuation was finally abolished. The threshold meant that workers who earned less than \$450 per month from a single employer didn't receive any guaranteed superannuation contributions. The change means hundreds of thousands of low-paid workers – disproportionately women and casuals – now have a chance to save for retirement.

Senator Jess Walsh, the new chair of the Senate Economics Legislation Committee, is considering raising the Super Guarantee to 15%.

'In this (chair) role, I look forward to delivering our Government's plan for an economy that works for people, not

the other way around.

'That plan includes strengthening our super system making sure super is paid to workers preferably at the same time as their wages, ensuring the ATO can and does crack down on dodgy employers with urgency and with force, getting the super guarantee to 12% and once it does, we're looking at whether and when we should aim for 15% and finding the best way to make super payable on paid parental leave.'

All union members have access to advice and legal representation if things go wrong in the workplace. That includes issues with underpaid super – don't forget to reach out to your union if your employer does the wrong thing.

Until 1992, most workers in Australia didn't have a superannuation account, most employers were not obliged to make contributions to them, and the super industry was dominated by a few funds that made a killing from members' fees.

It was unions, working with Labor in government, which secured a mandatory contribution system in which millions

of workers for the first time were able to build their own superannuation savings to fund their retirement.

As Mia McAuslan wrote for Australian Unions: 'Before employer super contributions became compulsory in 1992, borderline poverty was the end destination for most Australians after a lifetime of labour. Those who did retire with decent super were mostly male business executives.

'Employers didn't offer up super contributions with unprompted goodwill – the right to superannuation was entirely union member driven and won. Today the whole nation benefits. That is the power of collective action.'

If you're starting out with your super, or need some explanations of its complexities, head to the superannuation section of the Australian Unions site at [australianunions.org.au](http://australianunions.org.au)

## Playing catch-up with change



**DEPUTY SECRETARY**  
DAVID BREAR

Recently I finally got around to purging my home office filing cabinet of paperwork that had accumulated over 30 years.

In doing so I came across the tuck shop price list from my kids' primary school from back in May 1999. I don't know why I kept it.

Back then lunch choices for kids were:

Hot Food – Chips, hot dog in batter, fried rice, souvlaki, hamburger with the lot or cheese.

Sandwiches – Strasburg, egg, cheese, honey, vegemite – 20c extra for toasting.  
Cakes – including donuts, wagon wheels and vanilla slices.

Drinks – soft drinks, juice box or Big M (500 ml).

Finding that old price list got me thinking again about how much things have changed in schools over the last couple of decades.

What we are expected to provide as educators has become more complex and sophisticated – and meeting these expectations takes time.

An old colleague of mine used to say that if you wrote a list of every additional thing you've been asked to do to in a school over the past five years and another list of all of the things you no longer had to do, the former would run to several pages and the latter would probably be blank.

Many new initiatives legitimately add to student learning outcomes, but you can't expect staff to offer enhanced programs without providing more time and resourcing for them to do it.

I doubt there is a tuck shop in Australia where the menu hasn't changed since 1999, but I know plenty of schools where the time allocation and autonomy for staff to get their work done hasn't moved a bit.

That's got to change, because the expectations on educators just keep piling up.

Schools, school systems and governments just can't keep pretending that it's reasonable to give educators the same amount of time to get increasingly complex and demanding jobs done.

# Teacher Shortage Summit: did it address the real issues?

ABC commentator David Speers simplified the task for those attending the Summit by saying, 'It's not rocket science... you've got to pay them (teachers) more and improve working conditions'.

Ideas which arose out of the meeting of state education ministers included: paid internships, study incentives, shorter teaching courses, a targeted financial incentive scheme for hard-to-fill positions, poaching teachers from overseas, earmarking regional high school students for the profession, and performance-based pay, among many others.

Education experts like Pasi Sahlberg worried the 'National Teacher Workforce Action Plan' which arose from the Summit would deliver 'more good intentions and little concrete action'. He said performance pay 'takes away from the main issue'.

'Instead of paying some teachers more, every teacher in Australia deserves fair compensation that reflects the work they do'.

The federal government is expecting more than 50,000 teachers to permanently leave the profession between 2020 and 2025, including almost 5000 teachers aged between 25

and 29. A recent government survey of 18,000 teachers showed that teachers are working an average of 57 hours per week.

Our federal IEU branch and the AEU warned that quick fix responses such as sending unqualified teachers into classrooms would have long-term consequences for both teachers and students, and aggravate early career burnout. Instead, they say the workforce plan must involve ongoing consultation with education unions, and have respect and recognition for teachers at its centre.

Christine Cooper IEUA Federal Secretary, said that for over a decade, education policy has ignored the voice of the profession, leading to education policies that don't support or reflect the realities of the profession, nor the needs of schools.

The expert and the unions had the same conclusion as David Speers.

Sahlberg said workload is the most common reason for teachers intending to leave the teaching profession.

'This is due to overwhelming

administration, reporting and paperwork for compliance purposes.'

Sahlberg says other countries have similar issues and one step forward would be to learn from the annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession with the world's top-performing education systems, which Australia has not attended since 2011.

He said the new plan must address the 'root causes of teacher shortages: unproductive working conditions and non-competitive pay'.

The IEUA concurred: 'Our members will tell you that unsustainable workloads created by unreasonable demands and unnecessary duplication, along with stagnated salaries are the key reasons behind burnout and why they are choosing to leave the profession.'



## From the President



UNION PRESIDENT  
MARK WILLIAMS

A lack of understanding of working conditions has been a theme of recent interactions with education authorities, whether it's been negotiations on wages and conditions, or the low priority given to the health of school staff still dealing with COVID and flu.

It seems obvious and understandable that the law expects medical institutions to insist on mandatory vaccinations of staff, and PPE gear and mask wearing for all staff and clients – even with limited numbers of replacement staff. I find it less understandable that these mandates are no longer applied to the education sector.

A classroom where teachers are in close proximity to dozens of students for up to five hours per day in small, enclosed spaces and in constant risk of COVID infection is a working environment in which real safety precautions (including mask wearing) should be in place.

### It seems that two years of total commitment and high performance under extreme duress by school staff has been to their own detriment.

With this intensive contact, safeguarding school staff and students and their families, including grandparents and other vulnerable individuals in the wider community, should demand a similar strictness of application as medical practitioners.

Worse still, RATs are now limited to those families who are symptomatic. In other words, it's only when students have already been at school and infectious in the classroom that we test them!

It seems that two years of total commitment and high performance under extreme duress by school staff has been to their own detriment. No matter how much genuine positive encouragement we give staff as school leaders, employer representatives (are you listening, MACS?) seem to still lack empathy for what their employees have gone through, and indeed, are still going through.

I know it is probably slightly naive to expect our authorities to express anything but meaningless, pious platitudes of appreciation, but enough is enough... isn't it?

# Independent bargaining round-up

Gaining improvements around workload in enterprise bargaining is vital to ensure the future of the profession.

Every day the IEU office receives calls from members who are at their wits' end. Impossible workloads are badly affecting their physical and mental health, and their personal lives, and jeopardising the longevity of their careers.

During bargaining discussions, members consistently state that salaries are very important, especially given current inflation rates, but unsustainable workloads are the highest priority.

All current logs of claim across the sector include measures to address the workload crisis, such as reduced scheduled class times and the inclusion and strengthening of Consultative Committees. These measures and many more are being claimed by members to ensure they choose to stay within our profession.

Many employers are exceedingly hesitant to include workload limits into their Agreement. Bargaining Reps are working with members to push employers to realise that these improvements must be enshrined in Agreements, as they have been in the Victorian Government and DOSCEL Agreements.

#### At the table

Bargaining Reps at **Billanook College** were provided a day clear of other duties to work on their log of claims. They consulted with members to ensure voices were heard and their issues considered, and the log delivered to management in the first bargaining meeting was well received. Two items remain 'in development' and these will be presented by the Reps in an upcoming all-staff meeting to ensure they reflect the majority view.

At **Xavier College**, the log of claims has been presented to members and a staff 'Structure Test' was conducted to ensure members understand and support the claims. In this meeting over 100 signatures were collected, a strong showing of support. The most interesting element of this claim is the request for parity between junior and senior teaching loads, and long overdue adjustments to weekend sporting and other co-curricular activities.

At **Hume Anglican Grammar School** bargaining is slowing winding its way to resolution with only a few items still being discussed. One of the major sticking points is around senior teacher salaries which are running at the lowest percentage above VGS wages when compared to the other levels. To an outside observer, it appears that the longer teachers work at Hume the less they

are financially valued. Recent surveys of members reflect workers have had enough of unpaid duties being added to an already busy workload.

The **North-Eastern Montessori** team has begun initial discussions to develop their log of claims.

The Notice of Employee Representational Rights (NERR) has been reissued at **St Mary's Coptic** and a bargaining timetable is being negotiated. The log of claims has been finalised and addresses workload parity measures and the maintenance of salaries above the VGS.

The NERR at **Bayview College** is on its way to members and the log of claims is being developed. Members are focussing on workload reduction measures and wage parity. They are aiming to ensure the inclusion of a Consultative Committee and that existing policy arrangements are locked into the new EA.

The team at **Ilim College** has prepared their log of claims and are awaiting the issuing of the NERR by the employer this month.

Bargaining is well underway at **Alphington Grammar School**. The school has made a pay offer which is being considered by the membership.

**Aitken College** Bargaining Reps have presented their claim and the employer has made an initial response.

Bargaining continues for the Anglican Schools Commission Victorian Agreement for **Cathedral College** and **Cobram Anglican Grammar**. The log of claims of the members and the employers have been delivered and unpacked at the bargaining table. Further meetings for the remainder of the term are locked in.

The bargaining team at **Mt Scopus Memorial College** has sought an improvement to the wage offer put forward by the employer. Some progress has been made on workload issues, however not all items have yet been resolved.

A majority of **Bialik College** staff voted 'No' to the proposed Agreement that had no reductions in workload but maintained a 4% salary premium above government schools. The bargaining team worked hard to try to get management to understand that members felt the current workload was unsustainable. Management rebuffed every workload reduction offer put forward. The bargaining team has sought more meetings with management to restart bargaining.

**Bacchus Marsh Grammar** have offered a pay and workload deal that has been resoundingly rejected by

members in a survey. The bargaining team will seek further meetings with management to pursue a fair deal on pay and workload.

Members at **Highview College** have adopted a log of claims and the bargaining team will soon meet with management for a whole day to work through them.

Bargaining Reps at **Eltham College** have worked on a draft log of claims and are seeking feedback from staff to ascertain claim priorities.

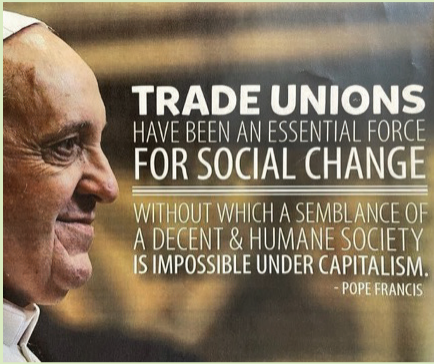
Bargaining at **Firbank Grammar** has yielded an in-principle Agreement and the employer is working on the final draft Agreement for IEU review.

Negotiations are ongoing at **Overnewton**. The employer has tabled a wages offer, and the employee Bargaining Reps are awaiting further details.

Negotiations continue for both the Teachers Agreement and General Staff Agreement at **Presbyterian Ladies' College**. The employer has provided an initial offer and further negotiations are forthcoming.

After the employer requested a hiatus, bargaining at **Gippsland Grammar School** has recommenced and is proceeding with renewed vigour and openness. The school and IEU will be presenting a list of items agreed upon to all staff and providing a status update for all unresolved claim items.

Negotiations at **Beaconhills College** for a General Staff Agreement are nearing the drafting stage, much to the relief of all involved, and the process for a new Teachers' Agreement will commence soon with pre-bargaining surveys. This will allow for the development of an employee log of claims which will hopefully be ready for serving by the start of Term 4.



## Tasmanian Catholic employers — from the ridiculous to the unconscionable

The behaviour of the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (TCEO) – which still refuses to properly bargain on a new Agreement – is descending into farce.

Of late, they have gone to great lengths to stop Tasmanian IEU Organisers from going about their normal work, trying to prevent them from assisting members, and meeting with principals and staff in schools.

Richard Heyward (TCEO HR Manager) has made a discrimination claim against Tasmanian-based IEU Organisers, asserting that they are discriminating against him on religious grounds by speaking directly to principals without his involvement! Mr Heyward also made a Fair Work Claim stating that the IEU is wrong to identify principals 'as, or representing the employer when it seeks to resolve disputes' under the Agreement. Never mind that the Agreement itself defines principals as 'the person appointed by the Employer or his/her representative to be in charge of the school'.

Tasmanian Catholic school principals may be interested to learn that, according to the TCEO, they have no power or authority. Mr Heyward describes principals as 'non-relevant parties', and

argues that the 'correct identification of the employer is the employer's designated representative which is the People Services Team of Catholic Education Tasmania...' – in other words, himself.

We are flattered at Mr Heyward's enthusiasm to talk to us and sad to learn that he feels left out when we communicate directly with principals. However, we will continue our long-standing practice (as required by the Agreement) of talking to the relevant principal first about any concern that comes up at their school. If a matter is likely to escalate, we involve the TCEO, and we respect principals' rights to seek advice, support, and representation. The fact is that most concerns we raise are local matters, and easily and co-operatively resolved. Unfortunately, in our experience, when Mr Heyward gets involved things get messy and protracted – in particular, his persistent failure to respond punctually or constructively has caused principals and countless staff significant and unnecessary stress.

In another desperate attempt to

prevent the IEU from going about its core business, the TCEO has also started to insist that IEU Organisers present a current Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWWVP) in order to set foot in a workplace. Organisers have no contact with children; their sole contacts on school visits are members of staff. If there was any doubt that this is just a hurdle thrown in the way of union representatives by the TCEO, consider this: the TCEO are also refusing to allow IEU Organisers to attend meetings at the Hobart TCEO Offices unless they show a RWWVP, despite the fact that there are no children or students at these offices!

Unfortunately, this anti-union ideological warfare is not only complicating the work of IEU Organisers, it is also continuing to derail bargaining for a new Agreement. While we continue to seek regular, constructive meetings with the TCEO, they maintain their refusal to meet for long enough to have any meaningful discussion (and never in person). We served our claim last November, and after eight months we

have had three short online meetings with no real progress - when we do meet, their vocabulary seems to be largely limited to the word 'no'. The TCEO are also desperately trying to work around the IEU and 'negotiate' with employees through an online portal. That way they can avoid any real discussions and maintain the imbalance: the TCEO, their lawyers and all of their resources on one side, and individual employees on the other; and they won't even meet members in person!

All in all, it seems a pertinent time to remind the TCEO of basic Vatican II doctrines recognising unions and their crucial role in workplace relations, as well as Pope Francis' own sentiment regarding unions:

'Trade Unions have been an essential force for social change without which a semblance of a decent and humane society is impossible under capitalism.'

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

# Don't be short changed when your school is shorthanded

When your school is beset by staff absences, how much more can you be asked to do?

With COVID-19 and flu rampaging through schools, IEU members have been hit hard. Absences are at an all-time high and those who haven't burnt out are close to it. We all do it for the students and (mostly) love our work but, on top already excessive workloads, the demands to cover the absences of colleagues is pushing many beyond their limits.

So what can be expected of you? **Support staff in Catholic and independent schools** can be asked to pick up other people's tasks provided that the request is 'lawful and reasonable'. The ask is probably lawful (unless the employer asks you to do something like teach without teacher registration, or drive without a licence). The real question will be whether it is 'reasonable'. Of course, what is 'reasonable' can be a bit subjective, but there is some case law about this, and the *Fair Work Act* has some criteria as well (see section 62).

- Here are some of the factors:
- Can it be done safely?
  - Is it within your skill set and you are trained to do the work?
  - Did you get plenty of notice about having to do the work? If so, it is probably 'reasonable' but, on the other hand:
  - Would doing the work cause significant inconvenience to you or your family?
  - Is the work normally done by someone at a significantly higher pay rate?
  - Did you give your employer plenty of notice that you can't do it?

Because if so, it probably isn't reasonable.

If a non-teacher employee takes on extra work which causes them to work additional hours, then they are entitled to overtime pay and may convert that pay to time-in-lieu. While some employers try to compel support staff to take it as time-in-lieu, this is not lawful under the Award and very few Agreements allow employers to

do this. If you want overtime pay, that is your right, so have a close read of your Agreement and if in doubt call the union.

The situation for **teachers** is (even) less clear. Total working hours, while theoretically 38 per week, are not strictly regulated and we know teachers work many, many more hours than this. But scheduled class time (SCT) is regulated in most schools. In Victorian Catholic schools the current maximum SCT is set by the Agreement. It is:

- 22.5 hours per week for primary teachers
- 20 hours a week for secondary teachers (plus 14 hours of extras per year).

The current round of bargaining is set to reduce these limits and start to regulate working hours much better but, in the meantime, the scheduled class time limits are all we have. Outside the Catholic sector, class time limits vary so check your Agreement (or call the union).

If teachers are asked to pick up extra classes, legally they must not exceed the scheduled class time limits. Through the COVID years we know that teachers have in many cases agreed to exceed these legal limits because there have simply not been enough available teachers to keep all classes going. We also know that all manner of arrangements have been agreed to by Consultative Committees. Some schools have agreed to extra pay for those taking extra classes while others have agreed to additional closure days or student-free days. No-one should be expected to breach the legal limits but, provided the school's consultative committee has agreed and teachers are doing this willingly and without coercion, we understand it.

Then there are all the 'little additional tasks'. There is no rule about these except the overall considerations of occupational health and safety and 'reasonableness'. If the additional work you are asked to do makes

your workload excessive, then it is a threat to your health. There are big penalties for employers who endanger the safety of their employees. And 'reasonableness' can be measured by the effect the additional work will have on you and your family. One of the most significant awards from a court in recent years was to a teacher who was given all the 'hard classes' and had a breakdown. There is no doubt that your employer can be held liable.

We all do it for the students, but there is a point at which we have to stop. It's important to protect the health of all teachers and support staff, and to make sure that we're not trying to manage impossible workloads.

You have the right to refuse additional work when the load becomes unbearable. Make sure that you and your colleagues don't burn out trying to 'do the right thing'.



## HSR profile: Brendan Nicholls, St Ignatius College Geelong



### What made you willing to nominate as HSR?

I felt I'd be able to help identify OHS issues and offer suggestions about how they could be resolved. I was a little naive it turns out, as the role is much more involved and significant.

### What has been challenging about the role?

I have experienced a lot of resistance as the elected HSR attempting to educate, consult and use the powers of the HSR to bring about change. Although I have found others have good intentions, their lack of any training in OHS has led to many situations where unnecessary tension has occurred.

I've also found trying to balance the need for action to resolve OHS issues and offering a reasonable amount of time to complete them to be quite a juggling act. Sensing when and how to follow up concerns has been difficult at times.

### What has been rewarding for you in the role of HSR?

I have found the positive feedback of staff in the DWG to be very fulfilling. I've also felt satisfied by resolving extremely dangerous OHS concerns. By completing HSR training with the IEU I have a very good understanding of OHS in school settings and I've achieved many good outcomes that I was unable to previously. Applying these learnings and making the workplace safer has been satisfying.

### Have there been any occasions when you've relied on your powers under the OHS Act in your workplace?

Over the last twelve months, I have made use of every power found in the Act, other than establishing a health and safety committee as there was one already in place. I have issued provisional improvement notices and a direction to cease work, been present in interviews, sought the advice of many people (including WorkSafe regularly), accompanied inspectors, inspected the workplace, and have attended incidents immediately after they occurred. Some of these things have caused tension as others sometimes have not known of these powers.

### Any hints for new HSRs?

Attempt to get the Principal and/or whoever is nominated as the OHS contact to complete OHS training or at least read the relevant compliance guides. These resources are excellent sources of easy-to-understand information, which can help clarify the OHS Act and reduce tension.

## Every workplace needs a Health and Safety Rep

If Occupational Health and Safety is everybody's responsibility, then why do we need a Rep?

It's true that safe workplaces are those where everyone does their part to follow safety procedures and report hazards. However there are specific legislated powers held only by elected Health and Safety Reps which compel employers to consult and act to provide safe workplaces.

It's not employees or the HSR who are responsible for identifying and controlling hazards and risk, that is the legal duty of employers which they can't delegate to their workers or to an elected Health and Safety Representative. The special role a HSR plays at a workplace is not to 'do' the work of OHS – but to exercise protected powers under OHS legislation to do the following without obstruction or interference:

- Inspect any part of a workplace with notice or immediately after an incident
- Take photographs or measurements or make sketches or recordings, including audio and video, at a workplace (with some exceptions)
- Accompany a WorkSafe Inspector during an inspection of a workplace
- Require the establishment of a Health and Safety Committee
- Attend interviews – with an employee's consent – between the employee and employer or inspector
- Whenever necessary seek the

assistance of any person (this could be a union Organiser)

- Issue a Provisional Improvement Notice (PIN) to the employer if they suspect a contravention of the OHS legislation, giving the employer a set timeframe of at least 8 days to remedy the contravention. If disputed, this can be resolved by WorkSafe Victoria/Tasmania. (Note that in Tasmania HSRs can only issue a PIN if they have completed Initial Training).
- Issue a direction to cease work in the case of an immediate threat.

These powers do not impose a duty on the HSR beyond that of any other employee. Like everyone else, the HSR must take reasonable care for their safety and that of others, not act recklessly at work, and cooperate with their employer's directions regarding safety.

HSRs cannot be ignored by an employer – in fact the OHS legislation requires employers to allow the HSR:

- To attend approved training with all costs met by the employer
- Access to information about actual or potential hazards (except confidential medical information if it is without consent)
- Paid time and facilities necessary to exercise their powers.



If there is an HSR in the workplace, the employer must involve them when they consult with workers about safety. This means:

- Giving prior access for the HSR to any information the employer intends to provide to employees within a reasonable time *before* providing the information to the employees
- Meeting with the HSR to consult about the matter *and* consider the views of the HSR.

Employers must also keep and display a list of elected HSRs and Deputy HSRs.

An employer cannot appoint an HSR, they must be elected by and from the Designated Work Group. Because HSRs represent members of the Designated Work Group, WorkSafe recommends that managers and supervisors are not elected as an HSR. Importantly, those employed to help the employer meet their OHS duties are Health and Safety Managers, *not* Health and Safety Reps.

A workplace without an elected HSR leaves employees with less power to insist that their workplaces are free of risks to physical and psychological health.

## Teachers remain frontline COVID workers

As Term 3 began, another wave of COVID infections swept through our schools and the wider community.

Though many infections in this new outbreak were relatively mild, in large part due to excellent vaccination rates, coronavirus still presented a major health risk to many in our community, and infection and death statistics reached unprecedented levels.

Clearly, schools remain on the frontline of the pandemic, but COVID policy applying to education has become murkier and more open to interpretation.

In Victoria in mid-July, a letter about mask wearing was sent to parents, jointly signed by the Department of Health, the Executive Director of Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Chief Executive of Independent Schools Victoria. This letter contained a 'strong recommendation' for masks to be worn by everyone aged over eight in indoor settings 'except where removing a mask is necessary for clear communication or when a particular activity requires the removal of a mask'.

The letter also stated that schools were not required or expected to sanction

students or staff who do not wear a mask in the appropriate setting, but 'asked to communicate this expectation to the whole school community and seek their support for this collective effort'.

Given the widely divergent views about mask mandates, the letter was less a directive and more a declaration of wishful thinking. Yet again, the safety of education staff seems to be sinking down the list of priorities. On page 8 of this publication, IEU President Mark Williams blasts the 'lack of understanding and appreciation' such decisions have shown to educators.

There is also a wide divergence in policy on the ground – some schools enforcing a mask mandate themselves; others more laissez faire, leaving it to students and staff to decide, which has led to some teachers handing out masks in class on their own initiative.

Meanwhile, the acting Victorian Chief Health Officer said he believed hospitalisations could be reduced 'by thousands' if schools achieved high

mask wearing compliance.

After three years of interruptions and compromises, there is one obvious reality: while it is preferable to keep schools open, this is not the only priority, and should not come at any cost. If ballooning infection rates and staff absences create intolerable stress for those left at school, sensible steps including partial, staggered, or temporary full-school closures should be taken.

If you do contract COVID, know that the IEU's position remains unchanged: if there is medical advice to support the fact that you contracted COVID through the workplace then Infectious Diseases Leave should apply. This is a clear entitlement in the Victorian Catholic Agreement, and we would expect similar arrangements to be made in independent schools. Please contact the IEU if you need advice around this.



# The IEU in the news

The campaign for a Victorian Catholic Agreement and the closure of Colmont school led to a spike in coverage for the IEU in the past two months, with radio, TV, newspapers and online publications all seeking comment from the union.



## Bendigo Advertiser Independent Education Union and Bendigo Catholic teachers protest workload pressures

By Lucy Williams  
Updated July 28 2022 at 6:24pm, first published 6:00pm  
0 Comments



ANGRY: Catholic school teachers are calling for urgent action on workloads in Bendigo schools. Picture: DARREN HOWE

Catholic schools teachers and staff have staged a protest rally in Bendigo today, angry over the slow pace of negotiations for a new agreement.

Staff from five local schools attended a protest at the Sandhurst Catholic Education Office on Thursday, calling for action to fix workload issues and to finalise a replacement for the now expired 2018 Victorian Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement as soon as possible.

## Herald Sun La Trobe University study highlights why teachers are turning away from the profession

While most teachers find their jobs were valuable and worthwhile, a shocking number were pushed to the brink during lockdowns.

The Independent Education Union's Deb James said teaching was already a difficult profession before the pandemic, only made harder by pivoting between classrooms and home learning.

"Though the lockdowns provided some parents with a new insight into the dedication of our teachers, the community continued to expect that school would continue and somehow the extraordinary would be achieved every day," she said.



David Brear, deputy general secretary of the Independent Education Union for non-government schools in Victoria said schools were hit hard in term 2 by student and staff absences, and he expects no less for term 3.

Some schools were preparing to schedule home learning days into the new term to cope with teacher shortages, he said.

"As a circuit breaker, some schools last term scheduled particular year levels for home learning and some have indicated that this will continue in Term 3," he said.

He said one inner-city girls' secondary school was starting term 3 with three staff vacancies it couldn't fill - and the problem was worse in some outer metropolitan and regional areas.



mitted to complying with equal opportunity legislation.

"However ... our staff are expected to support and uphold the college's Christian education program, ethos and values within the context of their respective roles," she said.

The Independent Education Union said it would defend any member "disadvantaged in their employment as a result either of a principled refusal to sign up to outdated ... ideas around gender norms or of some perceived failure to fit them".

Emily Howie, general counsel at the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, said the union's stance was "a bit of a red herring".



The independent education union spokesperson said historically there has been one agreement for all staff in Catholic schools in Victoria, excluding secondary principals, but this year the Sale Diocese has split off.

"Recently, an in-principle deal was reached with Sale, which matches most of the salary and condition improvements won by the Australian Education Union in government schools, and has a big focus on tackling the massive problem of teacher workloads," the spokesperson said.

"MACS negotiations have not been as productive, and their team continue to push back against our claims for improving the workloads of education staff."

"Essentially, this means that government school staff and Sale Catholic school staff have locked in significant improvements to workloads (including better parental leave), and over the next couple of months will be getting salary increases and backpay - while those in MACS Catholic schools across the rest of the state get left behind."

"This is starting to become a big problem for principals who are trying to plan for 2023 staffing but don't have a clear framework."



PROTEST: Bendigo's Catholic school teachers are pushing for a replacement for the now expired 2018 Victorian Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement as soon as possible. Picture: DARREN HOWE

## Herald Sun School must pay teacher's costs

A VICTORIAN private school that tried to wind back a teacher's fee discounts must now pay legal costs of \$150,000.

Peninsula Grammar was found guilty of unconscionable conduct in the Federal Circuit Court after it tried to rescind discounts of \$300,000 for the education of the daughters of Melissa Newham.

The school also threatened to expel Ms Newham's daughters and charge her \$300 for every 30 days she failed to pay the higher fees.

In February the court ordered costs against the school and this week the sum of \$150,000 was agreed.

Ms Newham was originally offered a staff discount of 75 per cent off school fees for her first daughter and 70 per cent off for the second. This saved her more than \$300,000.

In a decision expected to have implications for many other colleges, the school was found to have breached consumer law by reducing the discount in April 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. This was reversed in April 2021.

General secretary of the Independent Education Union Deb James said the "fact that the school has now been ordered to pay our full legal costs is an indication of just how poorly judged their decision to dig in and fight this was".



The Independent Education Union, IEU, said in a statement they would continue to work with members at Colmont to offer support.

"We're devastated for staff, students and their families. Too many kids will be searching for a place to continue their schooling on Monday, and too many staff members will be looking for new jobs - not an easy task in a regional area," they said.

"We are working with relevant authorities and our ... members at Colmont. We'll be meeting members at the school to ensure they have support and advice during this difficult period."



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## Shepparton's Catholic school teachers protest working conditions, demand better pay

The Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania is representing the affected school staff in ongoing negotiations with Catholic Education Sandhurst to reach a new enterprise agreement.

Teachers took to the street to voice their frustrations about their working conditions and pay, more than 450 days since the existing enterprise agreement ran out.

Notre Dame English and religious education teacher Jacinta Cosgriff has been working in the profession for about 35 years and said she had never faced challenges like those she was currently dealing with.

"Over the last 10 years, our workload has become increasingly unsustainable to a state where teachers are burning out, teachers are leaving," she said.

**Key points:**

- Teachers from three Catholic schools in Shepparton staged a public protest.
- The Independent Education Union says a subsequent strike is a possibility.
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited is in ongoing negotiations about a new enterprise agreement.

## Shepparton's Catholic school teachers protest working conditions, demand better pay



Independent Education Union members at an early morning protest before going to work. (ABC Shepparton, Ross Ritchie)

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Independent Education Union members at an early morning protest before going to work. (ABC Shepparton, Ross Ritchie)



## Herald Sun Teachers say testing is taking too much time out of students' classroom learning

Teachers want "more time teaching" and "less on Excel sheets" with many furious this "ridiculous" obsession is disrupting students' classroom learning.

Olivia Jenkins Education Reporter

"Teachers expressed a turmoil between the assessment data practices they were asked to engage in, and the actual benefit or value of those practices."

Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania general secretary Deb James said while data insights into students were important, they took up "disproportionate" amounts of teachers' time.

## Herald Sun Catholic teachers to mass in CBD

CATHOLIC school teachers will rally after school on Thursday in a push for improved pay and conditions - and have not ruled out more disruptive industrial action in the future.

The rally, to be held at 4.30pm in front of the Catholic Education Office in Melbourne, will call on employers to do more to address teacher burnout from long hours and low pay. Catholic staff pay and conditions lag behind many other private schools, with a gap of up to \$40,000 for leading teachers.

The Independent Education Union wants to see Catholic teachers in Melbourne, Ballarat and Sandhurst dioceses sign a workplace agreement similar to that signed by Catholic teachers in Sale. Government teachers have already signed a similar agreement.

Union general secretary Deb James said the event was an "after-school rally, not a strike". "We want to get this deal done without disruptive industrial action," she said.

"Our members have been waiting nearly two years for a salary increase, and we don't think they should have to lose pay simply to achieve workload reforms, which are so urgently needed in our schools."





## 'Amazing' teachers help students after traumatic school collapse

While the IEU concentrates on fighting for the entitlements of staff affected by the shocking closure of the Colmont School in Kilmore in late July, members are playing a vital role in helping students.

The IEU has been working overtime to gain clarity on entitlement arrangements for staff, with upcoming meetings to determine whether staff are paid under their Enterprise Agreement or the Federal Government's Fair Entitlement Guarantee.

Teachers were initially focused on helping their distressed students, and the IEU offered its support and helped deal with an avalanche of media queries. But inevitably, it was necessary for staff to contemplate their next professional move. The IEU assisted staff and fought for their rights with two administrators appointed to wind up the school.

After the collapse, students enrolled at more than 30 independent, Catholic and government schools.

However, Colmont had run the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, a program that provides an internationally accepted qualification for getting into universities. The IB program is run in very few schools, and none nearby, meaning it was difficult for senior secondary students to find appropriate placements.

Remarkably, some of the teachers who

lost their jobs offered to work on reduced wages, funded by parents, so the school's Year 12 students could continue their studies leading up to crucial exams later this year.

At the time of printing, 26 of the Colmont IB students who didn't find placements at other schools were being taught by Colmont teachers, using Ivanhoe Grammar School facilities.

Several international students who were boarding at the Kilmore school have found homestay accommodation to continue their studies.

Parent Jane Lamb told *The Age* that some teachers had chosen not to take on more permanent jobs at other schools in order to assist their Colmont students.

'The teachers there are amazing people,' she said. 'The whole thing has been very stressful, but we are just very thankful that these kids have got the opportunity to finish their IB.'

She said Ivanhoe Grammar's support had also been vital.

The school closed due to a lack of funds, leaving 360 students just days to find new schools. The inability to gather fees from international students during pandemic border closures was a factor, but it

emerged that poor business practices had left the business vulnerable. Incredibly, the school was taking enrolments on the Tuesday 26 August, the day before it announced it was closing.

**Remarkably, some of the teachers who lost their jobs offered to work on reduced wages, funded by parents, so the school's Year 12 students could continue their studies leading up to crucial exams later this year.**

IEU Rep Sandi MacNamara said staff had no idea the school was facing closure.

'We've been told that we were in a growth corridor and looking for a

new site to last 100 years,' she said. 'It's absolutely traumatic to have to say goodbye to our kids.'

The school, which didn't own its buildings and facilities, recorded a \$4.38 million deficit in 2021 and a \$620,000 loss in 2020. Recent media reports have raised very troubling questions about financial and governance arrangements at the school, and the reprehensible failure to act on clear warning signs over several years around the viability of the institution.

This is not the first time that an independent school has closed at short notice, leaving staff and students in the lurch. It highlights the need for competent, responsible and transparent governance arrangements. It is particularly unacceptable that hard-earned staff entitlements have been put at risk, and the IEU will continue to fight for every cent owed to our members.



## Tasmanian conference proves languages know no borders

The IEU helped sponsor the Modern Language Teachers Association of Tasmania Conference in August, which drew over 100 language teachers to Launceston.

The theme of the conference – *Languages know no borders* – was appropriate given the research shows that students who learn languages other than English improve their English language comprehension as well as gaining an appreciation for other cultures and diversity.

This makes language teaching a very important and fulfilling vocation which attracts skilled and dedicated practitioners. IEU member Kelsey Cooper, French teacher at Eastside Lutheran School, had made the IEU aware of the important work done by the Association and we were happy to participate.

Kelsey recently won a scholarship from the French Government to travel to Paris. She was one of the conference's many inspirational speakers shining a light on the important work done by language teachers and the Association.

Modern language teachers from St

Mary's College, St Anthony's, Eastside Lutheran, Mackillop College, Friends School, Dominic College, Eastside Lutheran College, Launceston Steiner School, Launceston Christian School, Scotch Oakburn, and Calvin Christian School helped make this one of the most linguistically and culturally diverse conferences ever.

Language specialists from South Australia and Queensland added to the rich knowledge and expertise being shared at the conference. An informative presentation from representatives of the Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations demonstrated impressive research from NAPLAN data showing that students studying an extra language increased their scores in all tested areas – conclusive evidence that modern language teaching must be a critical part of all curricula in Australia.

An important point made at the conference was the need for a language

teaching policy at Education Department and Tasmanian government level, as well as at Federal level.

It was clear that modern language teachers need support by:

- improving the valuing of language education
- gaining access to material support to offer quality programs that engage all learners
- receiving more curriculum support
- getting better access to leadership and professional support from professional associations
- better incorporation of online and blended learning into their programs
- gaining opportunities to undertake in-country learning experiences
- gaining opportunities for experienced teachers to mentor new language teachers, especially in the primary years.

Work has begun between the Modern Language Teachers Association of Tasmania and the IEU to advance these important aspects of language education in all schools.



## Why we love it – education staff talk about their jobs

In this issue, as we continue to push hard for a deal in Catholic education, we wanted to honour the reason the negotiations are so important – educating our students is vital work, which should be personally and professionally rewarding.

'We seek to help our students to be and become the people that they are capable of being. That is what gets the best teachers out of bed in the morning. They look forward to engaging in the complex relationships of a classroom of children or adolescents and finishing each day knowing that 'today I made a difference.'

Michael captures why education staff have hung on so long despite extreme workload intensification – they love their jobs! For most, helping kids learn is more than just an income.

Our focus right now is on the campaign for badly-needed improvements to the working lives of educators. We must keep in mind the other part of the picture – our students deserve to be taught and supported by professionals who are valued, motivated and equipped to do their best work.

Good teaching and learning should be rewarding – and even while battling unsustainable workloads, pushing through lockdowns and just trying to keep their heads above

water, we know that our members find moments of joy and inspiration in their work. We spoke to some IEU members to get some important reminders about the best part of working in schools!

At training in July, new Reps told us what had attracted them to their roles.

'To try to make a difference in the engagement of learning for all students,' said Mark Almond from St Brendan's Shepparton.

'I've always enjoyed seeing kids learn and grow. It's awesome to spark a child's interest and see them get excited and curious about learning,' said Georgina Bennett from St Joseph's Boronia.

Mel Whittle from St Dominic's Melton said she wanted to help create 'a community of learning and a safe haven for students. I love it!'

Ballarat Grammar's Danni Armstrong said it simply: 'A love of learning'.

Asked what their job gives them that no other occupation offers, Meindert Smid from Trinity Grammar, Kew, said: 'A student's

light-bulb moment'.

LSO Nikki Melilli loves 'working with primary-aged children and being part of the start of their educational journey'.

Mark, an art teacher, loves 'inspiring young artists'.

That crucial word 'love' repeats throughout their responses.

Georgie loves 'the joy that comes from seeing a child learn and grow'.

'From a student who can't read to loving reading or the mute student who grows in confidence to be telling jokes in front of the whole class'.

It's also a matter of joy for Mel: 'Seeing a student find self-confidence and success and the joy it gave them because of the classroom I set up!'

And Dean Haydock from Eltham College loves working collaboratively with young adults 'to assist them achieve their life goals'.

## Why I love it: Dave Colcott, Padua College



### What attracted you to your job?

I'm a third-generation teacher. My dad and my grandmother were both teachers and it's always been on my radar. I left school in Year 11 to pursue an apprenticeship in carpentry because I didn't feel that I was designed for school.

I travelled after my apprenticeship and worked with children in Ghana and Canada.

When I got home and started back in construction, there was something huge missing. I got a job as an integration aide (the hardest job I have ever done) and went back to uni to become a teacher.

### What is the one thing you love about teaching that you can't get in any other job?

I don't know a single teacher that does it for the money. I work with an incredible group of humans that do their job because they want to see others become successful. The selflessness I see in my colleagues amazes me every day.

### How do current teacher workloads affect how you do your job?

I can see that currently so many school staff are stretched to breaking point. The level of expectation is increasing, and staff continue to rise to the challenge despite the effect on their own wellbeing. It's just what they do. Teachers are taking work home, teachers with children must open their computers and put in another few hours after they put their children to bed. There's just not enough time to effectively do your job on work hours.

### Can you tell us about one time your role was especially rewarding?

Earlier this term, a Year 8 student made a comment that I spelled a word incorrectly on the whiteboard. Some others laughed.

I explained to the class that I was dyslexic, and that I struggle with reading, spelling, and handwriting. I explained that it's OK because I have had this trouble all my life and people have laughed before. No judgement.

I explained that if I spell a word wrong and someone kindly and thoughtfully lets me know, I would be very grateful and judge them on that.

After that class, one student waited till the rest of the class had left and sheepishly told me that he is also dyslexic and that he feels much better about it now. We discussed the fonts and background colours that made reading easier for us and parted knowing we had a comrade.

Now if I spell a difficult word in that class, they congratulate me.

I have found that if I don't take time out in class to speak on current topics and events, I am missing out on a huge opportunity for students to learn things like communication, humility, empathy, and compassion. In turn not only do they feel valued and calm, but I get a whole lot more out of them.



## Why I love it: Celeste Ramnac, The Hester Hornbrook Academy

### What attracted you to your job?

During the final year of my Masters, I did a short placement at my current school. Instantly, I wanted to work there. I just loved seeing how teachers and youth workers worked together to create such a fun and safe learning environment that really put students at the centre of their education experience. The extent to which the staff worked with and cared for students really changed my perception of what learning can look like in a secondary education setting.

### What is the one thing you love about teaching that you can't get in any other job?

The opportunity to observe and support students to grow and evolve into educated and independent young adults. The relationships you get to form over time with your students is

the best part of teaching!

### How do current teacher workloads affect how you do your job?

Administrative duties definitely contribute heavily to my current workload. Having a lot of meetings and administrative tasks can take away from planning time for lessons and preparing for the new VCE vocational major curriculum changes for 2023, but I'm lucky that I have good leadership that provides flexibility and support when needed.

### Can you tell us about one time your role was especially rewarding?

In my first year of teaching, one of my students was a new transfer to the school. They moved to our school after having many negative experiences in their previous education that really impacted their ability to finish their

final year of school. Understanding their adversity and barriers to education, I made sure to first create a trusting working relationship with this student.

Over the year, despite the numerous lockdowns (it was 2020), this student eventually felt safe and included at the school – something they hadn't experienced for such a long time. The student ended up forming trusting relationships with not just me, but so many other staff and students. They began to be their true charismatic self at school, which also allowed them to really take control of their learning and graduation plan.

This student really made my first year of teaching, and it brings me lots of joy knowing they are out there navigating the world with so much independence and confidence.



# VICTORIAN CATHOLIC BARGAINING: *turning up the heat*

Member frustration at employer inaction leads to rallies across the state.

'You can grill them, you can fry them, or you can roast them with cherries on top in a tinsel decorated ergonomic induction pan, but they're still sausages.'

The sausages in this case being the intransigent MACS employer group. No matter how you look at it, they haven't done much since our last report in these pages. They still seem in no hurry to complete a deal to improve the workloads of education staff and deliver wage parity with Victorian government and Sale Diocese schools.

So, we could have just reprinted the last edition's bargaining report, right?

No.

Because members have been unstinting, and participating in actions intended to wake up the MACS group and get them moving in bargaining.

Whether frying, grilling, or roasting, they've been turning up the heat!

Also increasing the pressure was a breakthrough in the Sale Diocese negotiations, which delivered an in-principle deal that has been resoundingly endorsed by staff across the Diocese.

That draft deal entrenched a raft of significant measures targeting workload intensification, better paid parental leave, salary increases, classification adjustments, and provisions to make Consultative Committees more democratic and effective to safeguard the gains made in the Agreement (see details p14).

While the draft Agreement was being finalised in Sale, IEU members ratcheted up the campaign for MACS to achieve the same outcome.



Firstly, thousands of members across the state filled in their 'Report Cards' on the performance of MACS in bargaining (a unanimous FAIL). The immense variety and creativity of these report cards helped to keep the focus on the lived reality of members, and gave us great content to amplify our cause on social media – see

for example the picture of our suitably disgruntled bargaining team in front of a 'Wall of Shame' of report cards which resonated strongly on social media.

These report cards have since been ceremoniously presented by members to MACS and to the leadership of the Dioceses of Ballarat and Sandhurst.

On the first day of Term 3, IEU members at Santa Maria College in Northcote gathered before school in a local cafe for a briefing on the failure of MACS negotiators to constructively bargain, before proudly gathering in union colours in front of the school.

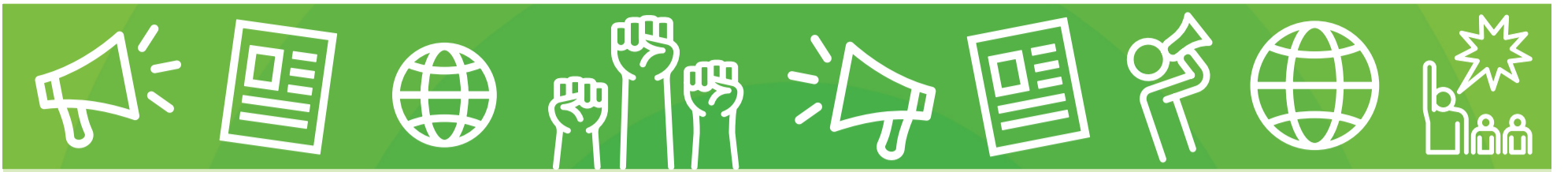
The sub-branch endorsed a motion asking their school leadership to direct Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools negotiators to agree to the IEU's reasonable claims around workloads,

## MACS, get the deal done!

From Ballarat to Shepparton, IEU members have been standing up to have their voices heard, culminating in a vocal rally outside the MACS head office in Melbourne.







salaries and conditions, and expressing deep concern that a failure to do so undermines the sustainability of the profession and has a real impact on both students and staff.

In late July, staff at Mackillop Education in Geelong also voted unanimously on a similar motion expressing their 'extreme frustration' at the lack of progress in negotiations for a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement covering their school.

Actions featuring similar words occurred at schools all over the map, from Sydenham to Shepparton, and from Melbourne to Myrtleford.

Members in Bendigo and Ballarat generated significant media coverage from local newspapers and television by meeting at Catholic Education Offices

to hand over report cards to employer representatives. Braving icy winter weather, their solidarity and good-natured determination was inspirational.

One of the spokespeople most widely contacted by the media for those events was Peter Joyce, the Rep at St Patrick's College. He wasn't as constrained by endless educational duties as others – because he was home on COVID isolation!

ABC radio and internet news, WIN TV news, the *Ballarat Courier* and the *Bendigo Advertiser* were keen to cover those Central Victorian rallies which upped the pressure on MACS employers to bargain seriously.

The following Monday, members at St Joseph's Ferntree Gully kicked off their working week by staging a walk-in and presenting their motion to the principal in front of all staff. Their letter

to their principal emphasised that the arguments the IEU is having are not with their school or school leadership but 'rather with the employer bargaining representatives at the table'.

On 10 August, the *Herald Sun* featured a lead article on the upcoming rally at MACS HQ, the member-driven action in Shepparton received print, online and live radio coverage, and in Melbourne, General Secretary Deb James had a prime-time stint on the 3AW drive radio program.

The centrepiece of this phase of campaigning was the rally held at James Goold House on Thursday 11 August – see pics below and our write-up on page 4.

All the while, the IEU bargaining team have kept up the pressure at the bargaining table for the wins our members (and our schools) so badly need.

The solidarity and camaraderie exhibited by members all over Victoria have given strength to their arm, and is making it increasingly clear to employer Reps that the pressure for a fair outcome is growing by the day.





# Grand Sale! We have an Agreement!

Members in Sale Diocese schools have taken a big step towards better working conditions by resoundingly voting in favour of the proposed Agreement.

Negotiations between the IEU and DOSCEL employer representatives took 10 months and many meetings, but proceeded constructively and with goodwill, and a draft Agreement was agreed upon in July. Details of the proposed Agreement were then sent out to members, who then voted whether to accept the Agreement, with a positive result announced on Thursday 18 August.

That means payments of backpay to the start of the year will be flowing almost immediately to members in the Sale diocese. It also means a lot of changes to workload management, as you'll see from the following.

## What's in the Sale deal?

### Broadly, the Agreement provides for:

- Salary increases for staff consistent with arrangements in Victorian government schools
- Strategies to address teacher workload issues
- Recognition of effective consultation processes
- Improvement of classification arrangements for Education Support staff, School Services Officers, Deputy Principals and Secretariat staff
- Additional leave entitlements including increased parental leave and the introduction of support arrangements for victims of historical sexual abuse
- The inclusion of business managers in secondary schools.

### The Agreement contains significant measures to address teacher workload, including:

- Scheduled Class Time reductions of 1 hour in 2023 and a further half-hour in 2024 - the biggest reductions to SCT in decades
- Limits to before- and after-school meetings of two hours per week (with no more than one hour per day)
- Inclusion of extras in Scheduled Class Time (secondary schools)
- Regulation of teacher working hours through the '30 plus 8 Model', providing teachers with more

control over their time

- Time-in-lieu for any employer-directed work outside the 38-hour week
- Stronger consultative provisions, and better-trained, better-empowered Consultative Committees
- Commitments to better manage workloads, deal more efficiently with administrative burdens and limit spread-of-hours for part-time staff.

## Here are four key areas of improvement:

### 1. Reduced face-to-face teaching limits

This Agreement brings in historic reductions to scheduled class time limits – they will be reduced by 60 minutes per week in 2023 and a further 30 minutes in 2024. The Agreement also removes the 14 hours of extras for secondary teachers – so from 2023 they can only be given additional classes if they are under-allotted.

For full-time primary teachers, this means that scheduled class time limits reduce from the current 22.5 hours per week to 21.5 in 2023, then 21 in 2024.

For full-time secondary teachers, limits reduce from the current 20 hours (plus extras) to 19 in 2023 (without extras) and 18.5 in 2024.

### 2. The '30 + 8 Model'

This Agreement introduces a completely new approach to regulating the 'working week' of teachers – we call this the '30 + 8 Model'.

This model brings clearer regulation of the working day. Normal 'attendance time' for a full-time teacher will be 7 hours per day, commencing no less than 10 minutes before students start. So, for example, in a school where students are expected in class at 8.50am, a teacher's normal attendance time is 8.40am – 3.40pm.

There will be 3 additional employer-directed hours which can take place directly before or after normal attendance time (though no more than 1 hour on any given day).

The model also divides the 38-hour week up into:

#### 30 hours for:

- Scheduled face-to-face teaching
  - Associated work at the teachers' discretion, free from mandated tasks, duties, or meetings.
- 8 hours, consisting of:**
- 2.5 hours of lunch breaks
  - 2.5 hours for employer-directed tasks, including yard duty, requirements to be in a room before class, lunchtime eating supervision, and directed meetings during normal attendance time
  - Maximum of 3 hours of directed duties outside of attendance time. This includes a maximum of 2 x 1-hour meetings unless otherwise agreed at the Consultative Committee.

### 3. Time-in-lieu (TIL)

Along with a more regulated working week comes the introduction of 'time-in-lieu' (TIL) for teachers. Teachers accrue TIL for any required attendance at activities (including camps, parent-teacher interviews, excursions, and sport) which occur outside of the 38-hour week.

For every hour of attendance (or for every 2 hours when 'off-duty' such as overnight on camps), a teacher is entitled to an hour off work. This time off can be provided anytime in the year in which it is accrued, but employers should aim to provide this time off within a fortnight of it accruing.

If the employer and the employee agree, it can instead be granted as additional payment at the teacher's normal hourly rate.

### 4. Better consultation

Effective workplace consultation is essential in managing workload at school level.

This Agreement gives the Consultative Committee stronger powers to deal with workload:

- Where the Consultative Committee is unable to reach agreement on a recommendation, the principal must provide written reasons for any decision made
- Where the union at the school

does not support a decision made by the principal, this decision can be reviewed, first through IEU and DOSCEL representatives, and if necessary, through referral to Fair Work Australia for resolution

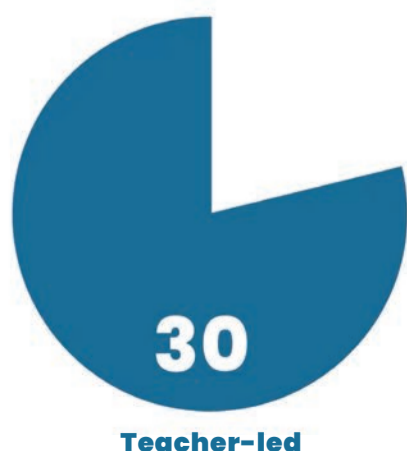
- Consultative Committees can now more effectively deal with non-teacher workload issues
- There will be paid training leave for staff reps on the Consultative Committee.

These are big wins – and they are also significant changes to the way schools operate. Good implementation is going to be critical, and we look forward to working with reps, members and school leaders across the Diocese of Sale to ensure that this Agreement leads to meaningful improvements to the working lives of our members.

We also hope the delivery of this new Agreement in Sale serves to hasten negotiations with the MACS group of employers, so IEU members in their schools can also gain long overdue improvements to their working conditions.

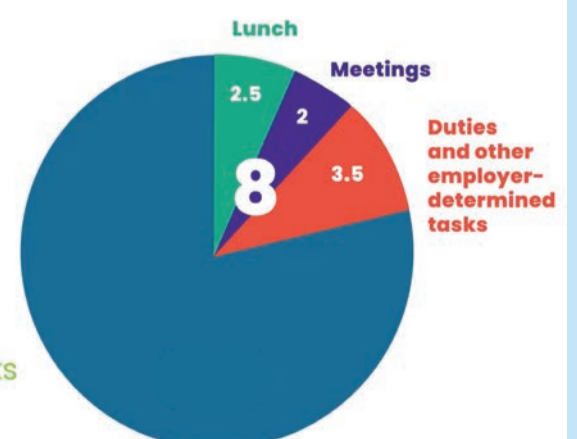
The 30+8 model divides the week of a teacher into:

**30 hours** for scheduled teaching and associated teacher-led work such as planning, collaboration and assessment



And

**8 hours** for lunch breaks, before/after school meetings (maximum 2 hours per week), yard and bus duties, assemblies, and other employer-directed tasks





## FOUR EXPLORATIONS OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TEACHER

# 3. Teachers are more than another brick in the wall



Teacher Learning Network

*'All in all you're just another brick in the wall' – The Wall, Pink Floyd, 1979*

I was never a great fan of the Pink Floyd song. I resented that the anti-authoritarian anthem drew teachers into the same class of people as autocratic politicians. I didn't foresee that it would predict the future of teaching.

### Education is an encounter not a formula

The risk I see in the future of teaching is that teachers become a component of a mathematical formula:  $a + b = c$ . In this approach **the teacher** (a) uses some form of provided **curriculum document or lesson structure** (b) to achieve the **designated outcome for students** (c). We become just another brick in the wall; just one piece of a structure formulated by others. That might mean following a literacy program funded by commercial education providers. It could also mean a direct instruction program in which the learning intention is written on the board and lesson rules are strictly enforced, as if this will magically cause student learning.

Education is an encounter between teacher and student, and the student and their peers. It is complicated. It is messy. It is hard work. Every teacher knows that, but that is why we do the job. We do it because we believe that we can make a difference in the lives of the students. We make that difference when we engage in relationships of trust, respect, and belief in the student. It can be incredibly hard work with many students in our classrooms. They can be confused, uncertain, maybe traumatised, often angry and demonstrating inappropriate behaviours. It is why the most popular professional development courses are still on behaviour and classroom management.

If teaching was easy everyone would do it – and that is the risk.

### Not everyone is a teacher

Teaching is both art and science. There is knowledge and skill in the science of teaching. Through neuroscience we are learning much more about how people learn. We also have brilliant models of teaching that are well researched and well informed by classroom practice. There is a wide array of materials available to support the curriculum we deliver in our schools (sometimes it feels like there is too much). Most rational adults could learn these skills and understand the requisite knowledge, but that would not make them a teacher.

Teaching is also art. The art of teaching is the operation of social and emotional intelligence, and the sense of purpose that allows us to create ongoing relationships that students need to grow and to learn. John Dewey reminds us that a genuine education experience is one that lives 'fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences'. We don't just ask, 'did the student pass the spelling test?', but 'have I helped the student appreciate the beauty and power of language?' Have I generated in the student a thirst for more learning? Have I helped the student see the link between what they know and can do right now with what is possible for them in their future? And most importantly, have I helped the student understand themselves as part of this learning community? Those questions do not appear on any page of any direct instruction textbook.

### Resolve to stay with your purpose

Education philosopher and practitioner Gert Biesta writes about the three interrelated purposes of education:

1. Qualification is the acquisition by the student of knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions
2. Socialisation has to do with the ways in which a person becomes part of the existing traditions of doing and being
3. Subjectification is the way in which a person (or subject) comes into the world through the education encounter.

You may be able to achieve a qualification with a good textbook; you might be able to get to Socialisation with a good textbook and an excursion to the art gallery and the museum, but you will only get to Subjectification if you engage in a relationship with the student. That is the reason why most teachers go into teaching – to make a difference in the lives of students. We seek to help our students to be and to become the people that they are capable of being. That is what gets the best teachers out of bed in the morning. They look forward to engaging in the complex relationships of a classroom of children or adolescents and finishing each day knowing that 'today I made a difference'.

### The future of teaching

In the end the message is inescapable; teaching is about the quality of the relationships we create in the education encounter with our students. That much has never changed, so the future of teaching is the past of teaching. The most important part of our work is to remain committed to a relationship with the 20,

or 25 or 29 students that we meet every day in every classroom, and that is what teachers have always had to do.

Teaching is complex and difficult. It is why we reach for textbooks. It is why we look to easy formulas and ready-made programs. It is why big business wants you to believe that their product will make your life a little easier. It is why governments want to shoehorn intelligent and well meaning, but ill-equipped people into classrooms. They want to believe that teaching is just subject knowledge, because to acknowledge the complexity of teaching is beyond the imagination of many policy makers. But teaching is always at its best when it is an encounter between people who have built healthy, respectful relationships. For me, the future of teaching involves:

1. Acknowledging the complexity of what we do, and every day celebrating our successes in our relationships with our students.
2. Joining with colleagues to build respect for the art and science of teaching, its complexity, its challenges, and its value to the community. What better place to find camaraderie than with the 20,000 members of your union?
3. Committing to learning. We need to learn content knowledge, expand our knowledge about the science of teaching and keep building experiences that allow us to flourish in the art of teaching. One starting point is the IEU Learning Hub ([www.ieuvictas.org.au/webinars](http://www.ieuvictas.org.au/webinars))

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEBINAR SERIES - UPCOMING SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY 31 AUGUST	WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER	WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER	WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER	THURSDAY 29 SEPTEMBER
<b>Support when you need it</b> Your inquiry portfolio	<b>Leadership Skills</b> Managing the challenging conversations	<b>Career Planning</b> Writing an application for a leadership role	<b>Career Planning</b> Interview skills	<b>Issues that Matter</b> Strategies to promote climate justice
6:30 to 7:30pm	10:00am to 1:00pm	1:30 to 3:00pm	3:30 to 5:00pm	10:00 to 11:00am

FOR WEBINAR DESCRIPTIONS AND REGISTRATION: [www.ieuvictas.org.au/webinars](http://www.ieuvictas.org.au/webinars)



## LABOUR HISTORY

## Smashing the bronze ceiling

How many of Australia's statues represent female figures? No. Lower, go lower. Much lower.

The answer, startlingly, is that less than 4% Australia's statues represent historical female figures.

Australia has more statues of animals than of women, and only 1% of Melbourne's statues are of historical women, standing alone.

The campaign to redress this ridiculous imbalance is underway, with artist Jennifer Mann selected to create (?) a statue of working-class feminist activist Zelda D'Aprano at the iconic Victorian Trades Hall Council in Carlton, facing onto Lygon Street.

Jennifer's figurative proposal *Chain Reaction*, cast in bronze, has been commissioned by the Victorian Trades Hall Council and the not-for-profit *A Monument of One's Own* campaign with support from the Victorian Government through the Women's Public Art Program.

Zelda, born in Melbourne in 1928 to a Ukrainian father and Belorussian mother, left school at 14 and worked in factories, as a biscuit maker, usherette, a seamstress, dental assistant and finally, in 1968, as an office worker for the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union (AMIEU), where she found many female workers dissatisfied with the inequalities that they faced in the workplace.

An 'enthusiast and idealist', and always a unionist, Zelda joined the Heidelberg branch of the Communist Party of Australia as a working mother when she was 21. But inside politics, as in the workforce, her leadership and advocacy were often thwarted. She left the CPA in 1971 to protest its sexism.

In 1969, the meat industry was being used as a test case for the *Equal Pay*

campaign. Zelda attended a hearing at the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission but was disappointed at the lack of female contribution.

'I just couldn't believe this, and I thought, here are all the women, here we are, all sitting here as if we haven't got a brain in our bloody heads, as if we're incapable of speaking for ourselves on how much we think we're worth,' Zelda later recalled. 'And here are all these men arguing about how much we're worth and all the men are going to make the decision.'

Frustrated by the situation, Zelda joined a meeting of the Victorian Employed Women's Organisation Council (VEWOC) and brainstormed a dramatic gesture to bring attention to the Equal Pay case.

On 21 October 1969, Zelda chained herself to the Commonwealth Building in Spring Street, Melbourne, where the hearing was being held. She was cut free by Commonwealth Police but repeated the gesture with teachers Alva Giekie and Thelma Solomon soon after at the entrance to the Arbitration Court. These stunts drew enormous attention to the Equal Pay campaign, and led to Zelda co-establishing the Women's Action Committee, which campaigned on equal pay for women, and against sexual discrimination.

In 1972 the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission finally extended the equal pay concept to 'equal pay for work of equal value'.

VEWOC spearheaded the women's liberation movement. To highlight women's pay inequality, they took a tram ride and insisted on paying 75 percent of the fare. They protested against Miss

Teenage contests and helped open a Women's Centre in the CBD, which became the focal point of campaigns relating to discrimination at work, discrimination against lesbians, sexist advertising, abortion law reform, rape culture, and access to childcare.

Zelda became a feisty speaker at public meetings, demonstrations, marches and at schools, and was frequently interviewed on radio and TV. She also became a writer, peace activist, member of the Union of Australian Women, grandmother, and great-grandmother.

In 1995, she received a special mention for her 'Outstanding Contribution to Australian Culture' from the Director of the Centre for Australian Cultural Studies in Canberra. In 2000, Macquarie University awarded her the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws; in 2001 she was among the first 100 women admitted to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

Trades Hall Council introduced special awards in her name for women trade unionists. In 2004, she was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) and in 2017 La Trobe University awarded her an honorary DLitt degree.

Upon her death in 2018, academic Marilyn Lake remembered Zelda as an 'earnest and fierce – but always good-humoured – supporter of the many causes she deemed necessary to overthrow the patriarchy'.



***A Monument of One's Own* seeks 'statue equality'.**

**It's aim is 'to achieve monumental change, one statue at a time'.**

**Such wordplay is no surprise since the campaign's co-convenor is acclaimed writer and historian Professor Clare Wright who described the commission as 'an exciting milestone in our campaign for commemorative justice in Australia'**

**'We are proud to be leading the charge for the equal memorialisation of women in public art, and to be engaging with Victorian women artists in the interpretation of women's history, a history of achievement that has benefitted us all.'**

## Workshopping CRT skills

The recent Victorian Term 2 holidays saw the second joint AEU/IEU CRT Conference of the year. This Conference was again held online, and the participants were offered a jam-packed series of workshops.

The keynote speaker was David Vinegrad who presented the workshop 'One Size Doesn't Fit All – Differentiating Behaviour Management'. David discussed research into co-regulation over the past five decades that is driving behaviour management models being established in progressive schools. Participants were encouraged to review and change their language when managing student behaviour,

and were reminded how important it is to be themselves in the CRT role. The workshop was well received by all with excellent takeaways for CRTs to put in their toolkit.

David's second session focused on anxiety in the classroom, a timely topic given the COVID pandemic is leading to an increase in displays of anxious behaviours in both students and staff. CRTs were encouraged to provide students with calm,

safe, predictable, and consistent classrooms to help reduce anxiety. There was discussion on the various 'anxiety behaviours' that students may display in the classroom, and of various strategies that schools and CRTs could implement to reduce these behaviours.

The third session was run by the IEU, where members could hear directly from an Organiser about the use of CRT agencies in Catholic and independent

schools and how to better engage with their union.

The final session of the day gave participants the opportunity to choose either 'Effective Questioning' by David Innes or 'Working with Gifted and Talented Students' by Bernadette Sheedy. David's session explored how effective questioning can enhance a lesson and related back to DET High Impact Teaching Strategies. Bernadette's session focused on

debunking myths surrounding gifted and talented students and highlighted the need to focus on student strengths when developing gifted and talented programs.

The day was well received by all attendees, and we look forward to next year's conferences!



**PRIDE**

# Help fight homophobia *In Full Colour*

Visit filmmaker Suzi Taylor's website and her goal is obvious. And emphatic. And audacious.

'The Full Colour Project aims to eliminate LGBTIQ+ discrimination and end the disproportionate rates of LGBTIQ+ youth suicide.

'Our goal is to make schools and workplaces consistently safe, respectful, inclusive spaces, and to empower LGBTIQ+ youth.

'We see schools, in particular, as the starting point for attitudinal change.'

We're dealing with a motivated, ambitious person here!

During Suzi's education 'prejudice was normalised' and LGBTIQ+ people were 'invisible'. Even as a queer teacher herself, she hadn't known where to turn for resources to change this.

'I taught in schools where I didn't feel safe to be honest about myself because so much of teaching is about giving of yourself,' Suzi told *The Point*.

She wanted to do something but didn't want to just 'chronicle tales of bullying'. When she discovered the Same Sex Formal (subsequently renamed the Queer Formal), she knew she'd found an event she could explore through film to make a difference.

'It was created for all the queer teens who couldn't attend their own school formals or debutante balls, either because they were overtly forbidden from bringing a same-sex partner or because they just knew they wouldn't feel welcome.

'I knew immediately that the Queer Formal could be a positive, life-affirming event – and it could be an empowering way to explore some tough subject matter.'

The 10 young people she chose spanned

the spectrum of sexuality and gender identity, and came from widely varying schools and localities, and from different economic and religious backgrounds.

'I knew that if I could find a way to weave their stories together, we'd have a unique window into the lives and perspectives of queer teenagers in Melbourne, 2012.'

She did.

Suzi's window was the moving and inspiring documentary *Love in Full Colour*, now celebrating its tenth birthday. Typically, instead of resting on considerable laurels, Suzi is launching a sequel to revisit her fascinating subjects ten years on, and examine how they and society are faring with change, or lack of it, for queer people in and out of school.

It's a timely reprise: Suzi says we are seeing 'tectonic shifts in society before our eyes'. At a national level, the win on gay marriage equality was followed by the toxic debate over the botched Religious Discrimination Bill.

Whether progress is being made or not, LGBTIQ+ people in Australia continue to be confronted with stigma and discrimination, with dire consequences. LGBTIQ+ Health Australia statistics from 2021 show that more than a quarter of LGBTIQ+ teens under the age of 17 and almost half of all trans people between 14 and 25 have attempted suicide.

Suzi says more is being done than ten years ago, but there is still an urgent need to embed more queer stories in the curriculum of schools and university education. It's also crucial to share good news stories about the schools

supporting LGBTIQ+ students.

Encouraging examples of progress are not always massive changes or statements; the actions of individual teachers are vital to the participants in Suzi's films.

'There's things educators can do in this space – I asked them all about the teachers that had an impact and their faces, they just lit up talking about them. Sometimes it was just someone who noticed they were a bit down and had a kind word...'

Documentary participant Maddy describes a teacher who helped her survive the 'six-year bad dream' of high school. 'She sat me down and said, 'It gets better. It will get better for you. You are much better than you think, and you can come and talk to me at any time.'

Suzi is now completing the first round of interviews for the sequel. Her cameras will then follow her fascinating participants as they pursue careers, each other (two participants are getting married!) and seek fulfilment outside school.

The urgent issues underlying her project mean Suzi is even more passionate about it now.

'The mental health fallout from the gay marriage plebiscite was heavy, as predicted. Trans young people and athletes are being used as political footballs, it's so damaging.

'It's not enough for schools not to have a stance and policies and procedures. They must make it clear that (positive LGBTI content) is embedded on a daily basis and is part of what that school represents. There's space in the curriculum for it to be taught but not a

lot of resources.'

There's other good news – people like Suzi's documentary participants are making a difference. Maddy is now a primary teacher who says, 'I want to be one of those teachers that kids can talk to and trust. I want to help them.'

**You can watch *Love In Full Colour* and read about (and support) the planned sequel *10 Years In Full Colour* at [www.suzitaylor.net/the-full-colour-project](http://www.suzitaylor.net/the-full-colour-project)**

## Fight continues on 'gender contracts'

It's not only parents and students that are exposed to ludicrous and discriminatory contracts in some faith-based schools.

The spectre of 'gender contracts' now haunts Victorian schools, with staff threatened with the sack unless they sign egregious statements on homosexuality and gender roles.

In late July, the *Herald Sun* reported that teachers at Ballarat College had been 'threatened with termination' for 'failing to abide by the school's statement of faith that states, 'God created two genders, male and female'.

ABC News reported that

enrolment forms at 11 religious schools across Australia demanded that the families of prospective students 'support beliefs denouncing homosexuality and diverse gender identity'.

It follows the recent enactment of Victorian laws that restrict religious discrimination in employment only to positions where *religion is an inherent part of the job*. The IEU campaigned for over a decade for such laws to give

workers in faith-based schools the same rights and protections as workers in other industries.

Now it seems the battle will have to go back to the national level.

In February, the outrageous 'enrolment contract' of Brisbane's Citipointe Christian College helped scupper the former federal government's misguided Religious Discrimination Bill. Citipointe backed down after 155,820 Australians signed a petition against its contract

and the Queensland state government, the Human Rights Commission, and the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board took a close interest.

In July 2021, the IEU's Discrimination Survey found that 48 percent of Victorian Catholic secondary education staff had witnessed or been subjected to discrimination in their workplace and confirmed that some Victorian teachers had been sacked by religious schools after coming

out (or being outed) as gay.

The IEU will continue to campaign to protect and support our members and to eliminate discrimination in our workplaces.





## Tasmanian women's union conference inspires IEU members

With support from the IEU, members Ronita Barratt, Kim Merhulik and Abbey Vincent attended the Unions Tasmania Women's Conference on 5 August.

The annual event draws women from a variety of unions and offers a day of learning, networking, and inspirational speakers.

Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania, started the program. She shared her experiences of being a woman in a male-dominated workforce as well as highlighting two key issues facing women at work – safety and the gender pay gap.

Current statistics tell us that women still consistently earn less than men in all age groups and do more home chores and child care. Women are also not being appointed to higher-paid roles within organisations despite the fact that they generally achieve higher educational qualifications than their male counterparts.

While providing some suggestions to address these issues, it was a practical solution that had the biggest impact. Governor Baker challenged us to affirm

women in the workplace when their voice is taken by male colleagues – to draw attention back to the women there and ensure that credit is always given to women for their ideas. Simple yet powerful!

A workplace reform update was provided by Jessica Munday, Secretary of Unions Tasmania. According to international gender equality measures, in the last decade Australia has dropped in the rankings from 15 to 43. This appalling fact reflects the inaction and lack of concern about gender equality from the previous federal government. Jessica reminded us that the gender pay gap is currently at 13.8%.

It is difficult to believe that we still have to fight for pay equality in 2022. Unfortunately, the education sector has not escaped the gender pay gap – education is female dominated, yet senior leadership positions are predominately held by men. The current leadership

structure of Catholic Education Tasmania reflects this situation perfectly.

We were given some hope for change with the Albanese Labor Government passing legislation through the lower house that will guarantee 11 million Australian workers access to paid Domestic and Family Violence leave. In addition, the Labor federal government is committed to implementing all 55 of the *Respect@Work* recommendations.

A short protest was held to bring attention to the challenge to democracy pushed by the Tasmanian government with their anti-protest bill and issues still facing women in the workplace.

Panel discussions focused on union-supported victories to improve pay and conditions, and reproductive healthcare in the workplace. Unions have managed to negotiate clauses into their Enterprise Agreements around reproduction healthcare such as menstrual leave, pregnancy loss leave and menopause leave.

Additional leave days for these health issues, that are unique to women, should be part of all modern working conditions.

A keynote address from Van Badham concluded the day. Sadly, for having opinions that challenge the status quo, Van has been subjected to relentless and ongoing abuse, threats, and even physical attacks.

How, in 2022, this behaviour towards women is deemed acceptable by some is a disgraceful reflection on our society. Despite this, Van remains optimistic and uses her voice to call out misogyny and advocate for positive change.

The Women's Conference was an uplifting experience. There is nothing quite like a room full of strong, committed union women!

## WOMEN

### Campaign calls for an end to gendered violence in workplaces

Worksafe Victoria's 'It Comes In Many Forms' campaign uses the imagery of black dust to represent the pervasive nature of gendered violence and the many forms it takes.

Work-related gendered violence ends careers, damages mental health, ruins relationships and destroys lives. This campaign aims to educate employers and remind them of their obligation to ensure sexism, homophobia, workplace aggression, and discriminatory language don't occur in the workplace. It also helps workers understand that they have rights under the OHS Act.

The IEU has been working with members around this issue, focusing this term on Edmund Rice (EREA) schools. We've worked with small groups of members to identify issues and come up with an agenda and three actions for each workplace. We know these issues are common across schools and that the most effective way to tackle gendered violence is to treat it as a health and safety issue. We're pushing to ensure schools have elected Health and Safety Reps who work with IEU Reps to educate employers, staff and students about what gendered violence is and how to eliminate it. See the policy at: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/it-comes-in-many-forms](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/it-comes-in-many-forms)

#### Reporting about gender equality in the workplace

Under the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012, non-public sector employers with 100 or more employees must submit an annual report to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

This means that all independent schools with over 100 employees need to report each year, and many more Catholic schools will now be included in reports to the WGEA. The public sector is currently open for voluntary reporting, before moving to the required reporting in 2023.

Because the IEU is an employee organisation, employers are also required to inform the union that the reports have been submitted.

The new format this year makes the report more accessible and may provide some interesting reading for employees. It reports on a range of gender equality indicators such as policies and procedures, consultation, flexible work, paid parental leave, sex-based harassment, discrimination, and family or domestic violence. It could be a useful resource if your school is bargaining for the next EBA.

If your school has submitted a report, it can be found here: <https://data.wgea.gov.au/organisations>

#### Anna Stewart Memorial Project

Anna Stewart was a journalist and active Victorian union official who tragically died aged 35. Designed to encourage more women to be active in unions, the Anna Stewart Memorial Project is a structured, two-week long internship program consisting of two days each week at the Victorian Trades Hall, with the remaining days at a host union.

In some cases, participants use the internship to move outside their previous experiences and engage instead with a different sector. Participants come from diverse workplaces including finance, education, health, and transport, exposing them to a rich pool of skills and experiences.

Women form a critical voice and deeply influence the culture of a workplace. Within unions and in the workplace, women can help accommodate changing demands through consultation and inclusion. The Anna Stewart Memorial Project has continued to nurture voice, opportunity and change, and highlighted

opportunities for women who are motivated to support other women.

If you are interested in participating in the next program which runs from 17 to 28 October this year, contact your organiser or email Therese O'Loughlin at [toloughlin@ieuvictas.org.au](mailto:toloughlin@ieuvictas.org.au)

#### Women's Rights At Work Conference 2022

■ Friday 21 October 9am-5pm and Saturday 22 October 10am-4pm, Trades Hall, Carlton

Join working women from across a range of industries and unions as we take over Trades Hall for two full days. We'll be celebrating our wins, talking about what's next, and building solidarity to keep fighting. This year's conference has a packed Friday of panels and discussion, followed by a post-conference mingle. On Saturday, we'll get our hands dirty with practical workshops for activists and organisers.

See more details here at [www.weareunion.org.au/wraw\\_con\\_2022](http://www.weareunion.org.au/wraw_con_2022) – and contact the IEU if you are interested in attending!



## The course that showcases Indigenous heroes

Aboriginal Change Makers, a unique collaboration between the Victorian Parliament and Worawa Aboriginal College, prompts students to consider Victorian history through the eyes and experiences of Indigenous people who fought against long odds to keep their culture and language alive.

The teaching resource, launched in early June by Worawa Principal Dr Lois Peeler AM and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Colin Brooks, presents 'amazing stories of political and social activity, self-determination, and empowerment, as well as the struggle for recognition in the face of another more dominant and colonising society'.

The history resource for students in Years 7 to 10 details life on Aboriginal missions, the removal children from their families at age 15 to work as household or farm labour, and crusades for recognition and self-determination.

Teachers and university teaching students will also be able to complete one-day training sessions at Worawa's Healesville campus, and the Victorian Government will provide professional resources for teachers to make best use of the material in their classrooms.

Worawa, Victoria's only Aboriginal-run school, was founded in 1983 by 'visionary,

poet, writer and philosopher' Hyllus Maris.

On [deadlystory.com](http://deadlystory.com) – an Indigenous education site – Worawa is described as 'an Aboriginal community initiative... established on Aboriginal-owned land. It is governed by Aboriginal people. Students are from Aboriginal communities across Australia'.

Worawa Principal and Executive Director Dr Lois Peeler has dedicated her life to supporting Aboriginal Australians as an educator, advocate, and role model.

Aboriginal Change Makers gives accounts of the personal experiences of people who participated in historically significant events. It gives voice to the stories, remembrances, and experience of people who worked tirelessly to bring about change in the lives of Aboriginal people.

For so many of them, campaigning for Aboriginal liberation and recognition was 'costly and dangerous'.

'We're talking about treaty, we're

talking about truth telling,' Dr Peeler said.

'We're talking about acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Nations people of Australia.

'That's why it's important to be able to provide resources so that this can be taught in schools.'

An example of one of the figures featured is William Cooper, who founded National Aborigines Day in 1940, a precursor to NAIDOC Week.

'He began with a group for Aboriginal people an organisation called Australian Aborigines' League, and they were advocating for improved conditions for our people,' Dr Peeler said.

In 1938, Mr Cooper led a delegation to the German consulate on behalf of the Aboriginal community to deliver a letter which denounced the persecution of Jewish people by Germany's Nazis.

'That was one of the amazing things, because our own people were

going through this process of being discriminated against,' Dr Peeler said.

The mission statement for the program states: 'It is our hope that non-Aboriginal students will begin to access the actual history of the past and a new understanding of what has created their own perspective so they can look at the past with clarity and the future with honesty'.

Dr Peeler, recently named NAIDOC 2022 Female Elder of the Year, hopes those who engage with Aboriginal Change Makers 'will gain an understanding of their own perspective and a deeper appreciation of the incredible riches of Aboriginal cultures and recognition of the impact of colonialism on First Nations people of this land that would truly support our nations journey to reconciliation and healing'.



## Learning to read: The essential role of orthographic mapping A Day with Linnea Ehri and Friends

What is the scientific evidence about teaching children to learn to recognise words? *Learning Difficulties Australia* is hosting two full-day conferences with Professor Linnea Ehri, one of the world's most influential reading scientists, as keynote speaker.

**Melbourne** | SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23

**Learning to recognise words: Research into practice**

Also featuring Dr Jennifer Buckingham, Dr Nathaniel Swain, Emina McLean, Jocelyn Seamer

**Sydney** | TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25

**Learning to recognise words: Cutting-edge research**

Also featuring Macquarie University Centre for Reading, including Professor Anne Castles and fellow researchers Dr Danielle Colenbrander, Dr Signy Wegener and Lyndall Murray

Both conference events will include a Q&A panel and provide opportunities for interaction and sharing of ideas.

**EARLY BIRD PRICE** (\*until the end of August)  
\$180 – LDA member, \$230 – non member

**REGULAR PRICE**  
\$200 – LDA member, \$250 – non member



For more info or to book  
[bit.ly/LDALinnea2022](http://bit.ly/LDALinnea2022)



Not an LDA member? Join now!  
[bit.ly/LDAmember](http://bit.ly/LDAmember)





## Student conference

This year's joint IEU and AEU Student Teacher Conference was an inspiring display of the passion for education and dedication to justice held by emerging teachers in Victoria.

The theme of this year's conference was 'Diversify Your Teaching Practice!', calling on student teachers to engage meaningfully and participate actively in making education more inclusive, diverse and equitable.

Our conference helped participants build a toolkit of inclusive classroom strategies, to understand their collective power as pre-service teachers, to take charge of their working lives and made it clear that the union movement stands for inclusion – with no tolerance of discrimination in any form.

The day began with a deeply moving and enlightening Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri man Thane Garvey, who informed the audience of the vital work of reconciliation, and their role within

it. He also shared the dark histories – unknown to many – of famous Melbourne areas and landmarks.

We are grateful to have been welcomed by Thane, and for his contribution to a greater understanding of Aboriginal history in Victoria.

The student teachers then heard from Dr Al Fricker whose presentation explored how decolonising the classroom and incorporating First Nations contexts supports the outcomes of all students. It provided a practical start to overcoming colonisation and celebrating diversity.

Our other keynote speaker Belinda Webb presented on working with children who may have learning disabilities, focusing on students with ADHD and/or ASD. Belinda provided



practical strategies to support such students, and dispelled common myths and misunderstandings that can result in a lack of compassion and adaptability needed for effective teaching.

Other sessions included our university campus breakout, where student teachers split into groups to brainstorm how to build unions on campus. Pre-service teachers are particularly passionate about issues experienced with placements, such as a lack of remuneration, lengthy commutes, and poor organisation – which student members want to push universities to address.

A Q&A panel with ex-teachers, union Organisers and recent graduates allowed participants to ask burning questions about what awaits them on the other side

of their degrees. Finally, the conference closed with organisations including the Young Workers Centre, We Are Union Women, and Migrant Workers Centre engaging with participants and encouraging further involvement.

Overall, the conference was a huge success with over 50 student teacher participants engaging deeply with highly relevant content. It was fabulous to hold an event like this in-person again, and we look forward to these emerging teachers entering Victorian schools – we know they will be incredible educators!



## IEU union winter interns

The IEU was proud to participate in the 2022 Union Winter internship, hosting two interns over two weeks in July.

Union Winter is a program run by the Victorian Trades Hall Council that aims to bring young activists into the union movement. Interns are immersed in the daily work of their host unions, interacting with members, delegates, Organisers, and industrial officers, and engaging deeply with key workplace issues faced by members in that industry.

The interns undertake a project about young workers in their industry, and make recommendations to their host union on how to increase participation amongst this cohort and to shape the future of unions in Victoria.

Our interns, Halen Betinsky and Jacob Rolley, made outstanding contributions during their time with us. Halen works in the Administrative team at a Catholic school in Geelong, and is one of our youngest IEU reps, while Jacob has just completed his Master of Secondary Teaching and is looking for the right place to start his career in education.

Their project looked at increasing awareness of unions by educating young people on their purpose, wins and importance. They developed a new pamphlet for potential members reframing the benefits of joining, dispelling common myths and concerns, and explaining why collective strength is so vital. They also

proposed developing a website function that would answer common questions about rights and entitlements. We are proud of their work and look forward to seeing how they continue to grow as young activists in Victorian schools.

### Halen Betinsky

My time with the IEU provided a wonderful insight into the work that goes in to facilitating large-scale union activities, member services, and actions that represent the interests of the members.

The opportunity to have long conversations with fellow unionists and discuss problems facing the union, workers, and the industry were valuable in helping me further understand the nuances that unions and their members must navigate.

Getting to meet various working unionists within the IEU showed me how each member of the team benefits the wider movement by providing their unique insight and experiences from working within the industry and union movement.

I'd been familiar with the voluntary side of unionism before my time with the IEU, but after my internship I was able to gain a greater appreciation for the scale of the work carried out by the IEU and their members. The number of boots on the ground that the IEU has can influence a

wide network, enabling them to build on the existing membership while addressing their concerns in the industry.

This left me with an optimistic view of the movement going forward.

After my time with the IEU I feel I will be able to apply many of the ideas shared with me through conversations. Applying these ideas to my ongoing involvement within the union movement will help me develop my ability to engage with unionists and non-unionists.

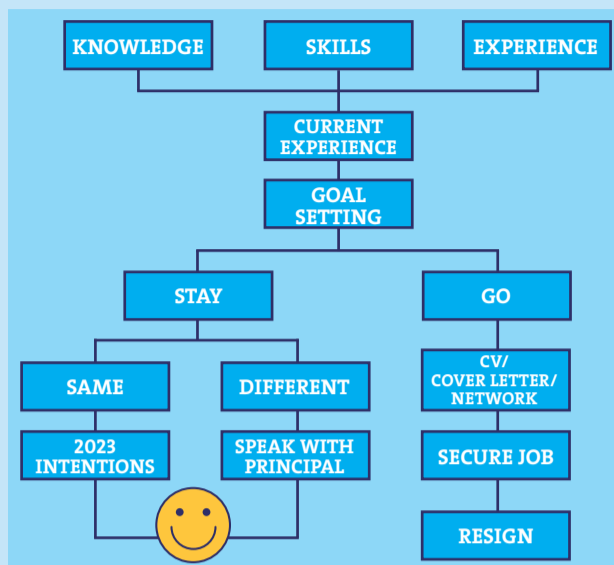
### Jacob D. Rolley

After spending two weeks at the IEU, I have gained an exciting insight into how the union works. The internship highlighted issues facing those working in independent education in Victoria, and issues facing Australian workers generally. It was exciting to see the work that the union was doing to resolve such issues and push for better conditions overall. Likewise, it was disappointing to see the resistance shown by some employers against improving the quality of life for those who keep their organisations afloat.

The highlight for me throughout my two weeks at IEU, AEU and Trades Hall were discussions around union activism, particularly those discussions which centred around the legal protections

and constraints that unions are placed under in the Australian context. These discussions helped me form a picture of how the union movement looks in contemporary Australia, why union membership is in decline and why unions are invisible to many people. Knowing now all I have learned in the Union Winter Internship, I will continue to ponder ways of engaging workers in their union so we can fight for better conditions together.





## CAREER CORNER

# 2023 intentions – Should I stay, or should I go?

When the intentions form arrives in your inbox at this time every year, it should be accompanied by a jingle of the Clash classic *Should I Stay or Should I Go* (cue guitar riff)!

This would prompt you not to just blindly fill it in so the timetabler can start timetabling and the recruiter can start recruiting, but rather to take some other actions first that will actually benefit you professionally, rather than just the school's resource management.

If you can set aside just one or two hours before completing your intentions form to consider your professional journey over the preceding twelve months, it could have a huge impact on what you write down, even though the mere fact of doing so does not necessarily

commit you to anything. Moreover, we know that we seldom get exactly what we would like in terms of allocation.

Each year we accumulate additional knowledge, skills, and experience (KSE) not only for our own benefit, but for that of our students and employer. This is the principal argument for automatic progression: All things being equal, you have a higher EVP (Employee Value Proposition) for every year (month! day!) of your employment.

It is therefore the perfect time to conduct a personal KSE audit and

evaluate not only where you can offer the highest EVP within your organisation, but also to consider whether you could offer a higher EVP at a different organisation (and therefore command a higher salary), and even whether this would equate to better job satisfaction or other tangible, or intangible (e.g. work-life balance, flexibility), benefits for you.

You might consider roughly following the flowchart above.

Of course, there are no guarantees in life, and it could well be that after more than two years of extreme uncertainty,

now is not the time for you to be exploring unknown terrain. On the other hand, nobody has ever climbed Everest by accident, so if you really want to maximise the return on your relatively short career, a bit of strategic planning and self-assessment cannot possibly be a waste of time.

*'Well, come on and let me know...'*

## We're on track for carbon-neutral by 2030.

Find out how we're tracking on our journey to decarbonisation.

There is no better time than right now to take action to address climate change. That's why, we've announced the ambitious target to transition to a carbon neutral portfolio by 2030. We have our sights on the interim target of a 35% carbon reduction in our portfolio by 2025. Find out more about our progress to date and what we have planned for the future.

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## NATIONAL IEU ROUNDUP

## NSW: IEU contests NSW Education Minister teacher shortage 'solution'

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam has slammed NSW Education Minister Sarah Mitchell's announcement of 'higher paid roles for outstanding teachers', saying it does nothing to address the fundamental teacher shortage facing education.

'We need a suite of solutions, ranging from attracting Year 12 graduates into initial teacher education, supporting them in their early careers; increasing teacher planning time, and better remuneration for all teachers and support staff, not just a select few,' Northam said.

'This proposal is the debunked idea of performance pay. It will simply pit teachers against one another for a small pool of higher paid roles while doing nothing to address the inadequate teacher salaries that lie at the heart of the matter.'

Northam said the advice the NSW Government received from education expert Professor John Hattie should be expanded to examine teacher shortages and the obvious link between salary, workload, and retention.

Representatives of the NSW IEU attended the Teacher Workforce Roundtable on 12 August hosted by Federal Education Minister Jason Clare.

'This is significant in that the Minister is listening to the profession,' Northam said. 'New directions must be forged to ensure staffing shortages come to an end.'

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch President Christine Wilkinson said: 'Teachers are already 'outstanding performers'. This proposal just creates a narrow tier of higher paid teachers, but salaries need increasing across the board to retain all teachers in the profession and attract new ones. It doesn't entice young students, who see corporate salaries far outstripping those of teachers.'

'How do you measure who is an 'outstanding teacher' and align this with pay?' Wilkinson asked.

'Some teachers love teaching students with special needs; these students' skills will increase dramatically but not be reflected in traditional measures. We're calling for salary justice for the entire profession.'

#### Queensland: Pay increase imminent for Catholic employees

Catholic employers have informed their teaching and non-teaching staff that they will commence paying the full wage increase due to employees under their IEU-negotiated Agreement now that the public sector 2022 wage increase is known.

In the current Agreement covering employees in Queensland Catholic education, the IEU QNT successfully negotiated a provision that would provide the same headline percentage wage rate increase for 2022 for teaching and non-teaching staff as that achieved by teachers in Qld state schools.

#### IEU Queensland/ Northern Territory supports AEU strike action

The IEUQNT has supported the strike action of public sector teachers in the Northern Territory which took place on 19 August. Branch Secretary Terry Burke said IEU members stood in solidarity with the Australian Education Union NT members striking in response to the NT Government's four-year pay freeze.

'Teacher shortages, unsustainable workloads and uncompetitive wages are issues for teachers across the country and the Northern Territory is certainly not an exception,' Mr Burke said.

'IEU members fully support AEU members in their action and call on the NT Government to provide a pay offer that will enable its employees to deal with current cost of living issues and inflation,' Mr Burke said.

## Four ways to counter stress for educators

Exhaustion is widespread in schools, and this edition of *The Point* addresses industrial solutions to workload issues behind that stress. However, while the fight continues to improve working conditions, here are some hints for getting through the work day.

An IEU Organiser alerted us to the **Healthy Mind Platter** from the *NeuroLeadership Journal*, described as a 'brain-based approach to beating burnout'. It's based on the food pyramid model, where the importance of variety in our diets is emphasised.

It is explained as: 'The Healthy Mind Platter has seven essential mental activities necessary for optimum mental health in daily life. These seven daily activities make up the full set of 'mental nutrients' that your brain needs to function at its best'.

Those activities are Focus Time, Play Time, Connecting Time, Physical Time, Time In, Downtime, and Sleep Time.

'The point is to become aware of the full spectrum of essential mental activities, and just like with essential nutrients, make sure that at least every day we are nudging the right ingredients into our mental diet...'

The Mind Platter people recommend mapping how much time you spend on each activity in the average day. We suspect most educators don't have the time to do that!

But when you get the chance, comparing what your mind needs with what your body needs is a good model to consider.

**Reflective circles** are used by frontline health workers to cope with trauma. La Trobe University used them in a trial in three schools.

All the educators who took part reported mental health benefits, and 'an increased ability to cope in the classroom'.

'Twice a term, four to six teachers gather to process their experiences, reflect on their reactions to challenging incidents, and consider how the situation might have been perceived by the other person involved,' *The Age* explained.

'We know that social workers and psychologists, who deal with incredibly complex, difficult and often traumatic circumstances, need peer support to ensure they can cope with the mental and emotional toll this takes on them,' said Associate Professor Fiona Gardner.

If you are constantly time-poor, consider trying a **to-do-not list** to subtract some activities that tire you.

Once a month author Amantha Imber schedules an hour in her diary to complete these lists.

Others prefer to review daily at the end of their shift and make a vow to eliminate unnecessary tasks. Abandoning work that doesn't help you achieve goals opens up more time for the things that matter. It also reminds

you of all the tiny, irrelevant things that add up to consume too much time, and can even help clarify which relationships drain you and offer you little and which are enriching and fulfilling and deserve more of your attention.

Most advice for overwrought teachers includes the instruction to **forgive yourself**.

Chris Mumford, writing for *Hey Teach* website, says teachers should practice 'emotional first aid'. When you get a cut, you don't find ways to make it worse. So when you make a mistake or experience a failure, don't dwell on it unnecessarily. Ruminating on mistakes is a counterproductive bad habit. Pause, step back, and try to find perspective.

'As educators, we tend to want to fix problems, soothe troubled student feelings, and quickly find a solution. Often, we need to let go and observe, allowing the experience to unfold. Follow the quiet. Allow the quiet of contemplation to enter, and to leave when its work is completed,' says Lori Desautels from Butler University, Indiana.

Feelings of guilt, remorse, and regret change nothing, and sap your energy so you can't deal with the present as well. Be kind to yourself.

Education expert Amber Osuba says

perfectionist teachers should remember they perform much better when their stress is in check.

'Commit to learning from your mistakes, without allowing them to take residence in your mind. They do not pay rent there.'

**Have you got useful strategies for managing workloads, coping with stress and maintaining a healthy work/life balance? Let us know at [thepoint@ieuvictas.org.au](mailto:thepoint@ieuvictas.org.au) and we'll share the best in future publications!**



**INTERNATIONAL ROUNDUP****Romanian unionists act to support Ukrainian educators and students**

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Romanian education union *Fédération des Syndicats Libres de l'Enseignement (FSLE)* has mobilised its resources to help Ukrainian colleagues and children made refugees by the conflict.

Romanian educators are working as volunteers making sure schools are ready to receive Ukrainian students and organising rapid training for teachers to learn how to work with students suffering from war trauma.

The union has also arranged access to EU teaching resources and helped border authorities with donations of clothes, beds, food and medicine, and toys and supplies for children.

Romanian teachers and education workers have also accommodated refugee families in their homes.

Thousands of teachers and education staff volunteers are at border crossings, helping to guide refugees and providing accurate information on transit through Romania and the refugees' rights in the country.

Up to a million Ukrainians have moved through Romania since the conflict began, with up to 83,000 stopping there.

The FSLE is now helping work out

how to handle more students in already overcrowded schools in big cities and identifying teachers who can speak Ukrainian, how to assess children's education levels, and how to access textbooks in Ukrainian.

**United Kingdom**

Industrial action in the UK is being described as the 'Summer of Solidarity'.

'Strikes or ballots for industrial action are being announced virtually every day as workers across the country join the growing campaign for 'decent' pay rises...' reports the *Manchester Evening News*.

'The walkouts are the latest in a series of stoppages hitting sectors including the railways, courts and postal services amid growing unrest in the face of the worsening cost-of-living crisis.'

There are 15 major strike actions planned for August and September, ranging from oil workers to barristers.

Trade union membership in the UK had fallen since 1979, but the decline slowed in the late 1990s and has been rising since 2016.

'Headline inflation is running at 9.4 percent in the UK, and ordinary workers are being hit hardest. Housing, water, and fuel costs have risen by 19.6 percent since June 2021, and real wages are falling at the fastest rate in two decades,' reports *Red Flag*.

'The eruption hasn't come out of nowhere. Britain has seen a modest uptick in strikes over the past two years. Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, bosses and government have insisted on wage suppression as a necessary sacrifice.'

**GHANA**

Public sector unions have completed a cost-of-living allowance (COLA) Agreement with the government, providing all public sector employees with increased remuneration.

The government and union leaders have agreed to retroactively implement COLA as of 1 July, and the allowance will represent 15% of basic wage.

President Akufo-Addo thanked organised labour for reaching the Agreement and said the NPP government 'has and will continue to have their interests at heart'.

Following the Agreement, unions in the education sector called off a strike that had been going on for almost two weeks in support of a 20% rise in COLA.

**NATIONAL UNION ROUNDUP****Unions Tasmania fears new law could target protests**

The Tasmanian Government's proposed legislation could be used to target unions, according to Unions Tasmania secretary Jessica Munday.

She said that the *Police Offences Amendment (Workplace Protections) Bill* could stop unions from making 'positive progress that benefits Tasmania'.

She cited union wins on superannuation, equal pay and paid parental leave that involved protests. She told *Workplace Express* the Bill could have a 'chilling effect on democracy and peoples' right to protest'.

Unions Tasmania has called for a 'specific exemption for trade union activity to ensure that workers who are participating in legitimate union activity such as industrial action, industrial disputes, or campaigns are not unduly targeted by any legislative change'.

Unions Tasmania has joined community groups in signing a collective statement in opposition to the Bill.

Cassy O'Connor MP, leader of the Tasmanian Greens, quoted the Australia Institute's 'very thorough examination' of the Bill when opposing it in Parliament.

'The Workplace Bill 2022, sets disproportionate penalties for the offences of public annoyance and aggravated trespass. It increases the penalties for public annoyance more than threefold. It doubles the current penalty for trespass, where a person obstructs a business activity, putting

the penalty for trespass at the same level as offences including loitering near children, possession of an implement with intent to commit a crime, and aggravated assault.

'It triples the penalty from the current amount for trespass, where a person's trespass causes risk to the safety of the person. A person would receive similar penalties for obstructing a crime scene.'

**Childcare workers strike over poor pay and conditions**

'Educators are leaving the sector in record numbers every week, due to burn-out, workload and low pay. Centres across the country are having to limit enrolments, close rooms and cancel staff leave. Children and families are suffering due to the strain.'

Sound familiar?

Educators in early learning settings say their industry is in crisis and that practitioners are abandoning their sector in droves. On 7 September they will close their centres to demand an urgent boost to funding so their salaries can improve.

Their demands are simple:

Members are calling for the new Federal Government to urgently outline a plan and timeline to deliver on three key priorities:

- Give us a reason to stay and pay us what we are worth,
- Value early learning as part of the education system, just as important as schools
- Put children before profit.

Helen Gibbons, Director Early Education, United Workers Union said, 'Educators are sick of being stuck. UWU members' vision is for a sector where educators' vital work is valued with professional wages and working conditions, and where early education is recognised for its vital role in children's development'.

'The only way out of the crisis in early learning is real reform that respects educators.'

**Jobs summit**

The Jobs and Skills Summit held on 1 and 2 September at Parliament House intends to bring together 100 representatives of unions, employers, civil society, and governments, to 'address the nation's shared economic challenges'.

However, it remains to be seen if it is 'Accord Two' – a reprise of the consensus building Prices and Incomes Accord events enacted by Prime Minister Bob

Hawke and his Treasurer, Paul Keating in 1983 – or a tokenistic gabfest.

Prior to the 2022 version, current Treasurer Jim Chalmers rejected calls from the ACTU for proposed tax cuts for the wealthy to be scrapped.

A report commissioned by the ACTU released ahead of the Summit included proposals reforming the industrial relations system to give workers more clout to bargain 'for their fair share of our national wealth', a windfall tax on companies enjoying huge profits as a result of current inflation, and cancelling the planned Stage 3 tax cuts.

Chalmers said many of the suggestions made by the ACTU are 'not government policies' and would not be implemented.



# COMING UP AT THE IEU

## AUGUST

- 1 ANNA STEWART MEMORIAL PROJECT (TAS) + 2,3,4,5
- 2
- 3 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR
- 4 LEVEL 2 REP TRAINING  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Children's Day
- 5 UNIONS TASMANIA WOMENS CONFERENCE
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous People
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15 PRINCIPAL'S COUNCIL CONFERENCE (DAYLESFORD) + 16
- 16 LEVEL 3 REP TRAINING
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26 Wear It Purple Day
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR

## EVENTS AND TRAINING UPDATED REGULARLY.

## SEPTEMBER

- 1 National Health and Physical Education Day  
Indigenous Literacy Day
- 2 HSR REFRESHER OHS TRAINING COURSE
- 3
- 4 Father's Day
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8 International Literacy Day
- 9 International Day To Protect Education From Attack
- 10 World Suicide Prevention Day
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16 Victoria Term 3 Ends
- 17
- 18 International Equal Pay Day
- 19
- 20
- 21 International Day Of Peace
- 22
- 23 AFL Grand Final Public Holiday (Vic Only)
- 24 AFL Grand Final
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR X 3
- 29 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR X 3
- 30 Tasmania Term 3 Ends

## OCTOBER

- 1 Burnie Show (Tasmania)
- 2
- 3 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR X 2  
Victoria Term 4 Begins
- 4
- 5 International World Teacher's Day
- 6
- 7 Royal Launceston Show
- 8
- 9
- 10 World Mental Health Day
- 11
- 12 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR X 2  
HSR INITIAL OHS TRAINING COURSE
- 13 HSR INITIAL OHS TRAINING COURSE
- 14 HSR INITIAL OHS TRAINING COURSE
- 15 Flinders Island Show (Tasmania)
- 16
- 17 Tasmania Term 4 Begins
- 18
- 19 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR
- 20 LEARNING HUB WEBINAR
- 21 LEVEL 3 REP TRAINING
- 22
- 23
- 24 Diwali
- 25 LEVEL 1 REP TRAINING
- 26
- 27 HSR INITIAL OHS TRAINING COURSE  
HSR INITIAL OHS TRAINING COURSE
- 28 Teacher's Day (Australia)
- 29
- 30
- 31

## CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

## NOVEMBER

- 1 Recreation Day (Tasmania)
- 2 Melbourne Cup
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8 LEVEL 2 REP TRAINING
- 9
- 10
- 11 PRINCIPAL'S COUNCIL AND RETIREE'S LUNCHEON  
Remembrance Day
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20 Transgender Day Of Remembrance
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25 International Day For The Elimination Of Violence Against Women
- 26 Devonport Show (Tasmania)
- 27
- 28
- 29 International Day Of Solidarity With The Palestinian People
- 30