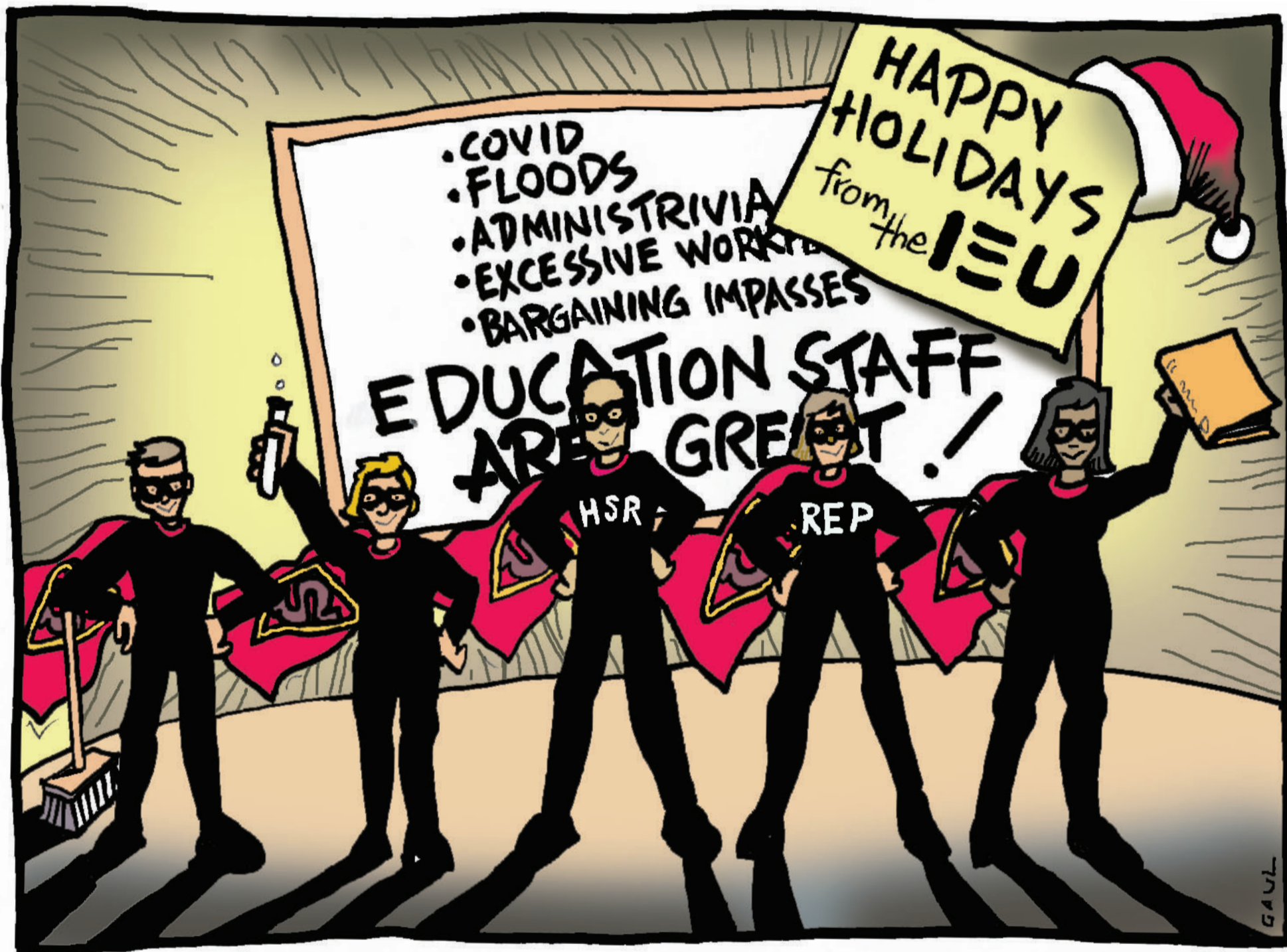


ThePoint



Deal or no deal?

As we go to print, we are yet again awaiting a revised proposal from Victorian Catholic employers. We hope that by the time you read this, we've been able to announce genuine progress.

Yet again, we've met with employer representatives and been presented with a proposal which does not offer employment conditions competitive with those in Victorian government or Sale Catholic schools.

Yet again, we've expressed our preparedness to compromise while clarifying what simply must be in a draft Agreement for us to endorse it in good faith – and for it to have a reasonable prospect of receiving

majority support in an employee ballot.

The delays have been extraordinary – never in our long history of Agreement negotiations have employer representatives been so unwilling or unable to progress the final few crucial matters at the bargaining table.

We've reached in-principle agreement on most key issues, but for months now there's been no movement on three low-cost but vital matters:

- The inclusion of 'extras' in scheduled class time (or paid allowances for extras falling outside of SCT)
- Equitable access to Time in Lieu for all staff
- A fair mechanism to review disputes over contentious decisions about workload and the arrangement of work.

Time and again, we've been let down by employer responses that leave schools unable to offer industry-standard

employment conditions.

The start of the 2023 school year is rapidly approaching. We need a draft Agreement that ensures our schools can offer competitive conditions, which provides certainty to staff and Principals, and which has a reasonable prospect of receiving majority support in an employee ballot. We need it NOW!



IEU Office Summer Hours

The IEU Victoria Tasmania Offices in Melbourne and Hobart will be closed for the summer break from 4.00pm on Thursday 22 December. The IEU Switchboard will re-open with reduced hours of 9.00am to 4.00pm from Monday 9 January and a Duty Officer will be available to assist with urgent member enquiries.

Normal office hours of 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday will resume as of Monday 23 January. For non-urgent enquiries during the holiday period, please email info@ieuvictas.org.au or for matters regarding your membership and fees please email finance@ieuvictas.org.au and you will be responded to when the office reopens.

Fees Frozen again

For the third year in a row, IEU membership dues will not increase.

This has not been an easy year for anyone – but off the back of solid membership growth, the IEU is once again able to avoid fee increases for 2023.

Our tiered fee structure ensures that membership is affordable for all – but this relies on members paying the correct income-based membership fee.

Please make sure you are properly protected by your union membership by checking in Member Access that your fee category is correct and that we have your current employment and contact details listed.

You can confirm or update your details at <https://member.ieuvictas.org.au>.

Let's work together to keep fees low by growing again in 2023!

Educators, get rid of your Working with Children card!

Teachers who hold current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) are exempt from requiring a Working with Children Clearance (WCC), which was previously called a Working with Children Check or WWCC. We advise them NOT to hold simultaneous VIT registration and a WCC card.

Why? Because if a negative notice is issued against a registered teacher under WCC, it automatically triggers a suspension of their registration. Even a spurious allegation can mean a drawn-out and difficult process of reinstatement.

The expert advice is, 'just don't have it!'

Cancel your WCC at the Department of Justice website: <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/current-cardholders/information-for-cardholders>

(Scroll down to 'How to Return Your Card'.)

Graduate Membership: kick start your education career

Become an IEU Graduate Member and join the collective voice of your profession. Membership offers you protection at work, professional development and networking opportunities and the peace of mind that comes with knowing you have experts on your side.

Graduates in their first year of employment can join at our special rate of \$228.91, a discount of over 60%. Further discounts apply for student members who convert to graduate membership by the end of January.

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GENERAL SECRETARY
DEBRA JAMES

Education staff are superheroes

At the end of another tough school year, we want to acknowledge the heroic staff who've kept our schools running and our kids nurtured despite so many challenges.

Thank you for all the work you do, how you constantly go above and beyond – we know your sacrifices and commitment have kept schools going.

Thank you to our heroic IEU members. Your commitment to bargaining campaigns, to your union and to your colleagues and students this year has been uplifting and inspiring. We'll never forget your good-humoured creativity, your resilience, and your solidarity.

Thank you, sub-branch Reps. You are the backbone of the IEU, you step up voluntarily to support members in workplaces, you grow and activate your colleagues and take on challenging conversations with leadership in schools. You're on the ground assisting in the bargaining process and rallying members behind internal and external campaigns.

Your actions keep us going, determined to constantly move forward to improve your working lives.

It cannot be repeated enough: We work for you. You are our bosses. You are the union.

In 2022, bargaining was challenging throughout - with two sets of employers in the Catholic sector in Victoria, with very conservative anti-union Catholic employers in Tasmania, and across the board in the independent sector in both states.

COVID remained a major focus of our daily activities. Vaccinations, mandatory stay-at-home-orders, regular RATS, masks, notifications to authorities, school closures, briefings and updates, operational guides and advocating for members with government, health and education authorities and employers still occupied a lot of our energy.

The federal election delivered a new government keen to talk about jobs, industrial relations and education with workers and their unions for the first time in years.

As we've seen in our bargaining this year, the industrial relations balance is currently tipped too far towards employers, with most of our members unable to take protected industrial action, get bargaining orders, or change their pattern of work if they have caring responsibilities. After a decade of bargaining power and industrial rights being eroded, we welcome the prospect of a level playing field returning and look forward to the government delivering on its industrial relations promises.

In the Victorian Catholic sector, 2022 was frustrating. The deal for Victorian Government schools was announced at the start of Term 1, so employers in all sectors knew what wage improvements and workload alleviation measures were

required to reach a deal.

An Agreement with the Diocese of Sale was lodged, approved and voted on by early in Term 3, and back pay began flowing to its employees soon after.

The professionalism and commitment of the parties in that deal stands in stark contrast to the approach of the other Catholic Employers who steadfastly refused to move on vital parts of the VGS and Sale deals.

There was never one 'fix' to the complex workload issue, and it will take a lot of time and effort on many fronts to make a difference, but you told us that you were sick of being taken for granted, particularly after three years of pivoting from educating in person to online, adapting delivery and curriculum, looking out for the welfare of students, and being exposed to high-transmission workplaces while other workers were safely at home.

Bargaining in Tasmania also proved very difficult this year with the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office resisting our attempts to negotiate in good faith. As a result, we filed an application for 'Good Faith Bargaining Orders' at the Fair Work Commission, which secured three further meetings. We will not cease our efforts there until members have the deal they deserve.

In Victorian independent schools we've

been busy finalising 19 Agreements – up from eight last year – and a further two are awaiting approval. Our Organisers are currently actively bargaining on behalf of members in 32 schools.

In Tasmania five new independent school Agreements have been approved by the Fair Work Commission this year.

You can read the details of our activity in these sectors in the Year in Review section of this edition.

I want to finish as I started, with thanks.

Thank you members, teachers, education support staff, principals, and school leaders. Your work is integral to a thriving, caring, respectful society.

You educate and shape the future, no matter how tough things get.

Enjoy your more than hard-earned holidays – even superheroes need a break!



Union movement fights for industrial relations reform

The *Secure Jobs, Better Pay* Bill is vital to every Australian worker.

The proposed overhaul of Industrial Relations laws could restore the bargaining power of employees and improve working conditions degraded by ten years of conservative Governments.

For the legislation to pass it requires the support of the Greens and at least one crossbench Senator. You can petition the relevant Senator at: www.australianunions.org.au.

ACTU Secretary Sally McManus says Australia is in a cost-of-living crisis, wages have stagnated or gone backwards for a decade and the current enterprise bargaining system is 'overly complicated, time consuming and too easily gamed by too many employers to drive down wages.'

McManus said if there is multi-employer bargaining without protected strikes the bargaining power of workers is reduced to 'almost zero'.

ACTU President Michele O'Neil laid out

the facts at a Senate Committee Hearing on 4 November: 'Company profits went up by 28.5 per cent in the last 12 months and CEO pay by 41.6 per cent in 2020-21. Even before then, wages have been stagnant for 10 years. This is an unbalanced system where profits grow, productivity rises, CEOs get obscene pay and yet ordinary workers do not get the benefit of the hard work that they're putting in'.

'Workers' share of the national wealth they create is now at the lowest-ever level.'

IEU General Secretary Deb James also addressed the Senate Committee.

Deb said IEU members who take actions as minor as wearing a campaign badge in their workplace can face fines for taking unprotected industrial action.

'Under the current legislation... the minimum amount of money that could be deducted from an employee's pay packet for doing a 15-minute ban on a meeting, for

example, would be four hours.

'This legislation really needs to change because it's simply not fair for employees. There's no balance. Employers have all the power.'

The IEU's current bargaining deadlock with Victorian Catholic employers is an example of why our current multi-employer bargaining laws must change.

At the commencement of bargaining, employers insisted on continuing with a multi-employer Agreement. This meant any action taken by our members would leave them vulnerable to disproportionate pay deductions, fines, or prosecution. It also meant bargaining couldn't be progressed by the Fair Work Commission, which cannot arbitrate a bargaining dispute for a multi-employer Agreement.

IEU member Heather Macardy, a primary school teacher in the Catholic primary sector, told the Senate Committee, 'teachers

and education support staff need to be able to get help and we need to have our workers heard'.

'This legislation is a way to change things and make things better for employees.'

STOP PRESS:

As we go to print, news is breaking of a deal that should see the successful passage of the *Secure Jobs, Better Pay* Bill.

Congratulations to everyone who played their part in the campaign for better Industrial Relations laws. This Bill will make a real difference to the bargaining power of millions of workers. In particular, it will mean that next time IEU members seek to negotiate a multi-employer Agreement, we will have the same protections and rights as other workers.

‘You are the union’: Rep training turbocharges Catholic campaign

On 13 October, 47 eager Reps braved Victoria’s Big Wet to attend a training day with a difference at 120 Clarendon Street.



At the biggest in-person meeting held since pandemic lockdowns began, they shared ideas on escalating the *No More Freebies* campaign in search of a deal in Victorian Catholic education.

This was as much a council of war as a day of instruction, and the Reps would enlighten union officials as much as they soaked up information. As an Organiser said during a session: ‘You are the union, you and your colleagues in schools. We are just your advisors.’

After shaking off dripping raincoats, Reps received an update on the (stymied) state of enterprise bargaining from General Secretary Deb James.

‘Our absolute focus is to land the deal,’ she said. ‘It should not be this hard... it should have been done. It should have been done long ago. MACS is intransigent on things that shouldn’t be difficult.’

Deb said the IEU was not at the table bargaining right then because MACS had not changed its position on three critical non-negotiables: time in lieu; extras; and the strengthening of consultative committee powers.

Those provisions were agreed to in

DOSCEL and government schools long ago.

‘We want these things so staff are rested, so you can do a better job for kids and be more effective. We need these loads off your shoulders,’ Deb James told the gathering.

This was mirrored by the words of a Rep later, ‘Teachers need to be looked after so we can look after the kids.’

Next up was a recap of the legal limitations on industrial action in multi-employer bargaining and a brief overview of the extensive campaigning this year, during which Reps were told that all the rallies, posts, banners, photos, media articles and bargaining meetings were having an effect, and had moved MACS’ bargaining position significantly.

Reps were told that MACS hated the bad media coverage they’d received due to their failure to finalise an Agreement with fair workload provisions.

‘They know people are frustrated, and principals want a deal done. No one wants this to drag on any further,’ Deb said.

At the outset, it was emphasised that the ‘informal’ parts of the day were as important as the scheduled talks. ‘The discussions you have together in breaks

will be as invaluable as any of the formal sessions. It’s been a long time since we’ve had this many Reps in the same space together. The feeling in this room is inspiring – we want that to be taken back into schools.’

This sentiment was vindicated by the hubbub at morning tea, with Reps sharing war stories and campaigning strategies. These passionate discussions continued in workshops throughout the day.

At each break, Reps were interviewed, detailing the concerns of members at their schools and on the specific *No More Freebies* actions they’d devised.

These accounts became videos and articles for *The Point* and social media, offering Catholic education staff a glimpse of some inspiring and creative ways to get their point across without unduly disrupting students.

In the afternoon, union leadership fielded questions on everything from dealing with bargaining misinformation to rural staffing.

This motivated and committed group of Reps gave the campaign renewed impetus with their passion for workload reform and inventive campaigning ideas.

At the start of the day, Reps were asked, ‘How are your colleagues feeling about employers delaying this deal and refusing to offer industry standard conditions?’

This question received tremendous, detailed responses, but one brief answer sums them up, and how most staff in MACS schools feel:

‘Frustrated, angry, undervalued.’

IEU Awards 2022

Each year, the IEU recognises the outstanding contributions of inspiring individuals. The following Awards were announced at Annual Conference.

IEU Sub-Branch Representative Award

The role of the IEU sub-branch Rep is the most important in our union. Our Reps give life and meaning to the union in their schools. Amongst other things, they recruit new members, provide advice, represent members, liaise with school leadership, and make sure the IEU has a voice in various schools-based forums. Often, they are just that person who is there to listen.

Without an IEU Rep in a school our union just doesn’t function as well.

Hundreds of our IEU Reps have done a fantastic job in their schools over the past few years – and many have done particularly extraordinary work activating and growing their sub-branches during the No More Freebies campaign – but this year our award acknowledges the outstanding contribution of **Kellie Illichmann, IEU Rep from Marian College, Sunshine.**

(See page 18 for more).

The Sue Prichard Award

The IEU makes a special award to an IEU Rep who has made an outstanding contribution in a regional area,

recognising the unique challenges these roles offer. This award is named after long term IEU Organiser Sue Prichard who worked with members across Victoria for many years and whose ‘calm and gentle but very determined manner’ and sage advice was always greatly appreciated by the members she worked with and by all IEU staff members.

This year’s deserved winner of the Sue Prichard Award is IEU Rep **Michael ‘Mick’ Barling from Emmanuel College, Warrnambool.**

Mick is a favourite of Organisers who have worked with the school, one of whom said, ‘You always know the members are in good hands with Mick.’

‘He has been the Rep at Emmanuel since 2006. He is highly respected by colleagues and always maintained a good strong relationship with principals.’

IEU Sub-Branch Award

The sub-branch is the grass roots of our union, the organising engine of our actions in schools. Collectively, the actions undertaken in sub-branches make things happen for individual members

and improve our profession. This Award celebrates and recognises the sub-branches who have unified to achieve great things for members.

The 2022 IEU Sub-Branch Awards go to **Killester College Springvale** and **Launceston Church Grammar School.** (Read more about LCGS on page 24).

Activist Award

This Award recognises the significant commitment a member has shown consistent with the values of our union.

This year’s Award goes to **Andrew James, IEU Rep at Ballarat Clarendon College,** recognising 15 years of perseverance and support of his colleagues. (Read more on page 8).

Young Activist Award

This Award offers encouragement to a young member showing exceptional commitment to unionism. This year’s recipient is **Oscar Jolly, a Melbourne University Student Teacher member,** for his extraordinary work organising student teachers, including pushing for

support when they are undertaking unpaid placements as part of their course.

Health and Safety Rep Award

The past few years have underlined the vital role played by elected Health and Safety Reps – important in every workplace but especially in the complex, dynamic environment of schools. This year’s Award goes to **Brendan Nicholls, St Ignatius Drysdale.**

Independent School Award

This Award goes to a person or group of people who have done an outstanding job in furthering the interests of IEU members in an Independent school. The IEU is proud this year to recognise the outstanding work of **Tania Hume, IEU Rep at Rossbourne School** and **Adam McCann, Mount Scopus Memorial College.** (Read more about Tania on page 20).





IEU offers assistance to flood victims

The IEU actively monitored the wellbeing of members affected by recent flooding disasters, seeking out those in need of help.

After the union put out a call for information, responses were quick, and reinforced how tough a period this would be for schools and their communities.

The union quickly offered to waive and refund fees for affected members.

The first report back, from Seymour, indicated many of the issues which would be repeated: the school was closed, damage to roads and road closures were severely restricting movement in the town, and many members of the immediate school community had businesses, places of employment and houses 'directly affected by the flooding'.

When disaster strikes, schools, as hubs of the community, become even more important as meeting places and relief efforts centres.

End of year exams were underway when the floods hit and represented a huge logistical challenge for authorities.

On Monday 17 October, there were 78 schools in Victoria's north listed as closed on the Department of Education site, and 20 elsewhere whose bus services were curtailed.

That means a lot of hubs missing and thousands of families being affected.

One Rep from Shepparton reported that his school was closed for at least another two days and a 'critical incident team' was meeting to review the situation.

He said Shepparton was blocked on

all sides, power outages were affecting surrounding areas such as Mooroopna and Tatura, and most other schools in the region were closed.

'Buses can't move and there is no way staff from Shepparton can move to their respective schools as the streets are under water. Panic buying has reduced food availability and some stations are out of fuel.

'It's traumatic.'

Our Rep had already considered whether staff members with water 'on four sides' should be made to revert to remote learning; how much effort was necessary to get to work with roads shut off all around; and what sort of consideration (and leave) was due for staff members forced to spend days cleaning muck out of their ruined houses.

Some of these were familiar issues from the past three years: it was as if pandemic lockdowns had returned in a new guise.

For every Rep who could gladly report that they were unscathed, there was one who could say that a colleague who lived in a different location had been directly impacted by the rampant floodwaters. Days after the last heavy rain, waters were still rising in some catchments. By then, the next wave of heavy rain and storms was moving in, as the unprecedented third consecutive La Nina weather event battered southern Australia.

Sacred Heart School Tatura was not directly affected by floodwaters, but it was closed because so many staff and families of students living outside the town were.

'Decisions will be made on a day-by-day basis,' our Rep reported. 'I do have concerns for staff travelling to and from Tatura using roads that are in places unsafe and dangerous.'

IEU General Secretary Deb James wrote to all Victorian Reps, to find out how members and their school communities were being affected. She sought the help of Reps to identify those suffering hardship due to the floods.

Organisers personally contacted over 150 members to check in on their wellbeing.

The union also shared a comprehensive list of resources from governments, care agencies, emergency responders, Worksafe, and the Bureau of Meteorology on everything from preparing to combat rising waters and when to leave to advice on accessing emergency relief assistance payments and Emergency Re-establishment Assistance funds.

Sadly, these resources would be required again, as intense rainfall and flooding continued into November.

If you are an IEU member needing advice or assistance please don't hesitate to get in touch - (03) 9254 1860 / info@ieuvictas.org.au

Planning fairness



DEPUTY SECRETARY
DAVID BREAR

Even if deals can be reached on new Agreements covering employees in Victorian Catholic schools (other than in Sale) or in Tasmania before the end of the year, the people who make plans in schools – leadership, timetablers, and Consultative Committees – won't have the time they need to implement changes.

Principals in the Sale diocese knew months ago what changes were coming, particularly in relation to teacher workload, so schools have had the time they need to properly consult and to figure out how to make things work.

Elsewhere in Catholic education things remain up in the air, which has cranked up the pressure on everyone. We know that schools have the resources to improve conditions and tackle workloads, but without sectoral leadership, guidance and support we are simply not going to see consistent and effective improvements.

How is it that the Catholic employers in Victoria still (as I write this) refuse to match government schools and the Sale Diocese by getting rid of additional unpaid extras, when they operate their schools on at least the same money? Why is it that the same employers are looking for workarounds on reducing face-to-face teaching and Time in Lieu arrangements rather than doing something meaningful about it?

In Tasmania, teachers in primary schools will go into another year being forced to teach for an hour more than their state counterparts while their employer looks for new ways to argue that the reduction is not needed or wanted.

An early acceptance of necessary changes and a commitment to make an Agreement would have been fairer and more respectful for everyone – but outside of the Diocese of Sale it still hasn't happened.

It seems that Catholic school employers have become addicted to free labour.

Every day, leaders in schools continue to prop things up as employers keep telling everyone there's 'nothing to see here'.

The fact that they are struggling to staff their schools seems to suggest otherwise.

We remain absolutely committed to getting these deals done. I truly hope that we can update members with progress on these matters before the end of the school year, but this should have been sorted out long ago.

Finally – on a completely different note, I acknowledge the support of every member of our great union and wish you all a great, well-deserved break.

Tasmanian Catholic Reps plot the way forward

There was an impressive turnout of enthusiastic IEU Catholic school Reps on Monday 14 and Tuesday 15 November to discuss the latest negotiations on a deal in Catholic education.

Union leadership and industrial officers who have been at the negotiating table with the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (TCEO) updated Reps and provided a summary of the TCEO's position.

Leadership also discussed the state of the government school sector where thousands of staff joined massive public sector strikes on Wednesday 9 November demanding better conditions, workload alleviation, and fairer salary increases. The IEU attended that event in support of our public sector colleagues.

Reps reported that severe workload stress remains the primary issue for Tasmanian Catholic members and staff. The IEU Log of Claims is focused on measures to address workload issues, and it appears that, finally, there is some acknowledgement from employers that this scourge must be a focus of the new Agreement.

Progress in bargaining has been slow, requiring the IEU to seek support

from the Fair Work Commission, but the most recent meetings have been more positive.

The TCEO is providing feedback on several claims including overtime for part-time staff, redundancy provisions, specific workload measures, maximum class sizes, and preparation times for teacher assistants.

Reps returned from their training full of renewed energy and keen to build member strength in support of the campaign for a new Agreement.



From the President



UNION PRESIDENT
MARK WILLIAMS

It's time to take stock and regroup after three of the toughest years of our lives as educators.

To every one of you who has adapted to illness, absences, remote learning, endless bargaining, demanding parents, and ever-increasing workloads, whether you are a teacher, support worker or Principal, I salute you and wish you a refreshing summer.

You deserve it.

It's taken flexibility and commitment beyond what most of us knew we had in us to keep going in these times.

It's taken skill, guts, and creativity for you all to keep stressed kids learning in such a challenging time.

Hopefully, we can now look ahead to less stressful times ahead.

There's genuine hope under a new Federal Government that the concerns of the profession are being heard, and we hope that concrete improvements come out of the education roundtable discussions about workloads and staff recruitment and retention.

More broadly, it is heartening to see that improvements to paid parental leave and 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave are already legislated. The union movement's commitment to these vital reforms was unstinting, and these are significant achievements that offer encouragement of further advances for workers under this administration.

While bargaining in the Victorian Catholic sector has been ridiculously drawn out, there is also hope that changes to industrial relations laws being discussed as we go to print could make it easier for us to achieve a more timely outcome next time around. While we haven't yet (at time of printing) landed a state-wide Catholic deal, our collective campaigning and the precedents set in Sale and a number of independent schools has won all Catholic school staff a very well-deserved pay increase in time for Christmas.

There are even signs that our members in the Tasmanian Catholic sector might see some genuine bargaining sooner rather than later, which will be a welcome change.

I applaud the campaigning efforts of members across both states – while bargaining delays have been enormously frustrating, I am immensely confident that our collective efforts will pay off in the end. Our campaigning ultimately benefits everybody, and makes our schools better for staff and students alike.

While I'm trying 'accentuate the positive', I'd urge members to consider what Michael Victory writes on page 19 of this edition when he asks us to 'celebrate the extraordinary things we do every day'.

I hope, once you get a decent rest, you find there's plenty you should celebrate – and better times ahead!

Compare the Pair: Scotch Oakburn vs Tasmanian Catholic Education Office

At independent school Scotch Oakburn, Launceston, robust negotiations yielded an outcome satisfactory to all parties. Meanwhile, the TCEO can barely bring itself to meet with the IEU...

It's instructive to take a look at the vastly different approaches to bargaining taken by each employer.

	Scotch Oakburn	Tasmanian Catholic Education
Agreement expiry	31 December 2022	1 September 2021
Notification of Bargaining	Scotch Oakburn contacted the union in July of 2022, explaining their desire to commence negotiations in August of that year.	The IEU contacted the TCEO to ask when negotiations would commence. The TCEO asked for delays to negotiations due to COVID. After delays and pressure from the union, the TCEO finally notified the commencement of bargaining in early 2022, at least four months after the nominal expiry of the 2018 agreement.
Meeting structure	Meetings were held weekly, and in person (with video conferencing available), from around 9.00am-2.00pm with times set aside for individual employee Rep meetings. There were nine employee bargaining Reps who were able to participate in every meeting.	The TCEO refused to meet in person and would only participate in two-hour Zoom meetings. Just four meetings have been held between January and the time of publication – and the union had to go to the Fair Work Commission to force the employer to meet.
Feedback	Scotch Oakburn gave employee Reps the opportunity to seek feedback from staff and then report this back at negotiation meetings.	The TCEO interact with staff only through an online 'portal', with a complete lack of transparency or process around how this operates, or how submissions through the 'portal' will be responded to.
Log of Claims – Employee/Union	The IEU tabled a log of claims on behalf of members, with additional claims presented by Employee Reps. All claims were robustly discussed with employer responses provided at subsequent meetings. Many claim items were adopted as part of the negotiation process.	The TCEO has dismissed all claims presented by the IEU on behalf of members. They asked the union to cost the claims, without providing necessary financial data. The TCEO has not provided any information about claims received via the portal.
Log of Claims - Employer	Scotch Oakburn provided a list of items for inclusion in the Agreement, with most representing an improvement to staff conditions.	The TCEO has still not provided a formal log of claims, but has said it wants extra days of work for staff, reductions in flexibility around time of attendance, and more ability for the employer to transfer employees between schools.
Timeline	Negotiations concluded with a draft Agreement made ready for consultation process and access period. The new Agreement is likely to be ratified prior to the expiry of the current one.	Over a year after the nominal expiry date of the 2018 Enterprise Agreement, we are no nearer to a new Agreement, and the TCEO continues to delay the process.

While the Scotch Oakburn IEU sub-branch did not gain every improvement it sought, the school participated in the bargaining process effectively and constructively and gave it the attention it deserved. All parties felt listened to and respected during the process and the union was recognised as an important part of the EA process. There were disagreements and some

robust conversations but at the end of the day, employees will have an Agreement that represents an improvement in their employment conditions. Staff in Catholic Education are no nearer to an improvement to their conditions due to the mismanagement of the bargaining process by the TCEO and a lack of willingness to recognise the IEU

as the voice for union members in Catholic schools. They could learn a lot about good-faith, productive negotiations by looking at how reputable Tasmanian independent schools approach this vital process.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS WITH SENIOR INDUSTRIAL OFFICER DENIS MATSON

Eight things all workers need to remember

For more than 30 years I've been writing 'Know Your Rights' articles in union publications. I've represented hundreds of members in construction, banking, manufacturing and now education.

I've watched great employees and members make the same mistakes – over and over. Union industrial officers like myself have had a hell of a lot of wins for members, and a few losses.

Here's a few things that every employee can do to help us have more wins – or better yet, help avoid the conflicts in the first place.

■ Get it in writing

Every agreement or arrangement you make, especially where it's all friendly, is prone to disputation later. So often we hear, 'the previous Principal agreed, but the new one ...' That part-time fraction, the return from leave, the extra allowance, the travel arrangement – they all need to be recorded. If you can't get the employer to write it down, send them an email with your understanding of the details (and, as per my next point, keep a copy!).

■ Take copies of anything you might need

The first thing an employer does when you are in dispute is to lock you out of school emails and files. Keep a copy of every email, contract, and letter relating to your employment. You never know when you may need it.

■ Don't sign that thing!

A member who signs a document relating to their employment without checking with the union is certifiably mad. New contract? Variation of hours? New policy? Every employer has their lawyers draft these documents in a totally one-sided way. All these documents can

seem innocent at the time, and you only find out how clever their lawyers are later when the employer takes advantage of an obscure clause that suits them, not you. You may well have to sign it in the end, but at least get it checked by the union before you do.

■ Don't assume the boss knows what they're talking about

Employers routinely put terms into employment contracts that they know they can never rely on. Employment law is complicated, but a simple truth to remember is that Enterprise Agreements, Awards, and the Fair Work Act (among other legislation) over-ride any written or verbal contract. Employees regularly get conned, agreeing to things 'because they are in the contract' or 'because I agreed to it' when the law says otherwise. Before you assume that the employer has a right to do this thing (whatever it is), check with your Union.

■ The ambush meeting

'Can you just pop into my office for a moment?' That question is the start of most workplace disputes. *Always* ask what the meeting is about and, if it relates to your employment, insist on having a representative or support person in attendance. If the employer won't tell you what it's about, don't go. Employees need only follow directions that are 'lawful and reasonable'. It is unreasonable to insist that you attend a meeting if the employer will not tell you its purpose. If you have any doubts about the meeting, start an

email trail so later you can say: 'You asked me to meet; I asked what it was about; you wouldn't tell me; I'm happy to meet if you tell me the purpose of the meeting.'

■ Read your EBA

OK, don't read it cover-to-cover – that's the union's job. Agreements are hundreds of clauses of legalistic mumbo-jumbo. But yours also contains the words that define your entitlements. Whenever you have a question about your rights, start by having a look at what the EBA says about it. You may be pleasantly surprised – the union negotiates every clause in those documents to get members the best possible conditions. And don't assume that the EBA is the end of the matter – it's just a good start. Once you've checked what the EBA has to say, check with the union for the rest of the story.

■ Keep your membership current

The IEU has a policy which prevents it from acting for people who join with a pre-existing issue, or are not paying in the correct fee category. It's like insurance – you can't wait until you've had an accident to take out the policy. Some members who have been unemployed or working few hours forget to update their membership when they get more employment. That makes them 'unfinancial' and ineligible to be represented.

■ Recruit your colleagues

The law provides certain protections, but the justice system can be slow and expensive and sometimes it fails

completely. Worse still, our laws are far from perfect, and many injustices can't be pursued through the courts. A workplace with a strong union membership can get justice for members without having to rely on the 'justice' system. There is a huge power imbalance between employees and their employer, and employers can create real problems for an employee. But when the employer is facing an angry majority of unionised staff, the problem becomes the employer's.

Other top tips for education staff:

- Don't use your own car for work purposes
- Your union representative can be more than a 'support person'
- Be VERY careful in your interactions with students: If you have any private, personal, or 'confidential' interactions, let your principal know. If you are apprehensive about telling the principal, then you shouldn't be doing it.
- Don't wear work-related costs. The employer must pay for equipment and services you need for work: computers, work phones, hiring academic gowns for the graduation, costs for attending PD, etc.
- If an employer 'policy' prevents you from exercising a right (such as to take accrued Long Service Leave) the policy is probably unlawful.



IS NCCD collection improving?

Evidence is mounting that many schools are not following new guidelines intended to reduce debilitating NCCD workloads.

Earlier this year, in response to member concerns about the NCCD exacerbating workloads, the IEU collaborated with the Department of Education, Skills, and Employment (DESE), which published an updated 'NCCD Evidence Fact Sheet' for the non-government sector.

This fact sheet helps ensure that meeting NCCD requirements doesn't place unnecessary additional workload burdens on staff. Amongst other things, the DESE fact sheet explicitly states that:

- Schools are NOT required to create new or additional evidence for the purposes of the NCCD.
- Schools are NOT required to collate the evidence into one document. If a school chooses

to develop such a document for the purposes of overview or planning, it should be concise and usable.

- Duplication of evidence into other forms, formats or locations is NOT required by DESE at class, school, or system level.

However, the IEU recently conducted a survey in regional Victoria which revealed concerns about the duplication of reporting on different platforms. Staff report being 'constantly' told they must report in more detail, or they will lose funding.

Even worse, we're hearing reports of Education Support Staff being told they can't be given ongoing employment because the school could lose funding due to 'deficient' NCCD data collection.

Teachers are also concerned that Education Support Staff are asked to report without proper training, under threat of losing hours.

The following comment from the survey sums up the frustrations of staff: 'NCCD would be more user friendly if it was nationally consistent and there was one electronic data collection tool into which teachers enter goals and adjustments... Goals should be about improvement, not necessarily mastery'.

Key survey findings:

- 87% of respondents reported the information required to be reported was generally regarded as 'more than necessary' to 'excessive'
- 91% reported there was not enough time allocated to test

and enter data

- 41% reported staff had to spend a lot of their own time trying to keep up
- 71% overall reported duplication of data reporting
- 77% reported on two or more platforms (20% reported on 4 platforms), and a total of 17 different platforms were used for reporting across surveyed schools

Staff say NCCD reporting would be more efficient if:

- A single platform only was used.
- Teachers were trusted to do their job. There is too much evidence required and too many hoops to jump through.
- More time was given to proper training.

■ The system of clicking in and out of students was less time consuming.

■ Staff didn't have to record adjustments for every child in every lesson.

Now is the time to be having these discussions at a school level, ensuring in planning for 2023 that processes are streamlined and that workload implications are minimised.

Find more information, a link to the fact-sheet and a workplace poster at ieu.news/NCCD

The survivor

If anyone deserved kudos from the IEU, it's 2022 Activist Award winner Andrew James, a foundation member who has toiled through countless negotiating ordeals.



Bargaining at Ballarat Clarendon College has often been protracted and the College is renowned for lacking empathy for its workforce, yet Andrew's determination and steadiness has guided good outcomes for decades. Time and again, Andrew has managed antagonism towards the union to deliver key wins on wages and conditions, including a recent triumph on parental leave.

At Conference, Andrew made his thanks by video, and included a sage line, paraphrased from a movie, that sums up his experience of bargaining: 'I'm happy to give you whatever you want as long as it's something I was always going to offer'.

Andrew also thanked his Organisers, saying the support he'd been given through some 'trying times' had enabled him to carry on and continue supporting his colleagues.

Health and Safety Rep as well as IEU Rep, Andrew has grown membership to the extent that he is ready to be a mentor, 'paving the way for some young energetic, enthusiastic members to carry on'.

If they have half his tenacity, Clarendon remains in good hands.



So said a Rep at training day in October. She'd continue to work hard for students but would no longer take on extra duties – regardless of when a deal in Catholic education was struck. Taking part in the *No More Freebies* campaign had made it even more stark to her how much of her time had been stolen by a ridiculous workload.

This viewpoint was repeated throughout the day – 'the more I refuse non-essential duties, the more obvious it is that the current workload is unsustainable.'

The beauty of *No More Freebies*, and the training day, was that Reps and members shared ideas like this. Every workplace is unique and there are no campaign actions that suit every school. But, by sharing what they have devised for their own situation, Reps inspired others to come up with variations that suit their staff and school.

That said, when we reviewed the actions Reps have devised, there were some common themes:

- No attendance at out of hours school events like art shows and concerts
- Leaving school grounds outside scheduled class times
- Refusing supposedly 'voluntary' or non-compulsory activities.

Reps list their *No More Freebies* actions

'I'm staying with No More Freebies forever!'

The more creative actions included:

- **Not answering emails after work hours & changing profile photos to union photos**
- **Mini-rallies held outside school before the beginning of the school day – members holding their IEU school banner and providing an explanatory handout to parents dropping off their kids**
- **No parent contact outside school hours.**

No More Freebies actions list

Here is the full list of *No More Freebies* actions undertaken in schools by the 47 Reps who attended the training day:

- No out of hours work; staff off campus when they don't have scheduled duties
- Staff not attending out of hours events
- No parent contact outside school hours
- No after-hours emails/phone calls; 'out of office' response on emails 4pm-8am
- No work on day off for part-time staff
- No participation in non-compulsory events
- Daily communal walk-out at 3.45pm
- Changing profile photos to union photos
- Petitions to MACS signed by parents
- Message to parents about our participation in NMF
- No attendance at lunchtime meetings
- Saying No to whole of school celebrations
- More sub-branch meetings
- Catching up with the principal each week to see where the EBA is at
- Campaign Working Group established
- Cancel before school and lunchtime clubs, training, and extra classes
- Encouraging teachers/staff to wear the *No More Freebies* badges
- No written feedback – verbal and scores ONLY
- Talking to students about the No More Freebies campaign
- Survey of all members
- Event held outside of school before the beginning of the school day where NMF handout given to parents dropping off their kids
- Flooding the staffroom with NMF posters
- Cancellation of health and wellbeing festival
- Non-attendance at information nights, formals, dinners
- No report comment for Term 4
- Non-attendance at Year 9/10 2-day excursion
- Meetings finish promptly at their set and agreed time.



An artful example: St Luke's Primary School, Wantirna

The following *No More Freebies* action built awareness and empathy without inconveniencing students, a major concern of its IEU sub branch.

Instead of boycotting an after-hours Art Show, teachers attached their *No More Freebies* badges and talked with parents, collecting signatures for a petition to MACS.

Members were 'overwhelmed' by the resulting show of support, with 94 parents signing a petition urging Melbourne-based Catholic schools to align the conditions and pay of their school's staff with those who work in Government Schools and the Sale diocese. There are 111 families at this school and not all could attend the show – this was a startling strike rate.

Rep Claire Williams said, 'All staff supported the Art Show and were in attendance from straight after school until 7:30pm as we are committed to our families

and students, and our actions are not going to disadvantage our community.'

How did you decide on the petition?

We are a small school with a small staff. We wanted to choose a way to support the union in a cause that we are passionate about that wouldn't cause division and risk damaging our relationships with our colleagues, students, and parent community.

What did you consider in choosing to approach parents at the Art Show?

- We didn't want to embarrass our Principal by making the petition the focus of the Art Show
- We didn't want to take the focus away from celebrating the artistic talents of the students

■ We didn't want to miss the opportunity to raise parent awareness at what was going to be the most heavily attended community event for this term.

Did the response surprise you?

I'd hoped that perhaps 40-50 people would be brave enough to sign, but I was astonished when nearly all the families who attended signed the petition. We have a wonderful parent community, and I was touched by their outrage on our behalf. Our parents want to help us, we just need to show them how they can go about supporting us.

Do you think parents fully understand the extent of workplace issues for education staff?

Not at all: our parents were shocked to discover that teachers were not paid to attend out-of-hours events such as camps, Sacraments, concerts, art shows, parent-teacher interviews, fetes, etc. They see us at these events and assume we are being compensated for being there.

What advice do you have for members at other schools considering a *No More Freebies* action?

We need to be strong and take a stand. If every school can find a way to act, then hopefully, MACS will see our frustration. We work hard and deserve better!

ACTU President lauds education staff at IEU Conference

ACTU President Michele O’Neil has praised IEU members for keeping schools going during the pandemic.



Addressing the IEU’s Annual Conference, O’Neil said, ‘all credit to you. Given the challenges you faced, what you did to keep educating was extraordinary.’

O’Neil was promoting the ACTU’s push to get the Labor Government’s *Secure Jobs, Better Pay* Bill passed by Federal Parliament before Christmas. Having passed through the House of Representatives, the legislation needs the support of at least one Senate crossbencher to become law.

O’Neil said the IEU’s multi-employer bargaining impasse with Victorian Catholic employers shows how the current industrial relations system fails workers.

IEU General Secretary Deb James and Rep Heather Macardy addressed the Senate Committee Hearing into the proposed Bill in early November, explaining the toll of drawn-out negotiations on education staff.

O’Neil said they both did their union proud and gave ‘really powerful evidence’, despite having less than a day’s notice to attend the hearing.

She said reforming the bargaining system was an ‘enormous task’, and the Bill presented a ‘once in a lifetime opportunity to change working people’s lives for the better’.

O’Neil urged her audience to use ‘friendly’ encouragement when seeking to convince Senators to back the legislation

via social media.

‘Tell your story, don’t attack, engage.’

And she practices what she preaches.

Deb told the Conference how a ‘zen-like’ O’Neil handled hostile questioning at the Senate Hearings, remaining calm, positive, and constructive throughout her grilling, and resisting the ‘bait’ set by an aggressive Senator.

O’Neil’s manner may be pleasant, but her message is blunt: ‘These laws are about fundamental rights of workers to bargain and have a level playing field’.

‘We’re about balancing power to win extra leverage to get workers a fair deal.

‘Australia has become more unequal and divided and a lot of the damage was done in the last decade under governments hostile to unions.

‘Changing the government in itself doesn’t deliver change – now we must make sure the promises made by the Labor Party are delivered.

‘We never take the foot off the pedal. We don’t win until we see a difference in the daily lives of working people.’

O’Neil said the union movement had done significant preparation on its policies in hope of a Labor victory before the 2019 federal election, and the recent cost-of-living crisis has made the need for change even more urgent.

‘Wages have been stagnant for 10 years, but they’ve gone backward in the past 16 months. Workers are literally making

decisions between spending money on food or petrol.’

O’Neil said the IEU’s multi-employer bargaining impasse with Victorian Catholic employers shows how the current industrial relations system fails workers.

This, when big business profits are up 28 per cent, CEO pay is up 41 per cent, and, despite productivity rising, the labour force has its lowest ever share of GDP. The people saying workers shouldn’t have more are about to spend big to oppose industrial relations reform.

‘Big business knows most people don’t like them so they’re framing their opposition campaign around public sympathy for small business, claiming there will be Australia-wide strikes.

‘That’s why there’s a scare campaign saying the Bill is too rushed – they need more time to spend a lot of money opposing it. They’ve had plenty of time, we’ve been talking to them for years... We

need to keep the Labor Party strong, keep the Greens on-side and get the one other vote we need to get this Bill passed.’

O’Neil invoked the actions of the ACT’s ‘Vintage Reds’ - unionists who have retired from full-time employment – campaigning for the Bill by knitting outside Senator David Pocock’s office and reminding him, ‘we voted for you, now it’s your time to vote for us!’

Asking members to follow their example and do everything they could to support the Bill in the next few weeks, O’Neil said, ‘we never win alone’.

‘We only win when we’re together. Solidarity is our power.’

Veteran teacher shares his concerns for Catholic education

The following heartfelt message was provided to us by an IEU Rep in in regional Catholic education (who wished to remain anonymous). As a 41-year education veteran and a foundation member of the union, his words bear serious consideration.

Catholic school teachers are currently at loggerheads with their employer regarding our Agreement. Our union’s main aim is to protect the future of a Catholic education system that values staff and protects teachers from unrealistic workloads and expectations.

We are concerned that current workloads are deterring young people from joining the teaching profession, while others are not considering teaching as a long-term prospect.

Primary school teachers work in excess of 50 hours per week. We generally arrive at school before 8am and leave after 5pm. After dinner we spend another two hours each night preparing for the next day.

Sunday nights are taken up again with more planning and preparation. Many of our students now require individual programs which in turn require hours of planning at home.

Yes, we do work during school holidays to prepare for the upcoming term. The activities and experiences we provide don’t magically turn up on the table on day one of each term.

Teaching is only a small part of our workload when you take into consideration the counselling and parenting required to run today’s complex classroom. Many teachers working in our more underprivileged suburbs and regional areas go home

heartbroken and feeling despondent and depressed because they are unable to support those students living in a vicious cycle of poverty, drugs, unemployment and significant dysfunction. Teachers are often the only people these families can turn to for support.

Teachers do not turn their professional life off when they get home; how can they when they are dealing directly with the lives of children in need?

We are constantly told by our employers to work harder, complete more documentation within a narrow timeframe, and lift our game because NAPLAN tells us we are not performing. Other sectors of society are always telling the teaching

profession how, what, why and when to teach. Wouldn’t you think these decisions should be left up to the professional, who has a four or five-year teaching degree and years of authentic experience to make these judgements?

Other countries gladly offer their teachers this respect.

Our teaching profession is failing to attract young teachers. A high percentage of those that do enter the workforce leave within their first five years citing poor pay and unrealistic workloads.

What does the future hold for our schools if this is allowed to continue?

Sale deal benefits casual and relief teachers

The new Agreement in Diocese of Sale Catholic schools has led to big improvements in work conditions for CRTs.

The daily rate for CRTs is linked to Level 5 of the *Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2020* with a causal loading of 25% added. This means that a CRT in a Diocese of Sale Catholic school is paid \$423.23 per day – over \$20 more per day than a CRT receives in a Victorian Government school. The daily rate will be adjusted in accordance with Fair Work Commission on 1 July each year for the life of the Agreement.

Other improvements include:

- the removal of the Casual Relieving category, so a CRT may only be engaged for a maximum of 30 consecutive days in one school before having to be made fixed-term or ongoing
- CRTs who work in a Diocese of Sale Catholic school for a minimum of 15 days in a school year will be provided with two paid days to undertake professional learning
- CRTs are entitled to long service leave under the Agreement.

With the 2022 school year coming to an end, the attention turns to 2023 and the AEU/IEU Kickstarter Conference in February. Keep an eye out on the website for details and how to register for the Conference.



Know your ABCs: Categories of ES & SSO employees in Victorian Catholic schools



For Education Support (ES) and School Services Officers (SSO) employees working in Catholic schools in Victoria, it's important to know there are three categories of employment – A, B and C – that can be applied to their roles.

These differences in classification can cause some level of confusion amongst ES members but the main difference between categories is relatively simple, relating to the number of weeks of leave that each category has during the school year.

■ Category A

These employees work 48 weeks of the year and the four weeks of annual leave they are entitled to under the National Employment Standards. Because this accounts for the full year, this category of employment is described as '52/52', and the salary table for these employees then becomes the base of comparison for the other ES categories.

Typical Category A roles in secondary schools are in administration, finance and ICT.

Category A employees receive all public holidays in addition to their four weeks of leave. Usually, there are 11 public holidays in Victoria with seven falling in the school holidays.

■ Category B

These employees have school term breaks as 'leave', which incorporates four weeks of annual leave. Category Bs forgo four weeks of pay to access the additional weeks of leave – this category can be described as 48/52, as this is the proportion of a Category A salary they receive. This means these employees lose four weeks of pay for around eight weeks of additional leave (depending on their school's calendar). This classification category is one that applied in Victoria before the modern Award was created and the union has

worked hard to protect it.

Category B roles tend to be those that support students such as LSOs, technical jobs in libraries, laboratories, and information and communications technology, and administration in primary schools.

Public holidays that fall in the school holidays are not added to the leave of Category B staff.

■ Category C

These employees are entitled to seven weeks of leave, generally with four weeks over the summer holidays and one week in each term break. Category C staff forgo two weeks of pay for the additional three weeks of leave, so the pay scale is '50/52' as a proportion of the Category A pay scale.

Category C roles include some administration roles in secondary schools (keeping the office open), some LSO roles relating to NCCD requirements, and increasing numbers of ICT, laboratory and library tech roles as secondary schools look to provide support to students over term breaks.

These staff do not receive public holidays that fall within their period of leave – which can at times lead to inequity between staff. For example, there were two public holidays in the first week of the most recent school holidays (the National Day of Mourning and Grand Final Eve), but none in the second, so employees scheduled to work in week one of the holidays only worked three whereas those scheduled for week two worked five days for the same fortnightly pay.

The Agreement we have negotiated with the Sale diocese has addressed

this inequity, by granting all public holidays to Category C staff in addition to their leave.

The classification of individual Education Support Staff is dependent on the nature of their role and the needs of the school. Some ES members might look wistfully at colleagues working under a different category and feel that they are being 'disadvantaged'. However, it's worth remembering that each ES role has pros and cons. For example, a Category C admin staffer will generally have significantly more flexibility in their working day than a Category B LSO who is working directly with students in a classroom or out in the yard.

An ES can ask to have their role recategorised, but there is no compulsion for the school to address this formally – so it is important to have a compelling argument, and also to be confident that a successful recategorisation will actually be an advantage!



Why you need the union on your side: Ann McLarty's story

The IEU employs industrial experts for a reason – Ann's experience reminds us that you never know when you'll need them.

IEU member Ann McLarty had a workplace accident in 2019 which caused significant injuries to her wrist, arm, and shoulder. Her surgery was delayed until December 2020 due to COVID.

Post-surgery, her arm was immobilised for a month before she could commence light duties and rehabilitation. She contacted her school and let them know she could work from home for the first two weeks of term. Her role was part teaching, part administration. The Head of Campus was fine with this arrangement.

Because her shoulder injury wasn't

mentioned on her initial WorkCover forms, Ann's claim was under review.

She supplied WorkCover letters and certificates of capacity from her doctors to her school.

But then Ann received an email from her school's human resources department stating that her two weeks working from home were not acknowledged and had been taken off her allotment of sick days. This despite her receiving instructions on her work responsibilities while working from home by her Head of School.

Ann requested a meeting with HR and

the Head of School but received no response.

So she informed the school on a Sunday night that she would attend campus the following day to meet with them and 'get everyone on the same page'. At midnight, Ann received an email stating that she wasn't allowed on campus.

'I then received a phone call from my principal at 5pm on Monday evening, stating that I was banned from returning to the campus, that he had got lawyers involved, and that they would contact me,' Anna says.

This was the first time any senior management team member had spoken to

Ann since her surgery.

Her principal also told her not to complete any work or use school emails. She was blocked from using school computer drives.

Furthermore, she was asked to provide access to private medical files and instructed to attend a doctor of the school's choosing, who would assess her whether she could return to her position. This was during lockdown, when Victorians could only travel within five kilometres of their home – and the doctor chosen by the school was two hours away



Inflation is not the fault of workers

None of us needs to be told about inflation. We've all seen \$12 lettuces. Exorbitant petrol prices. Extortionate rental prices.

But Australian workers need to be reminded that inflation is not their fault, says Jim Stanford from the Centre for Future Work.

In a recent webinar, he told unionists that Australian workers will pay for the upcoming recession even though they didn't cause it – and they shouldn't have to take a cut in living standards when it strikes.

He said wages for Australian workers are at an 'historical low' and had fallen or been stagnant since 2013: when the mining boom finished, the coalition was elected, and the targeting of unions eroded the bargaining power of workers.

'Wages grow because workers have power to negotiate them – and that has withered away.'

Stanford says the growth of wages hasn't just slowed, the relationship between wages growth and unemployment has broken down – wages are not growing when employment is stronger.

And because company profits have been prioritised over wages, Australian workers now have their smallest share of the economic pie since the Second World War – which means fewer sales for businesses, more inequality, and the increasing fragmentation of society.

'The share of the Gross Domestic Product going to corporate profit has never been higher. Businesses have taken advantage of the pandemic and jacked up prices far more than required. They grabbed every dollar in profits they could get away with.'

'We are seeing profit price inflation, not wage price inflation. Since 2019 workers have lost 3% of the economic pie. Corporations have increased their share

by 5%. It's workers who are losing and must fight back,' Stanford said.

In May, a report that Stanford co-authored, *The Wages Crisis Revisited*, stated, 'targeted policies to deliberately lift wages are needed to break free of the low-wage trajectory that has become locked in over the past nine years'.

'Traditional market forces did not cause the wages crisis, and market forces are unlikely to be able to fix it – even with a relatively low unemployment rate,' the report reads.

Instead, 'policy and institutional factors' were more important in explaining the deceleration of wages, including: 'the erosion of collective bargaining coverage; inadequate minimum wages; pay restraint imposed on public sector workers; and widespread wage theft'.

Stanford says the enterprise bargaining system is 'broken', with most workers having no access to collective bargaining because of the vilification of unions under the coalition and the repressive nature of Australia's labour laws, which criminalise everyday bargaining activities. He cites a worker being penalised for swearing on a picket line – only in Australia would this be considered illegal.

While wages are not responsible for inflation, the 'cure' of higher interest rates is worse than the disease. Increasing interest rates increases unemployment and makes repayments on mortgages bite deeply into the standard of living of workers. Which means they have less to spend on goods and services, which leads to recession.

'High interest rates do NOTHING about the fundamental causes of inflation,' Stanford says. 'External issues caused inflation.'

These include supply chain issues, pent up demand resulting from the pandemic, and Australia's 'failed energy prices system'.

He says the obsession of central banks with inflation 'snatches defeat from the jaws of victory'. Focus should instead be on the people who have profited from the policies of the past decade, such as housing developers and energy providers.

Making workers pay for inflation they didn't cause is not the answer.

Jim Stanford's 'cure' for inflation:

- Stronger minimum wage
- Rebuild bargaining
- Stronger Awards system
- Lift public sector pay
- Gender pay equity
- Stronger funding for public and community services
- Better unemployment income support.

Governments can do the following:

- Provide more affordable housing so it is not a 'casino' in an overheated market
- Make public services like early childcare cheaper
- Move to renewable energy as quickly as possible to cut dependence on speculative markets
- Targeted taxes – keep higher income taxes
- Put a 'disinflationary' cap on rent prices.

He says the federal government must be the main economic manager, not the unelected Reserve Bank, which is currently beholden to neoliberal monetary policies.

'They can go pell-mell towards a

human made recession that hurts working people – and it's not necessary.'

The *Wages Crisis Revisited* authors listed the following measures to support proactive wage-boosting policies:

- A new statutory definition of employment designed to protect gig workers
- An end to wage suppression by government (such as the 'wages policy' which has constrained salary increases in Victorian education)
- Revitalise collective bargaining.

Stanford also cites the ACTU's Job Summit paper *An Economy that Works for People*. Some of the recommendations of that report were:

- Establish full employment in decent jobs as the top national macroeconomic priority
- Reform the mandate and operational strategy of the Reserve Bank
- Regulate labour markets so that real wages rise in tandem with labour productivity and support the maintenance of full employment
- An excess profits levy on companies enjoying windfall profits as a result of current inflation
- Cancelling the planned Stage Three tax cuts which only benefit higher-income households, will widen the gender pay gap, and will exacerbate inflationary pressures.

To see Jim Stanford's presentation *Inflation and Why Workers Are Not to Blame*, go to: ieu.news/oyg

from where Ann lived. Naturally, she questioned that choice. Ann describes that phone call as 'quite distressing'.

The demand for her personal medical files was the tipping point: Ann decided to call the union.

Her Organiser passed her to our industrial officer who specialises in WorkCover claims. Luckily, Ann had saved copies of all her email correspondence with the school, and it revealed that her role had been changed while she was recovering from surgery, which was illegal. The email related to that change had been deleted,

but Ann forwarded a copy she'd saved.

It was clear that the principal was trying to dismiss Ann. He tried to deny her return to work by saying she was unfit to return because she was a Type 1 diabetic.

Ann's diabetes had not been an issue in the 10 years she had worked at the school.

The fight was drawn out and Ann says it got 'dirty', but (with the assistance of Maurice Blackburn lawyers) the IEU got her reinstated. As an IEU member, Ann was entitled to comprehensive legal representation at no cost.

Ann says the union 'diligently worked to

get me back to my employment'.

'I have been a union member all my life and have never had to use it. I didn't deserve what happened to me or still to this day know why, but my industrial officer and the union were with me every step of the way, guiding, communicating, and taking everything head on.'

'I did return to my workplace after six months of battle and worked there for another year, but now can report I am in a much better place.'

Ann wanted her story told so other people don't fall victim to a similar scenario.

'Please don't be the person to think it will never happen to you, because life can change in an instant and depending on who you are dealing with, and their agendas things can change dramatically.'

2022

The year in review

Victorian Catholic sector

Throughout Term 3 and 4, vigorous efforts continued to force Victorian Catholic employers to finalise an Agreement.



Members across the state attracted media attention for actions exposing the failure of employer negotiators to provide workload conditions already agreed to in government schools and the diocese of Sale.

When employers held out on basic, urgently needed improvements to workloads and consultation for thousands of dedicated and overworked education staff working in Catholic schools, the *No More Freebies* campaign kicked in.

That campaign called on all members in Victorian Catholic education (except those employed by the Diocese of Sale) to refuse to perform any work beyond that legally required of them from the commencement of Term 4.

In announcing *No More Freebies*, we pointed out what members were telling us – employers were ‘addicted to unpaid labour and are dependent on staff stepping up, plugging the gaps and going the extra mile’.

Limited by law

Broken multi-employer bargaining laws prohibited IEU members in this sector from taking protected industrial action. Those ‘deeply unjust and internationally condemned restrictions’ are being overhauled by the Federal Government, but changes won’t take effect until 2023.

The union told affected members if employers remained unwilling to strike a deal, it was possible that employers

could attempt to construe *No More Freebies* as unprotected industrial action, and on this basis threaten their own employees and seek an injunction or penalties against the IEU.

The IEU advised members that if legal orders were taken out against the union, the IEU office may be forced to instruct members to cease this campaign.

‘Whatever communication you receive from us, remember this: nothing short of a genuine resolution to this dispute will end this campaign.’

Pay rise success

On 1 October 2022 staff in most Victorian Catholic schools had been waiting two years for a new Agreement to be finalised, an ignominious anniversary the IEU pointed out with the hashtag #twoyearstoolong and an article which pointed out how much overworked staff had put up with in those two years, including remote learning, lockdowns, mandated vaccinations and rampant sickness in schools.

However, on the second day of term, Tuesday 4 October, employers announced that they would backpay salaries owed to the start of 2022. The IEU welcomed the news but emphasised to members that this did NOT mean the deal was done, or that the *No More Freebies* campaign would cease.

Sadly, the implementation of this promise was shambolic – it was still unclear

over a month later how the pay rises would apply and who would get them.

No More Freebies in action

As Term 4 progressed, more and more members devised actions suited to their school’s circumstances to further the cause. Some stopped providing written feedback on exam preparations, others agreed to attend a graduation ceremony, but not the dinner which followed. Messages handed to parents at some schools explained the staff’s plight, why they were undertaking their actions and how they were making sure students were not affected.

There were notable upticks in recruitment, merchandise sales and requests for school banners as the campaign escalated. It became clear to more education staff that the threats made against them when such actions were undertaken would be hopelessly inadequate if enough staff members were involved. More than ever, it was obvious that there’s strength in numbers.

Employers were bombarded with reports of local actions, pleas from principals to get the deal done, and messages of support for our actions from members of our school communities using an online petition.

FWC action

In frustration at the lack of progress, the IEU lodged a bargaining dispute at the Fair Work Commission, which was listed for conciliation Thursday 19 October. In front of a Commissioner, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools representatives committed to making a new offer by Tuesday 25 October, but on that date MACS failed to deliver and declined to face the Commission again. This effectively ended any chance of an Agreement being in place before the end of 2022.

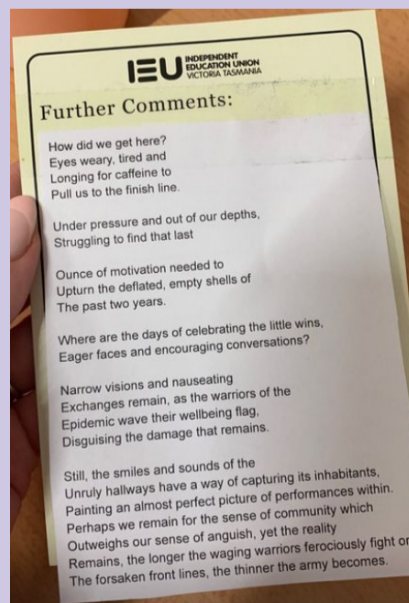
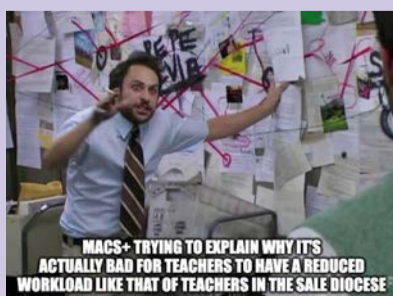
The IEU cannot endorse a deal which fails to offer industry-standard workload conditions – and is convinced that a deal without the improvements delivered for the rest of the industry would be soundly rejected in a ballot.

IEU members are furious that the extraordinary lengths they went to through the pandemic and school lockdowns to provide continuity of education and care for students have been worth so little at the bargaining table.

While our campaigning has intensified over the course of the year, until now members have gone to great pains to minimise the disruption on students and school communities. However, if they continue to be ignored, our members will call on us to further amplify this campaign.

The IEU in the socials

Members supported campaigning with cunning memes, ingenious pop-culture appropriations, and timely visual comments, bringing solidarity to social media.





Notable IEU wins

It's been a huge year – here are just a few of the victories we are most proud of.

Rossbourne School: From little things, big things grow...

Rossbourne School in Hawthorn had one IEU member and little transparency about employment conditions.

Then a teacher contacted the school Organiser seeking clarity on pay and workload. This teacher agreed to be the Rep, despite the risk of standing out in a workplace with virtually no members and no history of collective action. She rapidly grew the sub-branch to double figures, and put together a list of issues that the membership wanted addressed.

This led to the establishment of a bargaining committee, which developed and presented a claim to the Principal. Productive negotiations led to a doubling of paid parental leave, confirmation of a new salary and allowance scale, limits to face-to-face hours, and additional workload improvements.

See Page 20 for our feature on Rossbourne IEU Rep Tania Hume.

More IEU wins against Peninsula Grammar

The IEU has continued its run of legal victories against Peninsula Grammar, winning backpay for non-teaching staff stood down during the first COVID lockdown and forcing the school to honour fee discounts offered to staff with children at the school.

The stand-down matter had been in dispute for nearly two years, but an out-

of-court settlement was finally reached on the eve of a five-day hearing in the Federal Court. As part of this settlement, Peninsula Grammar agreed to pay four IEU non-teaching staff for the full period of the unjustifiable stand-down in 2020.

Every other school which attempted to stand down workers during the pandemic reconsidered their position in the face of legal action from the IEU.

We followed this with another emphatic legal victory in July, when the Federal Circuit Court found that the cutting of fee discounts for the children of teachers working at the school during the pandemic was 'grossly unfair', ordering the school to pay the IEU's legal costs, amounting to \$150,000.

'It's a real shame to see a wealthy institution like Peninsula Grammar display such little loyalty, regard or care for hard-working staff,' Deb James told the *Herald Sun*.

She 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 employees out of their legitimate entitlements.'

Great bargaining outcomes at Fintona Girls School

A new Agreement at Fintona was finalised in early April after more than nine months of negotiations. One of the most noteworthy elements of the deal

won by well-prepared and hard-working reps was an improved salary scale for School Assistants – for some individuals this amounted to a 15% increase in wages.

The new Agreement included a 6% up-front pay increase for teachers, the creation of a Consultative Committee, improved allowances for positions of responsibility, increases in paid parental leave, and 20 days paid domestic violence leave. There were also important wins on workload issues, including the introduction of face-to-face teaching limits in the junior school.

Misuse of fixed-term contracts at Ilim College

IEU action disputing the validity of fixed-term contracting at Ilim College resulted in County Court orders against the school for breaches of the Fair Work Act. In addition to declarations that Ilim College breached its Agreement and the Act, Ilim paid one affected employee \$15,000 (including the \$5,000 ordered by the court).

From the outset, the IEU offered to work with Ilim College to resolve the problem collaboratively and without expensive legal disputation, but unfortunately Ilim chose to fight.

Abuse of fixed-term contracts is illegal – and precarious work exposes staff to financial and housing stress, safety issues (due to reticence to raise concerns), lower

morale and job satisfaction, and impacts on physical and mental health.

The IEU understands that there are legitimate reasons for some fixed-term contracts, and we don't want to interfere with those. However, the onus is on employers to ensure any fixed-term contracts are lawful and justified.

Marvellous Media Mischievous Maker of the Year

Avi's Chopping Board (@BoardAvi) on Twitter

The infamous MACS Truck mobile billboard photobombed the National Catholic Education Conference in September at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, performing conspicuous laps of the venue and parking out the front with its heretical messages about treating teachers with respect and getting a deal done. As a result, many attendees turned to their phones for respite. Not so fast! Avi's sly messages bombarded the event's official Twitter feed with hilarious, exasperated and pointed reminders that the wages and conditions of neglected teachers must be a priority, not an afterthought, for Catholic education. The Conference is still trying to work out how to ex-communicate him.



2022

Victorian independent sector

In 2022, Victorian independent schools battled sporadic COVID outbreaks and the occasional return to online learning, and many extra-curricular programs placed on hold over the past two years recommenced.

However, this return to 'normality' came at a cost, with already stretched staff yet again surpassing themselves to deliver those extra-curricular offerings.

The IEU continued to support and work with sub-branches and individual members facing excessive workloads and staff burnout. While the return to classrooms was positive for most students, many found the transition a challenge and our members dealt with behaviours that posed health and safety concerns. We continued to support and represent affected members to ensure schools remain vigilant and staff safety remains paramount.

After the Victorian Government Schools Agreement was approved, we focused on bargaining, securing interim salary increases for members in schools where negotiations were delayed by the pandemic. These deferrals of bargaining created a backlog which dramatically increased the workload in 2022. This intensive work continues: our Organisers are currently actively bargaining on behalf of members in 32 schools, 15 of which are within a Multi-Enterprise Agreement covering members in Lutheran Schools across the state.

During 2021, eight Agreements were negotiated and approved by the Fair Work

Commission. In 2022, we've already had 19 Agreements finalised and another two are awaiting approval. That gives just a sense of the incredible bargaining workload undertaken this year.

Our bargaining has focused on building power within sub-branches. This was achieved by training sub-branch Reps and Employee Bargaining Representatives, recruiting new members and building the capacity of members to advocate for and demonstrate the importance of specific claims.

Bargaining within the independent sector is incredibly nuanced. While the industry standard is clearly articulated in the State Government and Sale diocese outcomes, it's not always easy in our sector to secure specified improvements within Single- or Multi-Enterprise Agreements. Employers can be hesitant to place specific items within an Agreement and often argue they should remain the subject of school-based policy documents. It's vital to secure specific conditions are within Agreements so they are enforceable. Improvements to current conditions ensure members receive comparable or better wages and conditions than the industry standard.

Workload issues dominate current claims, with the reduction of scheduled class time to match the new industry

standard often prominent. Claims around co-curricular and extra-curricular demands abound.

We're also doing a lot of work on the classification structures and salaries of non-teaching staff to ensure they remain competitive.

Improvements are being negotiated for parental leave, family and domestic violence leave and special leave provisions where staff can access their personal leave entitlement for other purposes. As inflation takes a toll, we're fighting hard for salary improvements. Notably, we're often seeing better salary outcomes in schools that are unwilling to move on workload improvements.

More consultation provisions have been included and improved in Agreements and fewer schools can now withhold monies from staff who fail to provide the full notice period upon resignation.

Over the course of this year there have been significant wins across the sector at the bargaining table. Firkbank Grammar bargaining resulted in the creation of both a Consultative Committee and Work-life Balance Committee with an annual allowance payment for committee members. Carey and King David moved ahead with parental leave increases rising to 20 weeks for the primary carer, well above industry standard. King David

bargaining also secured paid Christmas shutdown days for school assistants on top of annual leave.

We secured a first-time Agreement at Trinity College covering all employees. Flinders Christian College bargaining saw increased support for provisionally registered teachers and their mentors undertaking the VIT registration process in their second year. Significant wage increases were obtained at Ballarat and Clarendon College. Stemming from the threat of a Protected Action Ballot at Mt Scopus College, both pay and workload improvements were won.

The IEU continues to meet with Industrial Relations advisors from Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) to discuss Award and legislation changes and how these are reflected within bargaining.

Membership growth within the Independent Sector in Victoria remains strong and we look forward to continuing to work with our Reps and sub-branches to build their capacity and strength.

2021

8

Agreements approved by Fair Work Commission

2022

19

Agreements approved by Fair Work Commission

2 Agreements awaiting approval

Tasmanian Independent sector bargaining

In 2021 six new EBAs were approved by the Fair Work Commission in Tasmanian independent schools and in 2022 five new EBAs have been made.

These Agreements included multi-employer deals covering Christian Schools Tasmania and Tasmanian Independent Christian Schools, and single employer Agreements covering staff at Hutchins, Launceston Preparatory School and Scotch Oakburn College.

Some of the new Agreements covered all staff while others cover teachers or only general staff.

An important issue confronting IEU members in Tasmanian independent schools is the relatively low rate of pay of some classification levels of general staff. In 2022 the IEU worked with members and management at Launceston Church Grammar School

to review the classification structure for these staff to ensure their wages matched those being paid in Tasmanian government and Catholic schools. This review is now close to completion and the union is confident the process will result in good wage improvements for many general staff.

Following another review, the union was also successful in negotiating a wages increase

for general staff across the four schools covered by the Christian Schools Tasmania Agreement. Teachers at these schools initially voted no to a proposed deal forcing the employer back to the table where a CPI guarantee was agreed to which ensures that teachers have salaries equivalent to their colleagues in the Department of Education.

The IEU is currently negotiating new Agreements for both teachers and general

staff at Launceston Grammar School. The main issues there are teacher workload, wages and improving the operation of the school's Consultative Committee.

In the past couple of years, the IEU has been involved in considerable disputation at LGS due to staff and community dissatisfaction with the school's leadership. The school Headmaster ultimately resigned at the end of Term 1 and an interim Headmaster was

Tasmanian Catholic bargaining: from the unconscionable to the unbelievable

We shouldn't have been surprised that further attempts at proper negotiation on an overdue Agreement descended into farce.

In September, TCEO HR Manager Richard Heyward wrote to an IEU Organiser (renowned state-wide for his limitless supply of Tim Tams), attempting to ban him on Workplace Health and Safety grounds from bringing snacks into schools on his visits.

IEU members across the state, frustrated by the inaction on their deal, had a lot of very tasty fun with the ridiculous dictate, posting selfies with the apparently lethal foodstuffs. This caught the attention of Tasmania's leading newspaper *The Mercury*, which featured 'Tim Tam-Gate' on its front page and ran with the story for days online.

In response, incredibly, the TCEO doubled down on its OH&S angle, which didn't convince most people commenting on the story or IEU Victoria Tasmania general secretary Deb James. She said the snack ruling was merely an attempt by CET to 'frustrate' the union.

'We are advised that the TCEO has written to principals, asking them to demand explanations from any staff who have shown support for the IEU through the public consumption of sweet snacks,' Ms James said.

She strongly advised TCEO Executive Director Gerard Gaskin and the TCEO to 'focus on rebuilding very damaged trust and relationships across Catholic

education rather than the petty pursuit of staff who have spoken up about this absurd ban'.

'As always, we will vigorously defend any IEU member who is subject to unfair or unreasonable treatment in their employment.'

The facts behind Tim Tam-gate

The IEU had asked if there was any substance to the TCEO's concern about foodstuffs in a letter. The TCEO didn't respond – but they did run to the media with a story about students raiding a pack of Tim Tams in a staff room.

There are thousands of staff and tens of thousands of students in TCEO schools, and surely countless peanut butter sandwiches in their playgrounds – full of the substances the TCEO was supposedly worried about. And the TCEO were worried about a Tim Tam in the staff room. We suggested they should be more worried about students being unsupervised in the staff room.

The entire ludicrous affair confirmed growing antipathy towards the TCEO. The comments on the Mercury's online articles reflect what the IEU was hearing every day: staff in Catholic Schools know that the TCEO treat them with contempt and the resentment is widespread.

GET SERIOUS. GET BARGAINING!

**TASMANIAN
CATHOLIC EDUCATION STAFF
DESERVE BETTER!**

IEU INDEPENDENT
EDUCATION UNION
VICTORIA TASMANIA

Bargaining

It is a year since the last Agreement in the Tasmanian Catholic sector expired. The TCEO have repeatedly failed to meet and ignored our requests to meet. We had to go to the Fair Work Commission to force them to meet. Staff are sick of the delays.

The TCEO claimed they were 'negotiating directly with their own staff' via a 'portal' (better described as a 'vortex'). All staff can do through this channel is send messages to HR – messages which may or may not be read, acknowledged or responded to.

It's hardly a negotiation when you can't even have a discussion.

The Agreement is 160 pages long. It covers wages, all kinds of leave, performance management, workloads and more. Which staff members have the time, inclination, and resources to re-negotiate that with the TCEO's HR team and their lawyers through a glorified suggestion box?

The claim that letting staff send a few messages to HR is 'negotiating' is preposterous. But the TCEO clearly think their own staff are stupid enough to believe them – we know better!

Photos: IEU members send in Tim Tam solidarity snaps



Partly because Tasmania did not experience the same lengthy lockdowns over recent years as Victoria, bargaining in Tasmania's independent schools was largely unchanged over the past couple of years, so there was no backlog of EBAs to negotiate in 2022.

appointed. Staff are hopeful of calmer times ahead.

The IEU also represented members negotiating a new teachers' agreement at Scotch Oakburn College. As well as a solid salary improvement of 6.5% over the next two years, there were improvements in redundancy payments, which under the previous EBA were based on the NES minimum, and an upgrade to parental leave which will now attract

superannuation payments and count toward the accrual of leave – previously it was paid as a lump sum allowance. The parties also agreed to an improved set of arrangements around co-curricular expectations.

The IEU remains hopeful that negotiations at Tarremah Steiner school will conclude before the end of the 2022 school year.

The IEU has also assisted members dealing with major change at the Friends' School,

where there are plans to restructure leadership and shift the location of the senior campus.

Fahan School had a positive wage adjustment this year, delivering salary increases to teachers and general staff, members there showing considerable solidarity in dealing with a difficult leadership situation. After IEU Reps led a complaint, supported by the IEU office, an independent investigation resulted in the

replacement of the principal and the Head of Primary Campus. Fahan now has a cooperative, consultative, and more harmonious leadership, with the former IEU Rep of the primary campus appointed the new Head of Primary campus.

IEU membership remains steady in Tasmanian independent schools after a couple of years of growth. The IEU will continue to build membership in this sector off the

back of the considerable work we do in schools to improve salaries and working conditions.

2022

GENDER AND EQUITY

Time for change in workplaces

While there have been improvements for women in workplaces in the last decade, we are still far from achieving the gender equality that workers deserve.

On Global Gender Gap rankings, Australia has dropped from 15 in 2006 to 43 in 2022, underlining the continued lack of respect for women across much of society. Unfortunately, that disrespect is the reality for some IEU women in their workplaces, and it needs to change.

There have been far too many reports of education staff suffering sexist behaviour and harassment from students and other staff. These incidents represent occupational health and safety hazards for staff, both mental and physical, and they are unacceptable.

Paid parental leave

The Federal Government is adding more flexibility and an additional six weeks of pay to the scheme over the next three years (with two extra weeks added each July). In July 2026 a full paid six months of leave will be available. It will combine the current Dad and Partner Pay of two weeks and increase it to 26 weeks. Such developments chip away at the systemic inequality in workplaces.

Family and domestic violence leave

On 27 October, after a decade of tireless campaigning by unions and activists, Parliament passed a Bill to enshrine 10 days paid leave as a workplace right.

This means a further 8.44 million workers, including casuals, will be eligible to take paid leave to support them with leaving a violent relationship.

On average, it costs \$18,000 to escape a violent relationship in Australia and economic security is a key factor determining whether a person can escape a dangerous relationship.

Gender Equality Act

In Victoria, government bodies are now required to draw up Gender Equality Action Plans with their employees, which provides a useful model for us to draw upon.

IEU Activities

The highlights of the early part of the year were **International Women's Day** marches in Victoria and Tasmania on 8 March. The IEU event in Melbourne included a march through the CBD to Trades Hall in Carlton featuring an

intervention outside the Melbourne Club, which was deemed OHS risk due to spills of toxic masculinity.

Throughout the year, we conducted **safe and respectful workplaces training** for IEU staff, including a workshop on gendered violence which led to a major focus on this issue in the second edition of *The Point*. We will continue to build our online focus and resources around gendered violence, as we believe that members need access to good advice on this important issue at their fingertips.

The IEU continued its participation in **Organise for Equality** project with Victorian Trades Hall Council, including campaigning around women's issues for the Federal election in May and the Victorian State election.

IEU members handed out pay rate calculators to Melburnians commuting to work to highlight **(un)equal Pay Day** on 29 August. That date marked the 60 additional days from the end of the previous financial year that women must work to earn the same pay as men. In 2022 the national gender pay gap is 14 per cent.

As always, **Women's Rights at Work (WRAW)** chats in schools were a vital aspect of our work. This year, there was an emphasis on boys' schools.

WRAW discussions identified the following:

- gendered violence and harassment in schools is an OHS issue
- it's vital for all schools to have elected Health and Safety Reps
- it's vital for schools to have visible reporting systems and processes in place for violent incidents
- there is a lack of training and recognition in schools that GV is an issue and that workers are getting injured.

The IEU has developed a series of resources to support staff in schools dealing with gendered violence including a gender equity survey.

Women and gender diverse folk from across unions came together for two days of panels and workshops at the **WRAW Conference**, 21/22 October. IEU Rep Rebecca Long participated on the panel Women Leading Industrial Action, where she addressed the IEU's Victorian Catholic bargaining campaign including the rally at James Gould House and the No More Freebies campaign.



BOLD Women is the IEU's national IEU training, leadership and mentoring program, designed to build, encourage, and support women to become strong workplace leaders and powerful activists within their communities and schools. This year we farewelled Assistant Secretary Cathy Hickey, who retired after a long tenure in senior roles. We acknowledge the valuable contribution Cathy made to the union and her mentoring and support of IEU women over many years.

Federal news**Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Respect at Work) Bill 2022**

The Federal Government has vowed to implement all 55 recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (2020)* (Respect@Work) Report.

That includes recommendations for a positive duty on employers to prevent workplace sexual harassment, sex discrimination and victimisation.

Australia's Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins, who led the development of the Respect@Work inquiry and report, said: 'The right of workers to be free from sexual harassment is a human right, a workplace right and a safety right. This legislative reform will create a regulatory environment in Australia that is key to the realisation of that right for all Australian workers.'

Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Changes this year improved the usability and ease of reporting to the WGEA. Unions have called on the Federal Government to require all (not just private) organisations with more than 20 employees to report. There are schools who should but don't report – we encourage members in these schools to ask why this is the case!

Reproductive leave

The union movement is pushing for five days paid leave to cover IVF, endometriosis, hysterectomies, and any pain, discomfort or treatments associated

with menstruation and menopause. Reproductive leave would help workers ease through the often debilitating transition of menopause without having to deplete their sick leave.

Council of the Pacific Education (COPE) / Education International Women's Network Conference

The theme of the event, the first 'in person' meeting with COPE women since the pandemic, was 'Weaving Stronger Women Networks'.

Over 40 representatives from 11 Pacific Ocean countries gathered in Fiji for two days to outline their unions' plans to grow women's networks and promote equality in education and unions in the region.



Student Teacher Organising: Building the union of tomorrow

Student membership of the IEU is free and the union uses it to connect with and educate future members of our industry, providing them with the knowledge and skills they need to start their career securely.

For many years, we've worked with the AEU to create a strong presence at Victorian universities. Our recent focus has been on developing activist student members, connecting with student education societies, developing relevant PD and training, having a detailed understanding of the common concerns among preservice educators, and securing supportive relationships with university staff. As a result, we are engaging with a broader cohort of teaching students more frequently, which consistently improves our recruitment of graduate educators.

This year we've delivered 28 training and professional development sessions to preservice teachers at universities across the state on topics including 'Unions, Industry & Employment', 'Professional Standards and Expectations of Teachers', and 'Transitioning into the Teaching Profession'. We also developed two new presentations at the request of faculty staff and students: 'Workplace Health & Safety in the context of behaviour management' and 'How to develop a Professional Learning Plan to support your career'.

Together with the AEU, we held a successful Student Teacher Conference in July with the theme 'Diversify Your Teaching Practice!' It aimed to provide attendees with the expertise needed to become an inclusive and well-

informed educator.

Highlights included a presentation the always immensely engaging Dr Al Fricker on incorporating First Nations content into classrooms and a session where students broke into groups according to their university which produced some very creative and promising plans for building union presence on campus. The Conference recruited and activated new members, with participants reporting at the end a new confidence that the union was a place for them, and that the union movement stands for diversity and against discrimination.

Alongside the AEU, we continue to run the Student Activist Network, drawing in student members who would like to become more active and encouraging them to help organise and build student membership on their campus.

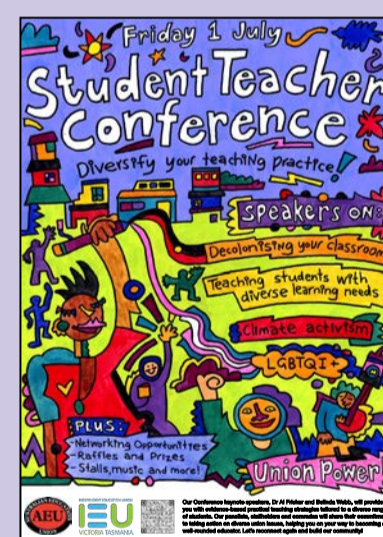
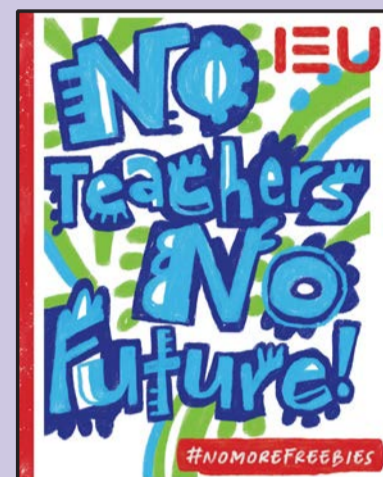
In the past two years we've built a Facebook group of over 800 student teachers, called 'Pre-service Teachers Victoria'. The group is administered by our Student Organiser and activist student members and draws in new student recruits to the IEU. It's a great space for students to discuss relevant issues, share resources and information and get connected with their union.

Alongside the AEU, we continue to run the Student Activist Network, drawing in student members who would like to become more active and encouraging them to help organise and build student membership on their campus. Through activist training programs, student members are taught about union history, values, recruitment and organising skills, and are guided through goal-planning to unite their cohorts.

A highlight has been the creation of the AEU/IEU Preservice Teacher Association at the University of Melbourne. This group has actively organised around student teacher issues, held monthly meetings, met with the Dean of the Education Faculty to consult on placement issues, and developed a campaign to achieve paid placements, which they intend to continue into 2023.

Photos: IEU/AEU Student Teacher Conference

**The year that was...
in IEU posters!**



Reportable Conduct Scheme needs urgent refinement

The IEU has made a detailed submission to the State Government review of the first five years of the Reportable Conduct Scheme and we hope our contribution is heeded, for much needs to change.

Allegations made to the Commission for Children and Young People under Victoria's Reportable Conduct Scheme are serious matters, which more often than not put an educator's career on the line – so any reasonable person would expect that the process to be rigorous, fair and transparent.

Unfortunately, this has not proven to be the case, and in countless cases a lack of transparency and procedural fairness has resulted in significant and in many cases completely unnecessary damage to the careers and mental health of education staff.

The Scheme, originally and admirably intended to capture misconduct likely to have a serious impact on the wellbeing of students, is now clogged with trivial and malicious allegations and is severely damaging the careers of many teachers who are either innocent of the allegations they face or whose alleged conduct does not meet the true threshold of a reportable allegation.

Here are just a few issues with the Scheme that need addressing.

Definitions

The definition of 'reportable conduct' under the Act is not clear enough, and there is ambiguity and inconsistency in the language throughout, feeding an environment of heightened fear and over-reporting from risk-averse school leaders.

Without clear definitions of what 'sexual misconduct' and 'sexual nature' mean, for example, overly cautious employers treat any type of physical contact with students or conversations with students which reference sexual themes as 'sexual misconduct'.

Further clarity is also required for the definitions of 'physical violence', 'neglect', 'emotional or psychological harm' and 'reportable allegation'.

When we ask principals how they've formed a 'reasonable belief' for making a report under the Act, they often respond that they feel obliged by the fact that another person has formed a 'reasonable belief'. This has resulted in dozens of cases

of alleged conduct which clearly don't meet the threshold being investigated and dealt with under the Scheme.

Overly lengthy investigations

Partly because of the sheer volume of reports, investigations are often extraordinarily lengthy and can take a year or more to be completed, leaving the staff member in limbo, often with very serious repercussions for their mental health and career. Whether they are exonerated or not, the endless wait for an outcome is destructive to staff wellbeing.

Where significant time has lapsed due to length of investigations or historic allegations, the requirement for specific information is crucial to ensure a fair process.

There are not enough safeguards to ensure the subjects of allegations are treated fairly throughout the investigation and that the outcome is fair for them.

Difficulties accessing information

One main challenge in responding to reportable allegations is the refusals by employers to provide relevant information. Many allegations are broad, vague and without specifics. Employers often argue that to protect children, further details cannot be provided. However, this assertion is usually made without proper basis (for example, why the employer believes that providing the information would be contrary to a child's welfare).

The refusal to provide relevant information greatly prejudices

our members.

Examples of information the IEU may seek on behalf of its members includes such fundamentals as:

- When the report was made/received (date and time)
- How it was made/received
- Who made the report
- Who has been interviewed and what evidence they gave
- What adverse evidence or contrary evidence the employer has and intends to rely on.

Inexperienced investigators

In our experience with schools in the non-government sector, the person conducting the investigation varies. Often when the principal or an internal person in the school investigates under the Scheme, their experience in running investigations and level of specialist training in the subject matter is very limited and the quality of the investigation is thereby compromised.

Fairness

There are not enough safeguards to ensure the subjects of allegations are treated fairly throughout the investigation and that the outcome is fair for them.

There are no safeguards to ensure that investigative practices are consistently rigorous, fair, and proper.

To improve this, the Act ought to include standards on how investigations must be conducted, including what information should be shared with a subject during an investigation.

The Act should also encourage the Commission to share information with the subject of the investigation. There are no effective safeguards for abuse of the Scheme by independent schools to the detriment of their employees.

No review option

At the extreme, a substantiated finding is unchallengeable and career-ending.

Once a Reportable Conduct finding is made, an employee in a non-government

school has no option available to them to seek a review from an external body or tribunal. The Reportable Conduct finding is then taken at face value and accepted as such by the relevant regulators in our industry: the Victorian Institute of Teaching and the Working With Children Unit. This means that our members have no opportunity to challenge a finding they disagree with, no matter how unfair, and that finding is then used in assessing their Working With Children Check or teacher registration.

These allegations or findings then cause our members unwarranted difficulties when they attempt to seek other work. Prospective employers usually ask questions in pre-employment screening about whether the applicant is the subject of a Reportable allegation/investigation, or of a finding, or if they left employment during such an investigation.

The power of accusation

Most alleged misconduct involving students is treated as reportable conduct, and the consequence of such allegations, even if manifestly untrue, can be career ending. Mud sticks. The mental health consequences for the victims of false allegation are significant.

Sadly, we also see cases where employers improperly frame any concern as a reportable allegation to improve their negotiating position against an employee they desire to be rid of.

There are no consequences for false allegations. A malicious student can ruin a staff member's career with impunity. And some do. If a student gets a bit annoyed with a teacher, why not make a false allegation? It will get the staff member stood down, at the very least.

It could ruin their life.

These are just some of the realities affecting education staff that must be confronted by this review.



A vibrant uniting voice

Kellie Illichmann, from Marian College, Sunshine, winner of the 2022 IEU Sub-Branch Representative Award, was hard to miss at the IEU Annual Conference.

Beaming, and resplendent in a brilliant (IEU) blue suit, she was described as a 'vibrant person, passionate about fairness and equality who breathed life back into her sub-branch'.

'You can't walk through the yard with Kellie without students

coming up to her – they're drawn to her because of her spirited personality and ability to engage. It's the same with her colleagues – she's a tireless advocate and a uniting voice for positive change.

'A group that wouldn't meet at all now meets every morning.'

It hadn't always been easy to be

the teacher Rep at Marian College, and it takes a unique person to engage the 'broad church' there, but Kellie has activated this disparate group admirably.

Kellie thanked her Organiser, the IEU, and her colleagues for their support, saying, 'it's not just me – the committee is always

helping and sending emails and I couldn't do it without them'.

But to anyone at Conference, it was clear Kellie is a driving force.

FOUR EXPLORATIONS OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TEACHER



Teacher Learning Network

4. Celebrating teachers: build on your strengths

The work that we do as teachers matters. It matters to our students, to their parents and carers, and it matters to the community. Let's celebrate our successes and keep building our profession.

There are lots of critics of teachers. I'm sure you've seen the articles from conservative lobby groups and politicians criticising us and what happens in our classrooms. Sometimes the criticism is closer to our workplace. An Australian Catholic University/Deakin University survey study released in early October highlights the challenges for teachers and leaders dealing with parents who are dissatisfied. Our work is complex and challenging, and frequently there is an insurmountable workload. It's easy to give in to the critics who believe that young people can be educated according to a formula.

However, we are the profession, we are the people who are making a difference. To end this series of four articles on teaching I want us to celebrate the extraordinary things we do every day: I encourage you to start building on your strengths, your successes.

Try one or more of these sentences in a conversation with a colleague, partner, or friend:

- *Today I was the one stable adult in Mary's* life and I offered her a moment of safety in a traumatic world*
- *Today I helped Bessie* read her first ever book*
- *Today I worked with Anne* to problem solve a complex mathematical problem and she loved it and was so excited about what she had achieved*
- *Today I put together a great history lesson and every student in my Year 9 group was engaged*
- *Today I worked out how to create a relationship with Amelia* and for the first time this year she stayed in class for a full day*
- *Today the grade 5 class was buzzing*

with curiosity about the science experiment; I just know they went home and talked with their parents/carers about what we did

- *Today I went to a helpful pastoral care meeting where we asked ourselves challenging questions about the program we're delivering*
- *Today I sat outside the classroom in the fading afternoon sun and for 10 minutes reflected on all the things that happened in my classroom – and it was good.*

This list represents what we do as teachers, and there is so much more – we make a difference every day. I say ignore the critics, ignore the doubters, ignore those who want to bring our profession down and let's talk about our strengths as a profession.

In this series of articles, I have encouraged you to:

1. Know where you have come from and what has influenced you as a teacher.
2. Know where you are now; understand your approach to teaching in your current context and with your current group of students
3. Know what the future of the profession looks like

With this article, I am encouraging you to build on your strengths. When you walked out of your classroom today, you did so as skilled professional. You have rich content knowledge, a deep understanding of how learning happens and the ability to connect with, relate to and inspire young people. Our community needs more of you.

There is an important question for you: How do you keep improving as the world around you and your students keeps

changing? For me the answer is relatively simple: learn from each other. We are the experts in teaching, and we can teach and learn from each other. We can challenge each other to keep developing our craft as teachers. I have three suggestions for you.

1. Visit the IEU Learning Hub. The courses both live and on-demand, developed by TLN, emerge from a philosophy of 'for teachers by teachers'. The people TLN identifies to present those professional development sessions are your colleagues doing something innovative or doing the basics really well. It is worth the investment of your time.

2. Connect with research. Contact your university – academics are keen to partner with classroom teachers. Read a teacher journal (my copy of *IE* arrived the same day I was writing this article – it's a good starting point). Connect with #edureading on Twitter. Co-ordinated by Steven Kolber (AEU member) and Dr Keith Heggart (formerly an IEU-NSW organiser). Good teachers, good union members, they connect you with important and useful education findings.

3. Visit a colleagues room and observe an active teaching sequence. In these final weeks of the teaching year, take in at least 15 minutes of a class (preferably the whole thing) and then sit with your colleague and review what they did. Ask yourself:

- What decisions did they make?
- How many decisions did they make?
- Why did they make those decision?
- What content knowledge did they use?
- What teaching strategies did they use?
- What judgements or assessment did they make?
- What knowledge about the students did they apply to the decisions they made?

- What knowledge of students existing knowledge did they use?
- What behaviour management strategies did they use?
- What adjustments did they make to differentiate for the students?

There are so many more questions you can develop and ask, but if you ask those ten, you will see how complex our work is, how skilled your colleague is, and on reflection, how skilled you are in your classroom. Once you can describe your work in detail, you can plan to improve. That is what makes our profession so appealing – every day, every class, every student offers us an opportunity to improve what we do to make the difference that we want to make.

Let's build on our strengths, grow our profession, and leave uninformed critics babbling to an ever-diminishing audience of naysayers.

Michael Victory
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Teacher Learning Network
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IEU LEARNING HUB

ACCESS THE BACK CATALOGUE OF RECORDED SESSIONS AT

<https://ieulearninghub.topclasslms.com/topclass/>

All courses are listed under 'Browse Catalogue', you can then filter by 'On Demand' to view the library.

PRINCIPALS

Rebuilding connections

Principals faced a third year of challenges arising from the pandemic – while we moved beyond lockdowns, unprecedented illness-related absences threw operations in many schools into chaos.

For Principals in most Victorian Catholic schools, the bargaining impasse created additional challenges in recent months as they sought to plan for a very uncertain 2023.

The relaxing of pandemic rules meant the IEU Principal's Officer could visit many more principals in their schools and learn first-hand the difficulties of being a leader when the workforce is stressed and one's own workload is ever more demanding and complex.

Principals continued to provide outstanding leadership to their school communities.

Their major task was to rebuild connections with families and develop a welcoming and supportive atmosphere. Many principals reported that students had increased needs after experiencing long-term home learning during lockdowns. This need for increased support of students will likely continue.

Key issues for Victorian principals continue to be:

- Frustrations with the clunky, outdated, and ineffective ICON system in Catholic education, including excessive costs, lack of support for training and follow up, and a heavy load on staff causing burnout.
- Difficulty planning for 2023 with uncertainty around the new Agreement.
- Onerous governance requirements and increased workload.

Support for our member principals in Tasmania featured:

- Contract renewal processes
- Principal wellbeing
- Reportable conduct advice.

The IEU Principals Council has met regularly and used the meetings to build a collegial network. The annual conference went ahead in Daylesford this year after a two-year hiatus. The theme of the conference was 'Principal Wellbeing', and the event focused on developing skills and management techniques to facilitate the health and happiness of school leaders.

Many principal members were assisted this year with employment concerns and issues. The IEU is always available to address their needs and concerns through the Principals' Officer, as well as the union's expert legal and industrial support.

As this edition goes to print, we are arranging further consultation with Principal members to provide a deeper understanding of proposed workload alleviation measures for Victorian Catholic schools, in particular the 30 + 8 model.

We acknowledge and thank all principals for their service to education, and we celebrate the contribution of those who are about to leave the profession.

EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF

Stepping up – again

In 2022 support staff stepped up as they always do when student and staff numbers were decimated by illness.

Again, responses from schools ranged from terrific, supportive, and flexible through to thoughtless and uncaring. Thank you to all the support staff who selflessly went above and beyond to ensure their students received the support they needed.

In 2022, we also continued to push for support staff to be included in Agreements in independent schools, many of which have historically had Agreements only covering teaching staff.

The Agreement with Sale diocese employers improved many terms and conditions for support staff. A huge, historic win was the movement of all Education Support Staff from Level One to Level Two. For years, experienced staff have been unfairly under classified and thereby underpaid. Learning Support Officers, in particular, have not had their

qualifications properly recognised by being kept on entry-level classifications. The move to Level Two was an overdue and welcome reform.

While other Victorian Catholic employers have belatedly agreed to match these salary increases, these will not be binding or enforceable until a new Agreement is made. Sub-branches have shown their commitment to fighting for a fair deal through No More Freebies actions honed to the specific issues in their schools. It's taken unity, strength, and solidarity for members to persist in the fight for a decent Agreement in Victorian Catholic schools. The more members we have, the louder our voice is at the table and the better the wins by and for support staff.

In 2022, we also continued to push for support staff to be included in Agreements in independent schools, many of which have historically had Agreements only covering teaching staff. Every independent school is different, so we encourage support staff members to help shape Agreements that address the needs of non-teaching staff.

One of the really positive outcomes from COVID (there were some!) was more professional development moving online. Education Support Staff have enjoyed accessing high-level PD at times which suit them through the IEU Learning Hub. We will continue to urge schools to allow professional

development for support staff to be available during working hours.

On 16 May, we once again celebrated the International Day for Education Support Staff. We ran seminars in the preceding week about the terms and conditions of their employment. These well-received sessions once more proved that the best way of showing respect to a significant and vital sector in our schools is to keep them up to date about the issues which affect their daily working life.

Those seminars included:

- Fixed Term Contracts
- Classification
- Access to overtime / Time Off In Lieu
- Hours of work and breaks

The IEU is deeply appreciative when the huge contributions made by support staff are acknowledged at a school level. There should be more of it – the incredible work of support staff is vital to education and to keeping schools running.

We are looking forward to 2023 and are hopeful it will be a more normal year. But we also know that no matter what is thrown at them that support staff will step up to do what needs to be done.



'A troublemaker in all the right ways'

Tania Hume, IEU Rep at Rossbourne School, is described this way with great affection by her school's Organiser.

To accompany her IEU Independent School Award, he presented her with a union book *Troublemakers: How to Fight Back Where You Work and Win*.

But by the sounds of it, Tania could have written the book!

Rossbourne is a tiny independent school that specialises in teaching neurodiverse children. When a principal of over 40 years left just before the pandemic, conditions became unclear and during lockdowns, staff had difficulties achieving flexible

teaching arrangements.

At that time, Rossbourne had one member. Then Tania got to work as Rep. Now, 20 out of 26 staff are members, and the school is committed to negotiating 25 claims including pay transparency. The staunch sub-branch agreed to hold off on a full Agreement until more of their needs were met.

And, after initially meeting in secret, Rossbourne members grew in confidence and united colleagues now 'walk through school together proudly'.

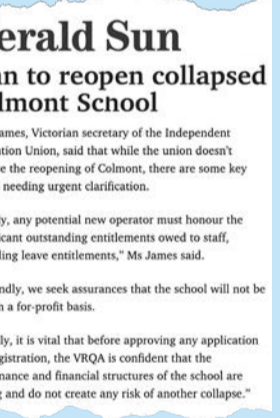
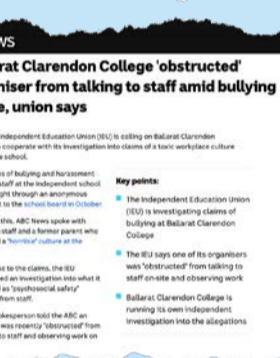
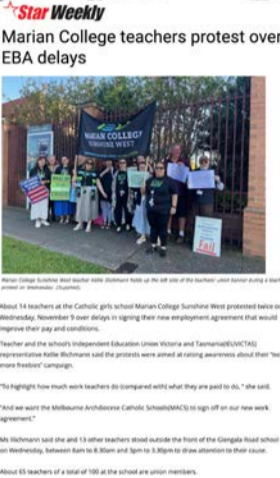
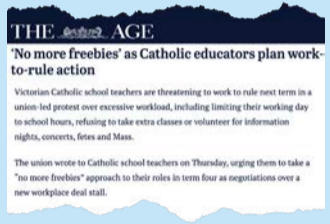
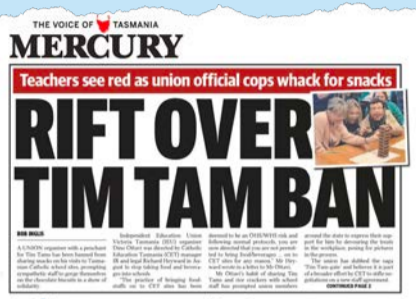
Tania told Conference she was rapt so

many members now had the 'courage to be visible' and vowed to keep working on the colleagues yet to join.

With tenacious Tania on the job, we don't think it's long until Rossbourne is fully unionised!

The IEU in the news

From COVID to bargaining rallies, school closures to deadly Tim Tams, the union was highly visible in 2022.



Recruitment or Retention?

There is an ongoing debate around what is causing the teacher shortage crisis and what we should be doing about it. Teacher and IEU member Jack Andrews says it's time to move past band aid solutions.

We hear arguments and solutions about this issue from journalists, politicians, and parents, but rarely from educators working in the profession. Policy-makers emphasise recruiting better, by luring University students with cash grabs to enrol in teaching degrees or by offering overseas teachers huge sums of money to teach here. These are short-term fixes that don't address the mass exodus from the profession and mask the true extent of the problem.

Recruitment isn't the answer, retention is. I don't believe there is a teacher shortage, but an enormous number of educators who have moved into other professions for a better work-life balance. A 2021 AITSL survey found that teachers typically work 55 hours a week, 45 percent more hours than they are paid for. Teachers will always go above and beyond, but goodwill only lasts so long, especially if it isn't being reciprocated.

The Federal Government predicts that there will be a shortfall of 4,000 Secondary Teachers by 2025, with the Australian Journal of Education finding that 59 percent of surveyed teachers planned to quit the profession. The survey was conducted pre-COVID; the statistics are likely worse now.

We need to retain our established teachers by listening to their needs and fostering their ongoing development. We also need to retain the trainee teachers who leave their university courses after teaching rounds due to the overwhelming demands and expectations they encounter. If we want to increase university enrolments and retain these University graduates we need to 'sell' the profession with visibly happy, motivated, and enthusiastic staff who feel the love of the industry and adore the work they do.

The message to the profession is: don't refuse to change and then wonder, where have all the teachers gone? To retain staff, we must lower the drowning volumes of administration, reporting and curriculum overload, and ensure the profession is valued by society.

If we value teachers' health, needs, and wellbeing they will be happier in the industry and become walking, talking advertisements about the attractions of teaching for VCE students who are considering the profession.

We don't need band-aid solutions to fix our staffing issues, but a reflection on why teachers are struggling and what we can do to ease their workloads. As educators we always prioritise the wellbeing needs of our students, modifying and adjusting assignments and timetables, creating self-care plans and caring for their mental health, but who's caring for ours?

For more on teacher recruitment see page 23.



Goodbye to a union giant

The International Trade Union Congress (ITUC), held in Melbourne in late November, represented the final official duties of retiring Australian union legend Sharan Burrow.

A former teacher from country NSW, Sharan became President of the AEU and ACTU, vice-president of Education International and, since 2010, General Secretary of ITUC, the first woman to hold that role.

A 'warrior for women', her ground-breaking career has advanced the rights of all workers, championed the inclusion of women in workplaces and in unions, and sought just transitions in workforces to fight

climate change. Before her final Congress, Sharan sent out this message: 'As we head toward Congress we know that the global economic model has excluded too many people. The price of extreme wealth for the few has cost the dignity of decent work, of just wages, of universal social protection and of equality for the majority of the world's people. When wealth is built on the dehumanising exploitation

of our supply chains and the destruction of our environment, when prosperity is not shared, we see the levels of inequality, despair, and anger today that are destroying trust in democracy and fuelling authoritarianism, fascism and xenophobia. It is time for a new social contract and trade unions will all stand on the frontlines to win the changes to our economic model that are so critical. People and planet must sit at the heart of

new economic thinking. It has been a privilege to work for and with you for twelve years as your General Secretary and as your President since the birth of the ITUC in 2006. The foundations of our global family are strong, democratic and driven by shared values. However, we need to double our efforts to organise in order to build workers' power. The future we want depends on it. Thank you.

In solidarity, Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary. @SharanBurrow (To read more about ITUC, go to page 26).



LABOUR HISTORY

How Australian union education led the world

Adult education is a comparatively new idea – the first international conference on the topic wasn't held until 1949 – and the concept of trade unions being involved in education is even more recent.

Opening in 1975, the Australian Trade Union Training Authority (TUTA) became the first fully government-funded trade union training organisation in the world.

TUTA trained 257,770 unionists, ran 11,311 courses in all states and territories, established a 'substantial remote and regional outreach program' and operated the purpose-built Clyde Cameron College in Wodonga. IEU General Secretary Deb James is one of those who undertook a 'formative' intensive two-week course at the College and can't speak highly enough of the experience.

We can celebrate TUTA today mainly thanks to a website, 'A Bold Experiment: Trade Union Training in Australia', which details the history of the authority with an interactive timeline, conferences, and soon, podcasts.

Site co-creator Dr Alice Garner, a research assistant from the University of Melbourne Graduate School of Education, says when TUTA was conceived, the government saw value in funding training for unionists. 'Workers' representatives, the thinking

went, needed a better understanding of the complex and changing industrial relations system, as well as improved skills in problem solving, negotiation, communication and administration, if they were to have a fair chance at the negotiating table.'

Despite being a Whitlam Labor government initiative, both sides of politics believed that 'fair chance' for unionists created better outcomes for the nation, and there was a 'bipartisan appreciation of the need to encourage more democratic, well-run unions and skilled negotiators'.

Dr Garner believes one of TUTA's greatest achievements was bringing together workers with 'very different educational backgrounds' from a wide range of industries.

'People who had left school early participated in TUTA courses alongside university graduates, and trainers worked hard to devise ways of ensuring that everyone in their sessions felt they had something to offer and to learn from their peers.'

TUTA trained thousands of unionists

who took their newly developed research, bargaining and negotiating skills and knowledge back to their workplaces and often into other realms of their life as well.'

TUTA also embedded a 'stronger awareness of the importance of training and education within the union movement'.

Sadly, the anti-union Howard government shut TUTA down shortly after its election in 1996.

However, Dr Garner says TUTA leaders had made plans for taking training in-house and TUTA had built a culture of education across the union movement.

The need for a national home for union education was recognised by the inception of the ACTU Organising Centre, then, just before the pandemic, by the establishment of the ACTU-funded Australian Trade Union Institute (ATUI).

ATUI runs practical tuition for delegates on matters such as industrial foundations, advocacy, recruitment, and organising pathways. It also partners with expert practitioners to deliver courses on topical issues such as climate action, and

economics and sociology for unionists.

In this edition of The Point, we've reported on the incisive ATUI seminar *Inflation - workers are not to blame*, which featured acclaimed economist Jim Stanford.

Dr Garner says the legacy of TUTA is evident in the way ATUI courses are delivered – 'participatory programs informed by the principles of adult education'.

TUTA was particularly important in advancing training for women in unions, who were a growing part of the workforce but grossly under-represented in union leadership. It also helped modernise the movement's attitude to migrant workers, pioneered training in crucial topics such as Occupational Health and Safety and industrial democracy, and even had an international impact by fostering the union movement in the Asia Pacific and providing the handbook *Educating for Union Strength*, used by union educators across the world.

Picture: 'Trade Union Training' TUTA brochure cover c. 1976-77.



Passing the Message Stick on First Nations justice

When promoting a just cause, it's tempting to think that supporters only need to persist. We've all heard the phrase 'this is an idea whose time has come'.

But when it comes to racial justice, activists know nothing is inevitable, every win is hard fought, and ideas need to be supported by smart research.

First Nations pioneers **Passing the Message Stick** are seeking no less than to 'build public support for self-determination and justice, paving the way for long term, systemic change'. Unfortunately, in Australia, that still seems highly ambitious.

Determined not to repeat ineffective messages, they went to work.

Message Stick undertook an incredibly thorough and sophisticated two-year analysis of messaging to find out what would help persuade more Australians to back their cause.

That meant:

- **Language analysis**, in which 18 First Nations Messaging Fellows collected and analysed 3,400 messages across issues including gender equality, land rights, and racism
- **Qualitative research** featuring nine focus groups
- **Quantitative research** where they tested the messages they'd developed through a representative survey of 1,500 people, and a 'dial test'.

Message Stick's two-year 'message research and narrative shifting project', conducted with expert global assistance, concluded that majority support for transformative change in Australia was only possible if their messaging

focused on the strength and capability of First Nations people, rather than their vulnerabilities. That meant moving beyond 'entrenched deficit language' that paints First Nations people as 'problematic, vulnerable and unable to make good decisions'.

Embrace and Replace

Message Stick decided on these simple points to repeat about First Nations people:

1. **We are strong and capable**
2. **Current injustices exist and there are unfair barriers that persist today**
3. **The solution is First Nations people making decisions, because we know what's best for us.**

They discovered that concepts such as 'closing the gap' and 'reconciliation' need to be replaced.

'Reconciliation... means to make up after a fight, but we were never friends to begin with...'

Instead of using these terms, their research suggests embracing 'strong' words and concepts such as:

- **Free:** 'People are better off when they are free to set their own course'
- **Journey:** 'move forward together', 'walk with us', 'chart our own course'
- **Build:** 'work together to build a better future for everyone'

Other examples of more effective messages:

Embrace

- 'We need your solidarity.'
- 'We make our own decisions about what's best for our people and for country - we've got this.'
- 'We are strong *despite* current injustices.'
- '65,000 years of wisdom and leadership.'

Replace

- 'We are vulnerable, we are broken.'
- 'We need your help.'
- 'Aboriginal people are vulnerable and need the government to step in and help them.'
- 'The current situation for a lot of Aboriginal people and their communities feels hopeless.'

With us or against us

Message Stick's research identified four groups, depending on their level of support for their cause – First Nations advocates, base supporters, 'persuadables', and opponents.

'We can persuade the majority of the public to support us, if we share messages that energise our base, persuade the middle, and alienate our opponents.

'A message is like a baton - it gets passed on by people.'

'The vast majority of the population are either with us (26%), or persuadable (59%) – meaning they don't have strongly held beliefs about us. Messages that engage

the base and are then repeated persuade the vast majority of the public. This is how we get majority support for our asks and win transformative change.'

Their most surprising conclusion was that alienating opponents can be beneficial.

'Opponents make up a small percentage of the population - just 15%. They'll never support us, and we don't need them to. Messages that alienate our opponents are powerful because they distance them from the majority. When our opponents actively oppose our messaging it can help move persuadables to us.'

The key to winning over persuadables is to use simple language to explain concepts like self-determination and justice and combine truth-telling with clear asks.

For more information, contact Millie Telford, First Nations Justice Director with Australian Progress at amelia@australianprogress.org.au.

How teaching is taught

One outcome of the Teacher Workforce Shortage Roundtable held in August was the establishment of a review into how teaching is taught at universities.

Education Minister Jason Clare said a key issue that emerged from the roundtable was, 'the need to improve initial teacher education to boost graduation rates and ensure graduating teachers are better prepared for the classroom'.

'There aren't many jobs more important than being a teacher and we don't have enough of them'.

In late September, Mr Clare announced that Professor Mark Scott would lead the review, which will examine how initial teacher education can deliver 'effective classroom-ready graduates'.

The review's expert panel will be asked how to improve the quality of practical experience in teaching and how to make postgraduate initial teacher education a better experience for mid-career entrants.

Federal education department statistics discussed at the roundtable show the demand for high school teachers will exceed the supply of new graduate teachers by 4,100 between 2021 to 2025. Initial teacher education enrolments declined by 8 per cent and degree completion declined by 17 per cent between 2017 and 2020, both contributing to Australia's growing shortage of teachers.

State Education Ministers at the roundtable committed to developing a National Teacher Workforce Action Plan to increase the number of people entering and remaining in the teaching profession.

At the time, Mr Clare described teacher education as 'screaming out for reform', but universities pointed out that teaching degrees had just undergone significant changes.

Mr Clare told *Sky News* why he believed there was a teacher shortage.

'We've seen a drop in the number of people enrolling at university to become teachers. I think it's dropped by about 16 per cent in the last ten years. And we don't have enough students at university actually completing their university degree and going on to become teachers. And thirdly, you've got a lot of experienced teachers who are feeling worn out and burnt out and leaving the profession early.'

'This review is focused on the second of those challenges, helping to make sure that you get more students at university completing their teaching degrees. So, to put it in perspective, about 70 per cent of Uni students finish their degrees, but only 50 per cent of teaching students finish their

teaching degrees.'

Clare said teaching students need to begin getting practical experience earlier in their degrees.

'So, an opportunity for longer periods of time in front of students and I guess a little bit more rigour, a little bit more methodology around the practical experience that teaching students get before they become teachers and enter the classroom for real.'

Clare added that there needs to be a greater focus on reading instruction in initial teacher education.

'One of the things that came out of the roundtable was a comment by Derek Scott, the head of ACARA, who said that only twelve and a half per cent of the time at university is spent teaching students how to teach kids to read. There's nothing much more important than learning to read.'

'You need to learn to read to be able to learn other things.'

Professor Scott, currently Vice-Chancellor of Sydney University, started his career as a teacher and is a former Secretary of the NSW Department of Education, and Managing Director of the ABC.

The panel will include Emeritus

Professor Bill Loudon, award winning teacher Rebecca West, Australian Council of the Deans of Education president Professor Michele Simons, former Principal of the Year Andrew Peach, and Australian Education Research Organisation CEO Dr Jenny Donovan.

The panel will have nine months to complete its review, with a report expected by July 2023.

For more on the Teacher Workforce Action Plan, see page 27.

Targets are good. Action is better.

We've divested from some of the big fossil fuel companies.

NGS Super is committed to taking action to address climate change and create a better future for our members. That's why we recently divested from some of the big fossil fuel companies. We're on our way towards our goal of a carbon-neutral portfolio by 2030.

ngs
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NEUTRAL
BY 2030

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NETWORK MEMBER

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Restoring community

The sub-branch at Launceston Church Grammar School has been honoured with an IEU Sub-Branch Award, but their biggest reward is the salvation of their school's treasured culture.

In accepting the award, Rep Gail Harris said the staff and community of the school had been 'under siege' after an interstate conservative was made principal of the progressive LCGS.

The 'pastoral, compassionate' Anglican co-educational school says it is 'more than just a school, it is a community where students are nurtured, challenged and inspired'. It was not the right fit for a right-wing, anti-union, non-consultative boss. Teachers were alienated, and the school lost 75 staff members during the tenure of the ill-fitting school leader.

Gail was glad on behalf of her colleagues to accept the recognition of the sub branch's efforts. She said organising at LCGS had been 'traumatic' at first, and meetings had to be held off site. But working together staff prevailed, and IEU membership, which rose sharply during the crisis, remains high.

Pastoral, compassionate LCGS was rocked by the crisis, but Organiser Dino Otavi said staff 'banded together and showed how comrades working together can overcome the

most difficult circumstances'.

'I've never seen anything like it... such comradeship and solidarity'.

It took three votes of no-confidence and a campaign that encompassed media and parents, but finally the sub-branch got their school back and a more appropriate leader is now in charge.



Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA: union values at work overseas

It's understandable that our focus was closer to home over the past three years, as the pandemic confined us to quarters and we worried about loved ones and our local communities.

But unionists have always been outward looking internationalists. It was one of the defining features of early unionism that it recognised that workers faced common issues wherever similar systems of work operated.

Australian unions maintain a formal international commitment through the global justice organisation Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, which works to support stronger unions and social movements in 14 countries, working with 43 local unions and community organisations on over 30 projects in Southeast Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, and Southern Africa.

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA's guiding values are partnership, solidarity, equality, justice, and accountability. Their aim is to provide on-the-ground assistance targeting the causes of injustice and inequality, not the symptoms.

Harnessing workers power to campaign for climate justice

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is working in Nepal and the Philippines to educate and support workers facing climate impacts to their work.

Mountainous, largely rural, Nepal is not a big emitter of greenhouse gases, but is ranked the fourth most vulnerable nation in the world to global warming.

Climate disasters like heavy rains, landslides, floods, snowstorms, avalanches, and dust storms have become more frequent and are having

a devastating impact on the fragile environment and the lives of workers in climate-sensitive occupations.

Tourism workers in trekking and mountaineering centres such as Pokhara watch as glaciers melt before their eyes as a changing climate wreaks havoc on their industry.

Government records indicate that between 1971-2007, 27,000 people were killed in Nepal due to natural disasters and the lives of five million people were affected.

'Secondary impacts' such as the rising food costs and the spread of disease are as dangerous as disaster events. Dengue fever and malaria are now found at higher altitudes due to the rise in temperatures.

Vulnerable workers in the Philippines are affected by climate events such as severe typhoons and landslides, poor farmers are hit by ongoing drought, indigenous communities are displaced by mega-dams, and construction workers are exposed to extreme heatwaves.

Trade unions campaign for climate action

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is working with the Centre for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR) in the Philippines, and the Centre for Labour and Social Studies Nepal (CLASS Nepal) to educate and empower workers to understand the impacts of the climate crisis, and support workers to mobilise for collective climate justice campaigns.

Last year, CTUHR developed a facilitator's training module designed for union leaders to build their understanding of the climate crisis and climate organising. This year they consulted with partner unions and organisations, rolled out a trial of the training and finalised units on disaster risk reduction concepts.

Through this project, CTUHR supported Women Wise, (an informal women workers association) and the Catholic Diocese of Novaliches Labor Ministry. CTUHR staff facilitated discussions with the workers about the importance of workers being actively involved in the struggle against the climate crisis.

CTUHR are also working with UMA, an agriculture workers union, to conduct an impact study to better understand the impact of climate crisis on sugar workers.

Similarly, CLASS Nepal has consulted with trade unions, governments, workers, businesses, and academics on their understanding of the climate change impact in their workplaces.

The study found that every workplace will be impacted – from street vendors to white-collar workers – due to the increase in temperatures and other climate-induced disasters.

Trade unions have also made climate change a campaign issue in the national election on 20 November this year.

Help APHEDA continue this important work

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is running an end-of-year appeal to support our partner organisations in Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines, and India to mobilise for climate justice.

Please consider supporting this important work. Your donation will immediately be put to good use helping workers on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

To find out more or make a tax-deductible donation, please visit www.apheda.org.au

CAREER CORNER

It never rains, it pours!

The difference this year is that there's a glut of job opportunities due to the well-publicised staff shortage in schools. This is potentially great news for anyone looking to move schools or seek internal promotion – or for those on fixed-term contracts, to request a permanent position.

But before taking the leap to a new workplace, there are several things to consider. Over recent months, the IEU has received numerous calls from members regarding job application matters, such as:

- The culture of the school they are considering
- How much notice they must give
- Whether they must list their principal as a referee
- Whether they can negotiate full or part-time, fixed-term or ongoing, and other conditions, such as pay and superannuation
- What to do if they get more than one job offer.

It's a great time to be exploring career opportunities! However, the following simple rules can help you make a wise choice.

Culture: contact your union!

Members can call the IEU office or their Organiser to learn about the current climate of the school they are considering. We can tell you about the school's pay and general conditions, morale, staff turnover, leadership, and culture. Sometimes we might even raise a red flag that you would not otherwise have contemplated. It's worth a call!

Notice

Typically, teachers are expected to provide seven term weeks' notice (exclusive of holidays) and general staff between one and five weeks depending on length of service and age. Where you provide less than this notice, your employer may be entitled to keep a portion of your entitlements in lieu of notice not

provided, although this depends on the Agreement or Award you are employed under, and will often be waived. Contact the union if you're in any doubt.

Referees

Future employers, represented by the principal or business manager for general staff, often want to speak with their counterpart in your current school. If you don't have a particularly good relationship with that person, you could consider enlisting another senior manager. However, you may have to justify why you've deviated from normal practice, so it's best to consider your options and rehearse your reason before you're asked.

Negotiating

Just like a market in Marrakesh, everything is negotiable! In the current climate, if the school only offers a fixed-term position, you're entitled to ask why and push for an ongoing role. If you need flexible hours due to carer

responsibilities (or for other reasons), then you can request part-time or other accommodations for a fixed period or indefinitely. Raise these matters at a second interview or after receiving a verbal offer as the preferred candidate.

Spoilt for choice

With historically low unemployment, this is a jobseekers' market and it's reasonable to shop around for the best conditions: you may receive more than one job offer. Of course, you can play each school off against the other, and it's up to you the extent to which you are transparent in your negotiations. But be mindful not to put prospective employers off-side. And never resign until you have accepted a formal offer in writing.

Good luck with your applications and make sure if you're changing employers or moving to a position of leadership that you update your IEU membership record at: <https://member.ieuvictas.org.au/>.

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NATIONAL IEU ROUNDUP

NSW: Catholic schools strike

Staff in hundreds of Catholic schools throughout NSW and the ACT stopped work for one hour on Tuesday 15 November in legally protected action to progress negotiations on a new enterprise agreement.



Carol Matthews, IEU NSW/ACT Acting Secretary said negotiations for a new Enterprise Agreement had begun in early February and were no closer to resolution. The NSW Industrial Relations Commission has granted teachers in NSW government schools pay rises of just 2.29% in 2022 and 2.53% in 2023. Catholic employers have long imposed the NSW Government's wages policy on Catholic school teachers.

Teachers and support staff have been pushed to breaking point by unmanageable workloads and unnecessary administrative burdens. The union says employers 'won't even discuss simple, sector-wide measures we know could mitigate workload pressure'.

Western Australia

The IEU WA has congratulated teachers for rejecting a proposed WA Catholic School Teachers Enterprise Agreement.

'By voting 'NO' again, you've made it clear that you deserve better and you're willing to fight for it,' they told members.

They union campaigned for No vote to force Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) back to the negotiating table, urging members not to take its proposed one-off \$3000 'bonus' – which staff wouldn't have received until after Christmas.

The union dubbed CEWA's proposed agreement 'woefully inadequate', failing to meaningfully address teachers' 'serious concerns about unsustainable workloads and other workplace conditions'.

Previously, the union had advised members that an email from CEWA stating 'to not vote at all is considered a No vote as part of Fair Work Act' was 'blatantly misleading, deceptive and unacceptable'.

Queensland

The IEU's Queensland and Northern Territory branch has welcomed the Draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan but says there is more to do.

Secretary Terry Burke said the plan was a significant step in the right direction, but the final plan must target 'unsustainable workloads, teacher burnout, stagnating pay and insecure short-term contracts' and can't just be

about attracting more new teachers.

'More work will be needed to deliver a final plan that tackles the underlying causes of staff shortages.

'The federal government does not employ any teachers and the draft Action Plan is not an industrial instrument that regulates wages or conditions.'

South Australia

The IEU SA has praised prestigious Adelaide school St Peter's College for publishing a list of how much it pays teachers to undertake extra-curricular activities.

It is the only independent school in South Australia that includes a schedule of allowances in its Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.

The list details 26 paid positions, ranging from \$12,972 extra a year for its rowing co-ordinator to \$2120 annually for its mooting co-ordinator.

IEU state secretary Glen Seidel told *Adelaide Now* that St Peter's was setting an example for other non-government schools to follow.

'A lot of schools make extra-curricular activities for staff compulsory but have

no extra money for it,' he said.

'Others pay something, but they keep it all internal and it's not publicly available.

'With St Peter's, they at least have extra money and it's public.

'That's a good thing to have in the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement because then it's enforceable.'

INTERNATIONAL ROUNDUP

Union world meets in Melbourne

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Congress came to Melbourne's Convention and Exhibition Centre from 17 to 22 November.



Delegates from over 300 national trade union centres debated the agenda for the world trade union movement for the next four years.

Discussions centred on the theme of a New Social Contract and special forums focused on lessons from global shocks, technology and impacts on work, an inclusive union movement.

Retiring ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow (see story on page 21) opened the Congress by saying said the New Social Contract has six clear demands:

- moving to climate friendly jobs, including a just transition
- embedding fundamental labour rights – decent work with mandated due diligence regarding human and labour rights and environmental standards to hold corporations to account
- ensuring universal social protection with minimum income and vital public services of health and education as foundations for resilience
- providing just wages with evidence-based minimum living wages and strong collective bargaining systems

- establishing equality of gender and race
- promoting inclusion with social development goals, the Paris Climate Agreement and new global architecture for peace.

Ukraine

The Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine is, not surprisingly, destroying the Ukrainian labour market.

The ILO estimates that there will be 2.4 million fewer jobs in the war-ravaged country in 2022 than the previous year.

Countries neighbouring Ukraine and the Russian Federation face disrupted labour markets, heightened price volatility and increased food and energy prices if the conflict becomes more entrenched. The war is already affecting labour markets in the Global South, leading to increased food insecurity and poverty.

Canada

In early November, 55,000 education workers in the province of Ontario walked off the job to protest after their right to strike, enshrined in the Canadian

Constitution, was removed. Individual workers can be hit with a C\$4000 fine under the despised new laws and the Canadian Union of Public Employees could face fines totalling more than \$200 million per day while the walkout continues. Picket lines had been established at dozens of locations across the province, including outside the office of the Education Minister.

Greece

A general strike brought Greece to a standstill on 10 November, with tens of thousands of people taking to the streets to demand higher wages in the face of surging inflation.

It was the second 24-hour strike staged this year over the cost of living.

Protesters marched on the Athens parliament, where there were brief clashes, as they called for an end to layoffs and pay cuts in a nation still recovering from a near decade-long debt crisis.

Dimitris Georgiou, a telecoms sector employee, told *The Guardian* a lot of government subsidies had gone to companies. 'If you're taking home €800 a

month, it's now down to €500 with all the hikes. It's vital that other support measures are introduced this winter.'

Photo: hundreds of women trade union leaders from across the world have gathered in Melbourne, Australia for the final event in the fourth World Women's Conference.

NATIONAL UNION ROUNDUP

Tugboat lockout averted

The Fair Work Commission has suspended towage company Svitzer's protected industrial action for six months, avoiding a lockout of over 600 workers after finding it threatened to 'endanger welfare and significantly damage the economy'.

Svitzer had notified the MUA, AMOU and AIMPE that it would lock out their members indefinitely at 17 ports across five states from noon on 18 November. Any such action is now suspended until May 18, 2023.

MUA national secretary Paddy Crumlin said Svitzer had refused to finalise a new deal for tugboat crews for three years, 'effectively giving these workers a wage-freeze amidst soaring inflation and massive corporate profits during a COVID-boom for shipping and logistics companies', *Workplace Express* reported.

'At every turn, the three maritime unions have sought to drag the management team back to the negotiating table and work on a mutually agreeable outcome,' he said.

Tasmania strikes

On 9 November, thousands of public sector workers rallied for better pay and conditions across Tasmania. More industrial action is expected before Christmas if their concerns aren't addressed.

State school teachers and support staff, health workers, firefighters, cleaners, and child safety officers were

among those to walk off the job.

Australian Education Union Tasmania president David Genford said stressed teachers had been left with no choice but to strike.

There has been a spike in teachers leaving the profession, with 271 permanent state school employees quitting in 2021/22 compared to 182 the previous financial year.

Unions Tasmania secretary Jessica Munday said the proposed deal didn't address recruitment, retention, and workload problems.

Health and Community Services Union state secretary, Tim Jacobson, said the strikes were 'a shot across the government's bow'.

'They should now listen (and) put competent negotiators in front of us so we can get these issues solved,' he said.

Queensland: Palaszczuk Government passes new IR laws

Queensland IR Minister Grace Grace has made no apologies for targeting 'red unions' in a raft of amendments to the state's IR Act.

'The changes provide protections against organisations and individuals

who make false and misleading claims about being able to represent the industrial interests of employers and employees under the Act,' she said.

Other legislative fixes targeted sexual harassment protections and pay equity and set minimum standards for independent 'gig' drivers and riders.

Celebrating leave win

On 14 November, Australian Unions held an event celebrating women workers who campaigned for a decade to win 10 days paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave for all workers.

The special online event discussed the tireless campaigning by unions and activists which led to the passage of the life-saving new laws.

Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke told Parliament that the law 'will not by itself solve the problem of domestic and family violence, but it does mean that no employee in Australia will ever again be forced to make a choice between earning a wage and protecting the safety of themselves and their families'.



Academic claims long COVID is reducing labour force

A leading labour economist says long COVID partially explains recent labour shortages.

Melbourne University Department of Economics Professor Jeff Borland cited a survey which found that 15.5% of those who have tested positive for COVID report symptoms lasting longer than a month.

People with long COVID were 7.2 percentage points less likely to be employed at the time surveyed than those whose symptoms lasted less than a week.

Borland also referred to a US study which found that workers who take one week off work when they are infected with COVID are 7 percentage points less likely to be in the labour force one year later, compared to otherwise similar workers who didn't miss a week of work for health reasons.

He expressed surprise that authorities are rolling back public health interventions, such as mask-wearing, that could markedly reduce transmission and long-term labour shortages.

Draft national teacher workforce action plan under scrutiny

The IEU has been actively engaged in the federal government's Teacher Workforce Working Group established in response to widespread teacher shortages.

The draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan arose from the roundtable meeting of August which established the working group. It includes \$328 million of additional Australian Government investment to attract, train, and retain teachers.

The IEU welcomed these collaborative discussions and the government's commitment to work with teaching practitioners on these long-standing problems.

IEU members Zoe Skeggs and Alexandra Abela participated in a discussion group with Education Minister Jason Clare in Tarnait on 17 November, ensuring teaching retention and workload measures stayed front of mind. Their views and feedback from that meeting will inform the IEU's official advice, to be submitted in early December.

The IEU insists that the final plan must be about more than 'simply trying to attract new teachers'.

'More work will be needed to deliver a final plan that tackles the underlying causes of staff shortages.

'The long-term success of any plan must include consideration and action on unsustainable workloads, teacher burnout, stagnating pay, and insecure short-term contracts.

'The plan should provide a framework and a stronger commitment by employers to increase their investment in wages and workload relief.'

Experts differ on whether the draft plan addresses the core issues causing the teacher shortage.

'All the investments individually are worthwhile, but none of them solve the real issues of an underpaid, over-worked, stressed workforce of teachers who are abandoning the profession,' Dr David Roy, a senior lecturer at the University of Newcastle's School of Education told *The Educator*.

Renowned education academic Pasi Sahlberg said the government's ideas and the new national plan 'don't adequately address the root causes of teacher shortages: unproductive working conditions and non-competitive pay'.

'Workload is the most common reason

for intending to leave the teaching profession. In the 2022 Monash University survey, teachers reported their workloads were intensifying and difficult to fit into a reasonable working week. This is due to overwhelming administration, reporting and paperwork for compliance purposes.'

The Plan will focus on: 'elevating' the teaching profession, improving teacher supply, strengthening teaching degrees, maximising teachers' time to teach, and a better understanding of future workforce needs.

The Plan features:

- \$159 million to train more teachers
- \$56 million for scholarships worth up to \$40,000 each to encourage the best and brightest to become teachers
- \$68 million to triple the number of mid-career professionals shifting into teaching
- \$10 million to boost professional development
- \$10 million on a campaign to raise the status of the teaching profession
- a \$25 million Teacher Workload Reduction Fund - to trial new ways to

reduce the workload on teachers and maximise the time they have to teach.

Minister Clare invited feedback on the draft plan from teachers, principals, parents, and the broader community until 1 December. The national roundtable of Education Ministers, teachers, principals, and other education experts is due to reconvene later in December.

The IEU said, 'more work will be needed to deliver a final plan that tackles the underlying causes of staff shortages – unsustainable workloads, teacher burnout and stagnating pay.'

'We need a plan that provides a stronger commitment by employers to increase their investment in these critical areas.'

The IEU called the implementation of the plan a 'once in a decade opportunity for government and employers to drive the widespread reforms needed in our schools and early childhood communities'.

For a member's view of teacher shortages see Page 21.

2022 HALL OF SHAME

The IEU Hall of Shame awards are a long-standing tradition. They hail from the Middle Ages when misguided headmasters would forgive sins like staff forgetting to wear their swords to examinations.

The Awards were created specifically to arrest such declines in standards. To this day, the HOS Awards celebrate those who do the most to protect the standing of our schools as draconian exemplars, especially if it is at the expense of the serfs who labour to keep them afloat.

Sadly, great controversy has enveloped this year's HOS awards. The Awards Committee has been rocked by revelations of betting scandals and insider trading. The President (and only voting member) has resigned in disgrace, taking with him nothing but the great wealth accumulated by putting his money on the Catholics to take out gold.

And they duly delivered, yet again. In 2022 the Catholics in Tasmania and Victoria competed furiously to achieve stellar heights of incompetence and truculence.

But as always, they had competitors

bronze



Peninsula Grammar shot out of nowhere to take a prize in 2020 when they stood down support staff without pay, blaming COVID. To ensure a repeat nomination didn't escape the notice of the HOS Committee, they also cut fee remissions for staff with kids at the school, thus achieving the big double: a cut to staff incomes and an increase to their costs. It took two years to resolve everything but finally, after the school was forced to pay back the stolen wages, the court found that the school, nobly led by their principal, had engaged in 'unconscionable conduct'. In any other year, this outstanding oeuvre of achievement wins easily. In 2022, incredibly, this phenomenal contribution to the reputation of our industry only scored third place.

silver



Runner-up this year is one of the nation's most consistent performers: **Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools**. MACS has always been a leader in oppressing their bothersome slaves when they get a bit uppity. In February 2022, represented by the IEU (a transparent front for heathens and vandals who would destroy all schools), teachers and support staff confronted the royalty of MACS with a 'log of claims'! What impudence!

MACS, showing brilliant tactical agility, delayed, obfuscated, avoided, and bewildered the IEU with ingenious ploys like, 'we need another month to talk to our people'. The whole year passed and... No agreement! While government schools, the Sale Diocese and dozens of independent schools relented and reached agreements, MACS ended 2022 with their underlings none the wiser as to which rules will govern them in the new year. I know what you're thinking: That HAS to be gold; who could possibly beat that?

gold



The **TCEO** (Tasmanian Catholic Executioner's Office), that's who! Stumbling between legal losses, the TCEO picked up silver in last year's awards, but it re-doubled its efforts in 2022, not only matching MACS for obfuscation, delays, and a give-them-nothing approach to bargaining, but also picking losing fights with the Union on matters ranging from redundancy and long service leave to performance management.

The TCEO paid big to get out of discrimination disputes and earned a bucket-load of sympathy votes trying to extricate itself from disputes over its failure to consult. Seeing the director try to argue that union-supplied Tim Tams in the staff room were an anaphylaxis risk to kids showed a penchant for humour unmatched in HOS Award history. Was that a peanut butter sandwich on top of the staff beer fridge behind him?

Sometimes this Award is so close it requires a count-back; in 2022 the TCEO romped home. Short of public hangings of staff, it's hard to imagine what more they could do to advance their reputation. Their insane anti-unionism is absolute GOLD!

Signing Off
Your unworthy (and now unemployed) correspondent

Hall of Shame Awards Committee President, 2009 - 2022



Honourable Mentions

HOS nominations from the IEU rank and file

Ears Painted On School of the Year

Mentone Girls Grammar ignored the advice of IEU bargaining Reps' that members would not support the inclusion of a particular clause in the draft Agreement. MGS put it to the vote anyway. And (shock, horror!) it got voted down, just as we'd foreshadowed. One week later the school agreed to change the offending clause. It proceeded to vote again and (hey presto!) employees can now receive the improvements negotiated over the preceding 18 months. We're here to help...

Bulging Legal Coiffers Dud Prosecution of the Year

The Principal of St Patrick's School, Mentone, and MACS spent more than six months trying to establish baseless allegations of significant psychological harm against a teacher of 40 years standing who admonished a group of students who took 40 minutes to go to the toilet. Hostile, facile, futile. But lucrative for some people with funny wigs.

Back to the Future Gender Awareness Backflip of the Year

Tasmania has produced the courageous women's activist Grace Tame, named Australian of the Year 2021 for advancing women's rights.

The Apple Isle has also produced a visionary Catholic figurehead, who felt that in 2022, post #MeToo, it was time to address the state's only all-girl's Catholic graduation mass with the Apostle Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus, found in **Ephesians 5:22-33**: 'Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church... Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything'.

After outrage from students - who threatened a walkout - and parents, who shared the ludicrous choice on social media, then enquiries from the mainstream media, Ephesians finally got the flick.

And from off the interchange bench came readings from the Feast of St John Paul II, which include: 'So often today, man does not know that which is in him, in the depths of his mind and heart'.

The far-sighted official who recognised that the church's mind and heart was a little too Old Testament for this millennium is surely looking for a new vocation.

